Report, STV1020

My impression is that the course is going very well. The students have taken to the new curriculum (Kellstedt and Whitten) and the "collaborative" model of teaching (we have four lecturers, and several more seminar teachers). It is a little hard to assess how many are falling behind in the course of the semester, but by impression is that we are able to retain the interest of most students. Feedback on the R-seminars has been very positive. Also the availability of the "code café" that students can use. My impression is that students are becoming more and more skilled in using R, which also spills over into a better understanding of core concepts and theory. I would strongly advise against departing from the model we have now, where Kellstedt and Whitten make up a unified core of the course (covering research design, principles and some regression basics).

Having an up-to-date, English language textbook, with R-compatibility, written by two distinguished researchers in the field represents a major upgrade of the course. That students are taking to this (somewhat heavier and internationally oriented) curriculum, while at the same time showing great interest and capabilities when it comes to the R-seminars shows that we may have underestimated BA-students in the past at the Dept. of Political Science. The only way forward is to maintain this high level in the future. The course needs to always be in tune with the most up-to-date methods that are actually being used by applied political scientists, at the frontier of the discipline.

The course is on a solid foundation now, but has some fragilities. For example, if the number of r-skiled seminar leaders is reduced (also depends on trained temporary staff), or if the course becomes less centered around methods that are core to applied political science. Maintaining the high level of STV1020 will be the most cost-efficient way of securing high-quality recruitment of entry-level staff at ISV in the future.