Experimental Implications of Theoretical Models  

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Experiment Section – June 19, 2015  

Rose McDermott  
Department of Political Science  
Brown University  

Rick K. Wilson  
Department of Political Science  
Rice University  

Module Objective:  

This module develops the role and place of experiments in political science. Experiments are simply one of the tools available for use in the social sciences – they are not necessarily the only (or even first) tool to be used.  

There are three goals for the module. First, we want to illustrate the connection between theory development and experimental design. Second, we want to stress key components of experimental design (simplify, simplify, simplify/control, control, control/randomize, randomize, randomize). Finally, we want to provide a sense of the kinds of problems facing various types of experiments (from randomized control treatments to field experiments).  

To learn about experiments there is no substitute for doing. This means getting your hands dirty with conducting an experiment. Unfortunately there is not enough time to fully implement an experiment in this course. However, if there is any interest, we will take students through an experimental design “from scratch” during the afternoon. You may opt out of this optional session (though beer may be involved as an enticement).  

READINGS  


**Optional Readings**


