Course Description and Goals

Half-credit course for one semester. This course surveys a number of methods for conducting research in political science. It pairs substantive articles written by leading scholars with methodological readings by the same or similar authors, including but not limited to case selection, discourse analysis, ethnography, process tracing, content analysis, counterfactual analysis, structured focused comparison, and network analysis. Readings will primarily come from international relations scholars, but these techniques are applicable across all subfields of political science. The course will be useful both for students who will be writing their junior qualifying examination in political science and for students who are in the first semester of their thesis research. Prerequisite: junior or senior standing in political science or consent of the instructor. Conference.

The schedule of the course mirrors closely the political science junior qualifying examination. The materials covered in this course are independent of the qual, and none of your qual work will be used to satisfy the requirements for this course. However, the tools and techniques that you will learn in this course should help you complete the qual and prepare you for your senior thesis.

The course focuses on the tools and techniques of political science research. We will review many of the major research approaches in political science. Much of the work in the class will involve reading, analyzing, and critiquing existing political science research with an eye to identifying the questions asked, methodology chosen, and how answers were reached.

Requirements

Class Participation

Students are required to actively participate in the class; they will have the opportunity to do so both during and outside of classroom hours. Good participation involves—among other things—listening carefully to others, referring or responding to the previous speaker’s comments, and asking questions in addition to or instead of making statements. There is such a thing as bad participation. This includes—but is not limited to—interrupting others, dominating conversations, and conducting ad hominem attacks.

Class will typically start with an interruptible mini-lecture on my part; only after we’ve covered the basics of the articles and how they relate to each other will we move to discussion. I do this to ensure that you understood the basic assumptions, mechanisms, and implications of each theory, and will consequently often contain a Socratic component. This is also a good time to ask one of your questions! Sometimes this will take up almost the entire class period, particularly near the beginning. This is another reason to post your question/observation to Moodle in advance so I can get a sense of where you are stuck or what you are interested in and incorporate that into the mini lecture part. As the class progresses and as we move from theory to practice, we will dedicate more time to the discussion portion of class. Sometimes we will not get to all of the readings or very far in the discussion. This is deliberate; you will still benefit from the context provided by those pieces even if we don’t discuss them. If we miss something in class, you are most welcome to post (or re-post) your question/observation to Moodle after the class.

If you miss a day of class for any reason whatsoever, you may make it up by posting a summary of each of the readings for that day to Moodle. In order to make up missed days from the first half of the semester, these must be posted before the first day of classes after the break; from the second half, by the end of reading period. If you are sick, do NOT come to class and spread it to the rest of us. Instead, stay home, write your summaries up (which all of you should be doing every day in any case), and get better.
Readings for the course are drawn from one book and E-Readings, which can be downloaded directly from the links on Moodle. These are best used in conjunction with Zotero, which is supported by the library. I encourage all students to use Zotero to download the class readings, take notes, and use for citing works in their papers. Students are expected to bring a copy of the readings to class every day for reference. Laptops are not permitted in class; tablet or convertible devices may be used without keyboards for accessing the readings. Take notes by hand; this will help you remember the subject materials. Readings marked “Further” on the syllabus are other relevant articles or books; they are not required for class. Students who have a particular interest in the topics in question are encouraged to read these pieces and to incorporate them into their assignments.

**Required Book**


**Course Website**

Frequent use of the course website will be necessary for success in the class. Supplemental and core readings will be made available there; and assignments will be turned in electronically using the site.

**Assignments**

Assignments will be due weekly on Mondays at noon. Weeks in which a substantial part of the proposal or research design parts of the qual are due (i.e., weeks 3, 12) will not have large assignments, but your submissions may be used as part of an exercise those days. Most of the assignments will be short, as they are designed to test mastery of concepts and tools rather than your ability to generate mass quantities of text.

**Citation and Plagiarism**

A major goal of this course is to encourage good reading, research, and citation habits. Good research requires good documentation of sources and the ability to put one’s own analysis and thoughts into a paper rather than relying on others. When in doubt as to whether you should cite something, always do it. Citations are required for ideas as well as facts, and are imperative even if you are not directly quoting authors. Make sure that you provide as specific a citation as possible; if an author discusses an idea in one section or one page, cite the specific section or page instead of the full article or book. I usually recommend that students use in-text author-date citation with full Chicago Manual of Style citations; see their Citation Quick Guide: [http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html).

However, style is less important than the cites being present. If you use an idea or a fact without attribution, you are plagiarizing someone else’s work. Plagiarism and cheating are violations of academic integrity and thus violations of Reed’s Honor Principle. As specified by Reed’s academic conduct policy, such violations will result in disciplinary actions, including suspension or permanent dismissal from the College. Plagiarism is submitting a piece of work which in part or in whole is not entirely the student’s own work without attributing those same portions to their correct source. For examples of plagiarism and how to avoid it, see [http://www.csusb.edu/ssric-trd/howto/plagiarism.htm](http://www.csusb.edu/ssric-trd/howto/plagiarism.htm). If nothing else, you should avoid “sinister buttocks” syndrome. For more information on Reed’s policies see: [http://www.reed.edu/academic/gbook/comm_pol/acad_conduct.html](http://www.reed.edu/academic/gbook/comm_pol/acad_conduct.html).

Plagiarism often comes as the result of a student being up against a deadline without being able to meet it. If you are having trouble meeting a deadline for whatever reason, please contact me. It is always better to ask for more time than to plagiarize. When you ask for an extension, you should a)explain what events are causing you to miss the deadline and b)request an amount of time proportional to the interfering events. You may ask for an extension up to, but not exceeding, the amount of time remaining for the assignment, except for cases of emergencies. However, since this course runs on a strict timetable and your fellow students are counting on you, in many cases extensions cannot be granted.

**Accommodations**

If you’d like to request academic accommodations due to a disability, please contact Disability Support Services. If you have a letter from Student Services, please let me know so we can discuss those accommodations.

**Week 1 - Qual Find a Professor**

**24-Jan: 01.1. Introduction (33 Pages)**

Further


31-Jan: 02.1. Reflexivity (67 Pages)


Further


Week 3 - Qual Draft Proposal

7-Feb: 03.1. Feminist Approaches (82 Pages)


Further
  <http://dx.doi.org/10.1086/494362>


14-Feb: 04.1. Case Study Methods (96 Pages)

• Audie Klotz (2009) Case Selection. In Klotz and Prakash *Qualitative Methods in International Relations*. chapter 4, 43–60


• Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett (2005) The Method of Structured, Focused Comparison. In George and Bennett *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*, 67–72

• Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett (2005) Phase One: Designing Case Study Research. In George and Bennett *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. chapter 5, 73–88

Further


• Rebecca Adler-Nissen (2014) Stigma Management in International Relations: Transgressive Identities, Norms, and Order in International Society. *International organization*. 68(1), 143–176 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0020818313000337>, ISSN 0020–8183

21-Feb: 05.1. Process Tracing (103 Pages)


**Further**


**28-Feb: 06.1. Counterfactuals (94 Pages)**


**Further**


**7-Mar: 07.1. Content Analysis (67 Pages)**


**Further**


• McManus, 726–740


• Carpenter *International Studies Quarterly*, 295–334

14-Mar: 08.1. Spring Break

23-Mar: 09.1. Network Analysis NOTE THURSDAY CLASS (79 Pages)


28-Mar: 10.1. Discourse Analysis (93 Pages)


Further


4-Apr: 11.1. Pragmatic+Historical Analysis (95 Pages)

• Kevin C. Dunn (2009) Historical Representations. In Klotz and Prakash Qualitative Methods in International Relations. chapter 6, 78–92


Further


Week 12 - Qual Draft Research Design

11-Apr: 12.1. Agent-Based Modeling (78 Pages)

• Matthew J. Hoffmann (2009) Agent-Based Modeling. In Klotz and Prakash Qualitative Methods in International Relations. chapter 12, 187–210


Further


18-Apr: 13.1. Ethnography (92 Pages)

- Hugh Gusterson (2009) Ethnographic Research. In Klotz and Prakash *Qualitative Methods in International Relations*. chapter 7, 93–113
  <http://search.proquest.com.proxy.library.reed.edu/docview/197855156/abstract/704D8F5965414A25PQ/1> – visited on 2017-01-20, ISSN 00963402
  <http://dx.doi.org/10.1525/ae.2001.28.2.417>
  <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0305829808097641>, ISSN 0305–8298, 1477–9021

Further

  <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0305829812463835>, ISSN 0305–8298, 1477–9021

25-Apr: 14.1. Psychology (67 Pages)

  <http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/3791465>
  <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/000306551060540030401>, ISSN 0003–0651, 1941–2460
  <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0047117813492448>, ISSN 0047–1178, 1741–2862
- Michael Kruse (2017) ‘He Has This Deep Fear That He Is Not a Legitimate President’. January 18 POLITICO Magazine

Further


Week 16 - Qual Final due at noon on May 9