

GOV 5033-01
Research Methods in Government
Spring 2020
M 6:00-8:50pm
Room: ASB 201

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Course Description:

Graduate students are inundated by rigorous, compelling research. In all their classes, graduate students are asked to read (and critique) the most important, impressive works produced by the field. Fed on a diet of top scholarship, it is only natural that graduate students might forget how monumentally difficult it is to produce quality research. The purpose of this class is to push students to think deeply about the practical and inferential problems social scientists face every day and to begin to develop a skillset that will help them address these issues. The class is divided into four parts. The first part introduces students to the philosophy of science, establishing a baseline understanding of causal inference and reviewing major research design issues. Part II of the class explores statistical methods as a strategy for dealing with observational data. Students will learn to handle data and test hypotheses using the R programming environment. In Part III, students consider qualitative techniques for making causal claims. Finally, in the fourth part of the course, students are asked to utilize their new skills to design a rigorous research proposal. This will serve as valuable practice for developing their prospectuses.

Objectives for Students:

1. To develop an understanding of the problems of causal inference in the social sciences.
2. To become familiar with a variety of quantitative and qualitative strategies for research design.

Course Requirements:

1. Participation (20%)
2. Weekly assignments (50%, 10 @ 5% each)
3. Research design memo (due April 20th) (5%)
4. Research design presentation (due April 27th) (10%)
5. Research design paper (due May 4th) (15%)

Texts to Purchase:

1. Gerring, J. (2017). *Case Study Research: Principles and Practices*, 2nd ed. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
2. King, G., Keohane, R., & Verba, S. (1994). *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
3. Pollock, P. H., & Edwards, B. C. (2020). *The Essentials of Political Analysis*, 6th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: CQ Press, SAGE Publications Ltd.

- ★ Readings marked with a star will be available on Canvas.
- 🖱 Assignments marked with a mouse symbol can be completed on the DataCamp website. Further instructions for setting up an account and joining the course will be provided in class.

Part I: The Philosophy of Science

Week 1 – Introduction (January 13)

- ★ KKV: Chapter 1: The *Science* in Social Science
- ★ Popper, K. Chapter 3: Theories

Week 2 – Causal Inference (January 27)

- KKV: Chapter 2: Descriptive Inference; Chapter 3: Causality and Causal Inference
- PE: Chapter 4: Research Design, Research Ethics and Evidence of Causation
- ★ Mutz, D. C. (2008). Is Deliberative Democracy a Falsifiable Theory? *Annual Review of Political Science*, 11(1), 521–538.

Week 3 – Research Design Issues I (February 3)

- KKV: Chapter 4: Determining What to Observe; Chapter 5: Understanding What to Avoid
- ★ Treisman, D. (2007). What Have We Learned about the Causes of Corruption from Ten Years of Cross-National Empirical Research? *Annual Review of Political Science*, 10(1), 211–244.
- ★ Adcock, R., & Collier, D. (2001). Measurement Validity: A Shared Standard for Qualitative and Quantitative Research. *The American Political Science Review*, 95(3), 529-546.

Week 4 – Research Design Issues II (February 10)

- KKV: Chapter 6: Increasing the Number of Observations
- ★ McDermott, R. (2002). Experimental Methods in Political Science. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 5, 31-61.
- ★ Green, D. P., & Gerber, A.S. (2003). The Underprovision of Experiments in Political Science. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 589(1), 94-112.

Part II: Using Quantitative Methods

Week 5 – Handling Quantitative Data (February 17)

- PE: Chapter 1: The Definition and Measurement of Concepts; Chapter 2: Measuring and Describing Variables; Chapter 3: Proposing Explanations, Framing Hypotheses, and Making Comparisons
- Codebook and Dataset (ANES or DPI, Comparative Agendas Project?)
- 🖱 DataCamp: Introduction to Data in R; Numerical Summaries

Week 6 – Inference and Hypothesis Testing (February 24)

- PE: Chapter 6: Foundations of Statistical Inference; PE: Chapter 7: Tests of Significance and Measures of Association
 - ★ Gerber, A. S., Malhotra, N., Dowling, C. M., & Doherty, D. (2010). Publication Bias in Two Political Behavior Literatures. *American Politics Research* 38(4), pp. 591-613.
 - ★ Monogan III, J. E. (2015). Research Preregistration in Political Science: The Case, Counterarguments, and a Response to Critiques. *Political Science and Politics* 48(3), 425-429.
- 🔗 DataCamp: Foundations of Inference in R

Week 7 – Correlation and Regression (March 2)

- PE: Chapter 8: Correlation and Linear Regression;
 - ★ Choi, S. (2009). The Effect of Outliers on Regression Analysis: Regime Type and Foreign Direct Investment. *Quarterly Journal of Political Science*, 4, pp. 153-165.
 - ★ Signorino, C. S. & Yilmaz, K. (2003). Strategic Misspecification in Regression Models. *American Journal of Political Science*, 47(3), pp. 551-566.
 - ★ Krueger, J. S. & Lewis-Beck, M. S. (2008). *The Political Methodologist*, 15(2), pp. 2-4.
- 🔗 DataCamp: Correlation and Regression in R

Spring Break!

Week 8 – Data Visualization (March 16)

- PE: Chapter 5: Making Controlled Comparisons
 - ★ Wainer, H. (1984). How to Display Data Badly. *The American Statistician*, 38(2):137–147.
 - ★ Kastellec, J. P. & Leoni, E. L. (2007). Using Graphs Instead of Tables in Political Science. *Perspectives on Politics*, 5(4), pp. 755-771.
 - ★ Salkind, N. J., & Shaw, L. A. (2020). Statistics for People Who (Think They) Hate Statistics Using R. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc. Chapter 6: Creating Graphs
- 🔗 DataCamp: Data Visualization in R

Part III: Using Qualitative Methods

Week 9 – Small-N Research (March 23)

- Gerring: Chapter 8: Quantitative and Qualitative Modes of Analysis; Chapter 11: Tradeoffs
- ★ Bennett, A. “Process Tracing and Causal Inference,” in Adcock & Collier eds. (2010). *Rethinking Social Inquiry*.
- ★ Brady, H. E. “Data-Set Observations versus Causal-Process Observations: the 2000 U.S. Presidential Election,” in Adcock & Collier eds. (2010). *Rethinking Social Inquiry*.

Week 10 – Case Studies & Archival Research (March 30)

- Gerring: Chapter 2: Definitions; Chapter 3: Overview of Case Selection; Chapter 4: Descriptive Case Studies; Chapter 5: Causal Case Studies
- ★ Geddes, B. (1990). How the Cases You Choose Affect the Answers You Get: Selection Bias in Comparative Politics. *Political Analysis* 2(1), pp. 131-50.
- ★ “From the Archives.” *Trajectories: Newsletter of the Comparative Historical Section of the ASA*, pp. 2-9.

Week 11 – Interviews (April 6)

- ★ Mosley, L. “Introduction,” in Mosley, L. ed. *Interview Research in Political Science* (2013).
- ★ Lynch, J. F. “Aligning Sampling Strategies with Analytic Goals,” in Mosley, L. ed. *Interview Research in Political Science* (2013).
- ★ Beckmann, M. N., & Hall, R. L. “Elite Interviewing in Washington D.C.,” in Mosley, L. ed. *Interview Research in Political Science* (2013).
- ★ Straus, S. (2006). *The Order of Genocide: Race, Power, and War in Rwanda*. Chapter 5: Why Perpetrators Say They Committed Genocide, pp. 122-152.

Week 12 – Content & Discourse Analysis (April 13)

- ★ Krippendorff, K. (2013). *Content Analysis: An Introduction to its Methodology*, 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc. Chapters 1-4, pp. 10-97.
- ★ Jamal, A. A., Keohane, R. O., Romney, D., & Tingley, D. (2015). Anti-Americanism and Anti-Interventionism in Arabic Twitter Discourses. *Perspectives on Politics*, 13(1), pp. 55-73.
- ★ Fairclough, I. & Fairclough, N. (2012) *Political Discourse Analysis: A Method for Advanced Students*. New York, NY: Routledge. Introduction, pp. 1-16

Part V: Becoming a Researcher

Week 13 – Designing a Research Project (April 20)

- PE: Chapter 10: Conducting Your Own Political Analysis
- ★ Powner, L. C. (2015). *Empirical Research and Writing: A Political Science Student’s Practical Guide*. Chapters 1, 2 & 4.
- ★ Schmitter, P. C. (2008). “The Design of Social & Political Research,” In D. Della Porta & M. Keating (Eds.), *Approaches and Methodologies in the Social Sciences: A Pluralist Perspective*.

Week 14 – Research Design Presentations (April 27)

- Students present their research proposals/designs.
- Students must prepare as audience members by reading their peers’ research design memos in advance and preparing questions.

Research Design Papers Due Monday, May 4th

