

**CEU Political Science Department  
PhD Program  
2008/2009 Fall**

## **Survey Methodology**

**Instructor: Tamas Rudas**

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Office hours: by appointment  
Class meets: Friday 9:00 – 10:40

### Course description

Every empirical investigation in political science (and in the social sciences, in general) requires valid and reliable data, and the application of carefully selected statistical methods. The typical form of data collection is conducting a survey, and well designed surveys can provide the researcher with good data, even if they are based on surprisingly small sample sizes. The course will discuss the most important concepts and techniques in survey design. A clear understanding of these methods is necessary for the political scientist who is engaged in data collection, but it is also useful for the researcher who analyses or interprets data. The mathematical background needed for this class is about the high school level.

### Learning goals and outcomes

Ability to critically interpret survey data; to judge the quality of a survey; to design and conduct simple surveys, including questionnaire design, sampling, organization and analysis; to be able discuss aspects of design of more complex surveys with survey professionals.

### Topics to be covered:

Surveys and censuses  
Probability versus non-probability samples  
Role of the sample size, accuracy of estimates  
Sampling and nonsampling errors  
Questionnaire design  
Sample survey design  
Main sampling techniques:  
    simple random sampling  
    stratified sampling  
    cluster sampling

Handling of missing data  
Allocation of resources

Texts:

Freedman, Pisani, Purves: Statistics 3rd ed, Norton 1997.

Hansen, Hurwitz, Madow: Sample Survey Methods and Theory, Vol 1, Wiley, 1993.

Grading:

Midterm test – 40%

Final take-home assignment – 60%