

University of Florida
Department of Political Science

Fall 2016

CPO 6096
Fall 2016
Room: 101 Anderson Hall
Time: Tuesday 3 PM to 6 PM

Course Convener: Sebastian Elischer
Office: 212 Anderson Hall
Office Hours: Wednesday 10 AM to 12 PM
Thursday 4 PM to 5 PM.
Email: selischer@ufl.edu

Graduate Seminar: Comparative Qualitative and Mixed Methods

Prerequisites: None. All graduate students are welcome.

Description: The course helps students to develop and improve their qualitative research skills. It encourages students to engage with additional methods in order to advance their understanding of causal inference and to generate higher confidence in their own findings. In class we discuss concepts and measurements, the differences and similarities between qualitative and quantitative methodology, individual and small-N comparisons, appropriate case selection, the challenges of fieldwork and writing as well as a variety of alternative methods, which are compatible with qualitative research.

Following King, Keohane and Verba's landmark 1994 *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research* the discipline engaged in a (at times ferocious) debate about the criteria driving qualitative research. Simultaneously regression analyses and other methods gained prominence in the discipline's leading journals. These developments led to a new awareness of the potential and the pitfalls of different methodologies. Equally important, it led to a renaissance of methodological thinking among qualitative researchers. All political science graduate student must be aware of these debates. Today qualitative and mixed methods are important tools of research. Within APSA the Qualitative and Mixed Methods section is the largest section of the association and many scholars are committed to an ecumenical view of methods. I strongly encourage all student to keep up with the newsletter of the section: <https://www.maxwell.syr.edu/moynihan/cqrm/Newsletters/>.

Assignments: There is very substantial reading for every class. The reading requires critical thinking (on your own) and deliberation (in class). Careful reading and active participation are essential. Please note that there will be several periods during the semester where students are given time to reflect on the readings. There are three types of assignments:

1. During the semester students have to write *three short reaction papers* (1-2 pages). The reaction papers summarize a specific chapter or article we discuss in class. The reaction papers should critically engage with the reading and provide the background for our class discussion. The papers are due at 7 PM on the Monday before our meeting and must be circulated via email to all seminar participants.
2. All students have to give an *oral presentation* in which they evaluate an empirical book-length study, which applies qualitative or mixed methods. The idea is to summarize the study and to critically review its research design (research question, hypothesis, data generation, quality of analyses, relevance of study, implications of findings for the wider field). The purpose of this assignment is to make students apply the material we discuss in class, to familiarize them with some of the empirical literature and to prepare them to improve their own research. I will provide students with a list of suitable books as well as a copy of the book. If students wish to present a book of their choice they have to discuss the suitability of their choice with me during my office hours.
3. A *final research paper* (around ten pages). There are two possibilities. Students either may evaluate the methodological content of a qualitative/ mixed method study. While this is similar to the oral presentation, such a paper will have to engage with general methodological debates at a much deeper level. Students may choose a book (obviously a different one than the one they presented on) or a number of articles (2-3), which deal with the same/ similar topic. Examples of potential topics include democratization, civil wars, regional integration and military coups. Please note that the selection of appropriate studies for the final paper is not an easy task and part of this exercise. Alternatively students may conduct a qualitative study of their own taking into consideration the methodological debates in class. I strongly encourage students to use the final paper to sketch out the research design of their dissertation projects. The main concern should not be with data but with methodological considerations (relevance, hypotheses, how to establish causality, justification for qualitative/ quantitative/ mixed methodology, contribution to the field). We will discuss the final assignment several times throughout the semester. The final assignment is due on *December 13 at 5 PM*.

Grading: participation in class -- 15%; reaction papers -- 30% (3x10%); oral presentation -- 20%; final research paper -- 35%.

Books

The following books are required for purchase as we will use them extensively:

Goertz, Gary (2006). *Social Science Concepts*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Gerring, John (2012). *Social Science Methodology. A Unified Framework*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Box-Steffensmeier, Janet et al. (2010). *The Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology*. New York: Oxford University Press.

I recommend the following books for purchase as we will use parts of them. They occupy a prominent place in the current debate about qualitative methodology and they are useful additions to every personal library:

Gerring, John (2007). *Case Study Research. Principles and Practices*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Coppedge, Michael (2012). *Democratization and Research Methods*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Bennett, Andrew and Jeffrey Checkel (2015). *Process Tracing. From Metaphor to Analytic Tool*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

George, Alexander and Andrew Bennett (2005). *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Edward Schatz (2003). *Political Ethnography. What Immersion Contributes to the Study of Power*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.

Policies on Persons with Disabilities

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. It will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Anyone with a disability should feel free to see me during office hours to make the necessary arrangements.

Policy on Cheating and Plagerism

All students should observe the University of Florida's standards of academic honesty. In the event that a student is found cheating or plagiarizing, he/she will automatically fail the course and will be reported to Student Judicial Affairs and to the Department Chair and Graduate Coordinator for possible dismissal from the program. Acts of plagiarism include:

- Turning in a paper or another assignment that was written by someone else (i.e., by another student, by a research service, or downloaded off the Internet);
- Copying, verbatim, a sentence or paragraph of text from the work of another author without properly acknowledging the source through a commonly accepted citation style and using quotation marks;
- Paraphrasing (i.e., restating in your own words) text written by someone else without citing that author;
- Using a unique idea or concept, which you discovered in a specific reading, without citing that work.

Policy on Late Assignments

I understand that sometimes there are reasons why an assignment cannot be handed in on time. If you see such a situation emerging please contact me *prior to the deadline* of the assignment.

Course Outline

Week 1, August 23: Course Overview

Discussion of syllabus, readings and assignments.

Mahoney, James (2010): After KKV. The New Methodology of Qualitative Research. *World Politics* 62 (1): 120-147.

Week 2, August 30: The Comparative Method

Gerring (2012): 1-58.

Lijphart, Arendt (1971): Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method. *APSR* 65(3): 682-692.

Sartori Giovanni (1991): Comparing and Miscomparing. *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 3(3): 243-257.

Snyder, Richard (2001): Scaling Down: The Subnational Comparative Method. *Studies in Comparative International Development* 36(1): 93-100.

Week 3, September 6: Concepts and Measurement

Goertz, Gary (2006): p.25-129

Coppedge (2012): 1-48.

Gerring (2012): 107-194.

Sartori Giovanni (1970): Concept Misformation in Comparative Politics. *APSR* 64(4): 1033-1053.

Collier, LaPorte and Seawright (2010). Typologies: Forming Concepts and Creating Categorical Variables. In: *The Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology*, edited by Box-Steffensmeier et al., p.152-173.

Week 4, September 13: Qualitative, Quantitative and Multi-Method Designs

Mahoney, James and Gary Goertz (2006): A Tale of Two Cultures: Contrasting Quantitative and Qualitative Research. *Political Analysis* 14: 227-249.

Collier, David and Colin Elman (2008): Qualitative and Multimethod Research. In: *The Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology*, edited by Box-Steffensmeier et al., p.796-813.

Lieberman, Evan (2005): Nested Analysis as a Mixed-Method Strategy for Comparative Research. *APSR* 99(3): 435-452.

Brady, Henry (2008): Causation and Explanation in Social Science. In: *The Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology*, edited by Box-Steffensmeier et al., p.217-249.

Week 5, September 20: No class. Time to think about final assignment and to prepare oral presentations. Students are encourage to discuss their final assignment and oral presentations with me.

Week 6, September 27: Individual and Small-N Comparative Case Studies

Gerring, John (2007): *Case Study Research. Principles and Practices*. New York: Cambridge University, Press, p.1-64.

Rueschemeyer, Dietrich (2003): Can One of a Few Cases Yield Theoretical Gains? In: *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*, edited by Mahoney and Rueschemeyer, p. 305-336.

Levy, Jack (2008): Case Studies: Types, Designs, and Logics of Inference. *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 25 (1): 1-18.

Coppedge (2012): p.49-74.

George, Alexander and Andrew Bennett (2005). *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge: MIT Press, Chapter 7.

Week 7, October 4: Small-N Studies in Practice. Research Design, Scientific Purpose and Case Selection.

Gerring, John (2007): *Case Study Research. Principles and Practices*. New York: Cambridge University, Press, p.68-150.

Collier, David and James Mahoney (1996): Insights and Pitfalls: Selection Bias in Qualitative Research. *World Politics* 49(1): 56-91.

George, Alexander and Andrew Bennett (2005): *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. USA: MIT Press, Chapter 3, 8 and 9.

Goertz (2006): Chapter 6 and 7.

Week 8, October 11: Longitudinal Analysis, Process Tracing and Historically-Grounded Research

Hall, Peter (2008): Systematic Process Analysis: When and How to Use it. *European Management Review* 3: 24-31.

Bennett, Andrew and Checkel, Jeffrey (2015): *Process Tracing. From Metaphor to Analytical Tool*. New York: Cambridge University Press, Chapter 1, 5 and 8.

George, Alexander and Andrew Bennett (2005): *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. USA: MIT Press, Chapter 10 and 11.

Flyvbjerg, Bent (2006): Five Misunderstandings About Case-Study Research. *Qualitative Inquiry* 12 (2): 219-245.

Week 9, October 18: No class. Time to think about final assignment.

Week 10, October 25: Political Ethnography, Field Research and Writing

Schatz, Edward (2009): *Political Ethnography. What Immersion Contributes to the Study of Power*. USA: University of Chicago Press, Chapter 1, 5 and 9.

Kapiszewski, Diana et al. (2015): *Field Research in Political Science*. New York: Cambridge University Press, Chapter 2, 3 and 10.

Emerson et al. (2011): *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. USA: Chicago University Press, Chapter 1, 7 and 8.

Wilson, Edward (2014): *Letters to a Young Scientist*. New York: Liveright Publishing Corporation. Chapters to be announced.

By week 10 everyone must have decided on the topic and nature of their final paper. You must discuss your final assignment during office hours this week. Do not miss the deadline.

Week 11, November 1: Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA)

Schneider, Carsten and Claudius Wagemann (2013). *Set-Theoretic Methods for the Social Sciences. A Guide to Qualitative Comparative Analysis*. New York: Cambridge University Press, Chapter 1 – 4.

Ragin, Charles (2008). *Redesigning Social Inquiry. Fuzzy-Set and Beyond*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, Chapter 1 – 7.

Mahoney, James (2008). Toward a Unified Theory of Causality. *Comparative Political Studies* 41 (4-5): 412-436.

Goertz, Gary (2006). Assessing the Trivialness, Relevance, and Relative Importance of Necessary or Sufficient Conditions in Social Science. *Studies in Comparative International Development* 41 (2): 88-109.

Week 12, November 8: Mixed Methods in Practice

Coppedge, Michael (1999): Thickening Thin Concepts and Theories: Combining Large-N and Small-N in Comparative Politics. *Comparative Politics* 31(4): 465-476.

Latin, David and James Fearon (2008): Integrating Qualitative and Quantitative Methods. In: *The Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology*, edited by Box-Steffensmeier et al., p.756-776.

Rohlfing, Info (2007): What You See and What You Get: Pitfalls and Principles of Nested Analysis in Comparative Research. *Comparative Political Studies* 41(11): 1492-1514.

Week 13, November 15: Experiments

Carlson, Elizabeth (2015): Ethnic Voting and Accountability in Africa: A Choice Experiment in Uganda. *World Politics* 67(2): 353-385.

Dunning, Thad (2012): *Natural Experiments in the Social Sciences. A Design-Based Approach*. New York: Cambridge University Press, p.1-62.

Morton, Rebecca and Kenneth Williams (2008): Experimentation in Political Science. In: *The Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology*, edited by Box-Steffensmeier et al., p.339-356.

Gerber, Alan and Donald Green (2008): Field Experiments and Natural Experiments. In: *The Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology*, edited by Box-Steffensmeier et al., p.357-384.

Week 14, November 22: To be determined.

Week 15: November 29: No class. Time to work on final assignment.

Week 16: December 6: Students present outline of final assignment in class and react to feedback.