A political science major will independently design a research project and write an analytical paper.

FP130: Introduction to American Government and Constitutional Development. Required course for all midshipmen.
- A student can research and write an analytical paper with guidance from their instructor.
- This reflects the need for students to receive “intrusive” instruction in selecting a relevant topic area, identifying a research question, developing a thesis statement, researching the phenomena, documenting sources, and writing a coherent paper.
- Research relies predominantly on secondary sources and instruction on evaluating these information sources is provided in class.
- This may include students being required to separately turn in different components of the paper and/or drafts for feedback and revision.
- Class time is devoted to different aspects of writing a paper, including a library research session.

FP210/230: Introductory courses for International Relations and Comparative Politics. Required for all political science majors.
- A student can follow a prepared research design and write an analytical paper.
- Students are introduced to different approaches to research and their suitability for different types of research questions.
- Time may be spent in class discussing some aspects of instructor expectations for the assignment.
- Students are encouraged to use extra instruction outside of class to discuss their paper.

FP2220: Introductory course in quantitative methodology. Required for all political science majors.
- A student can apply the scientific method to explain patterns of political outcomes using quantitative statistical and graphical methods.
- Students are introduced to the use of quantitative data as a research method in political science literature.
- Students are introduced to and evaluated on techniques of quantitative data analysis.

FP3XY/FP4XY: Upper level political science electives
- A student can work independently and primarily interact with the instructor outside of class as needed to develop their research question, execute the research, analyze cases and data, and write the assigned paper.
- Students are expected to be able to employ necessary skills to be both good consumers and evaluators of research. This includes the use of primary and secondary source materials.
- Time is spent in class evaluating others’ research.
- Students are expected to prepare a research design and write an analytical paper with some assistance from the instructor/professor.

FP471: Political Science capstone. Required for all political science majors in their I/C year.

- **A student can independently design a research project and write an analytical paper.**
- In their senior year, midshipmen enroll in a capstone seminar with the expectation that they will embark on an independent research project within the topic area designated by the professor. The seminar style class provides midshipmen ample opportunity to engage with the professor to develop a research question, explore the relevant literature, undertake significant research, analyze their findings, and write a 35-40 page analytic paper. This research involves the use of originally compiled data, as well as primary and secondary sources.