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Paul M. Kellstedt and Guy D. Whitten

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THE FUNDAMENTALS OF POLITICAL SCIENCE RESEARCH SECOND EDITION

The Fundamentals of Political Science Research provides an introduction to the scientific study of politics. It offers the basic tools necessary for readers to become both critical consumers and beginning producers of scientific research on politics. Professors Paul M. Kellstedt and Guy D. Whitten present an integrated approach to research design and empirical analyses in which researchers can develop and test causal theories. The authors use examples from political science research that students will find interesting and inspiring, and that will help them understand key concepts. The book makes technical material accessible to students who might otherwise be intimidated by mathematical examples.

This revised second edition refines discussions from the first edition and includes a new chapter on how to write an original research project. The second edition also contains an additional forty exercises and adds definitions for terms discussed in each chapter.

Paul M. Kellstedt is an associate professor of political science at Texas A&M University. He is the author of *The Mass Media and the Dynamics of American Racial Attitudes* (Cambridge 2003), winner of Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government's 2004 Goldsmith Book Prize. He is on the editorial boards of the journals *Political Behavior* and *Political Science Research and Methods*.

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**Political Science
Research**

Second Edition

Paul M. Kellstedt

Texas A&M University

Guy D. Whitten

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Dedicated to

Lyman A. Kellstedt, Charmaine C. Kellstedt,

David G. Whitten, and Jo Wright-Whitten,

the best teachers we ever had

– PMK and GDW

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Preface to the Second Edition

We received a wealth of helpful feedback on the first edition of this book. In crafting a new edition, our challenge was to try to produce a book that incorporated as much of this feedback as possible, coupled with our ideas for changes, while at the same time keeping the book at roughly the same length. Our general goals in the second edition were to produce more exercises at the end of the chapters, to make our explanations as clear and accessible as possible, and to incorporate more examples from published research.

We added substantially to the exercises available at the end of each chapter. The second edition contains 101 exercises, compared to the 59 in the first edition. In addition, we also have added substantially to both the general and instructor-only sections of the webpage for our book (<http://www.cambridge.org/fpsr>). The general section now contains the guides for conducting the analyses discussed in the book for the SPSS, Stata, and R statistical programs, as well as many more data sets available in formats compatible with all three programs. The instructor-only section contains several additional resources, including PowerPoint and T_EX/Beamer slides for each chapter, a test-bank, and answer keys for the exercises.

In the new edition, at the end of each chapter we have added short working definitions for each bolded term introduced in that chapter. The trade-off here is one between making the materials in the book more accessible versus running the risk of offering over-simplified definitions that might mislead students into thinking that they can master the book's materials by simply memorizing these definitions.

As outlined above, we made broad changes that permeate all of the book, but we also made major changes to particular chapters as follows:

- We substantially revised Chapter 3. Among other changes, we altered the language of the “four causal hurdles” and added what we call a

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“causal-hurdles scorecard” to help keep track of the progress of our theories as we move through the various stages of testing them.

- Chapter 4 was altered to make the running example throughout the chapter one that is more familiar to political science undergraduates, namely whether campaign advertising affects voting behavior. We have also expanded the discussion of experimental methods to highlight more examples of applied work, and also to include a discussion of field experiments.
- We combined Chapters 5 and 6 from the earlier edition of the book. Like so many books in this genre, we had written our first edition of chapters on these subjects as though students would be conceptualizing and then measuring their own variables. While this may be true for some students, we expect that many more will be downloading data from the Internet or otherwise conducting their research with data that they did not originally collect. We wrote the new Chapter 5 with such students in mind, combining the critical concepts of measurement and descriptive statistics into a single chapter where the focus is on getting to know one’s data.
- The combining of Chapters 5 and 6 from the previous edition into the new Chapter 5 allowed us to address one of the major concerns that we heard from instructors – that the book didn’t get into the business of data analysis soon enough. Chapters 7 through 11 from the first edition became Chapters 6 through 11 in the second edition. We split the old Chapter 11, which one reader described as a “methodological behemoth,” into two more digestible chapters, each with some new material. The new Chapter 10 focuses on a series of challenges in terms of model specification and interpretation in OLS, while the new Chapter 11 focuses on models of dummy dependent variables and time series data.
- We pulled elements out of the old Chapter 12, which was titled “Multiple Regression Models III: Applications,” and inserted them into the second edition’s Chapters 9 through 11.
- Chapter 12 is a wholly new chapter that we ambitiously titled “Putting It All Together to Produce Effective Research.” The goal of this chapter is to provide a follow-up to Chapter 2 in which we give some specific advice on how to pull together the lessons from the book to write an original research manuscript, such as a senior honors thesis or independent research project. We are very much looking forward to feedback from instructors and students about what works and doesn’t work with this new chapter.



Acknowledgments to the Second Edition

We had a tremendous amount of help writing the first edition of this book and even more as we prepared this second edition.

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Acknowledgments to the First Edition

An inevitable part of the production of a book like this is an accumulation of massive intellectual debts. We have been overwhelmed by both the quality and quantity of help that we have received from our professional (and even personal) contacts as we have gone through every stage of the preparation of this manuscript.

This book arose out of more than twenty years of combined teaching experience at Brown University; the University of California, Los Angeles; the University of Essex; the University of Minnesota; and Texas A&M University. We tried out most of the examples in this book on numerous classes of students before they were refined into their present state. We thus owe a debt to every student who raised his or her hand or showed us a furrowed brow as we worked our way through these attempts to explain the complicated processes of scientifically studying politics.

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