

University of Florida
Department of Political Science

Fall 2023
Room: NRN 3035
Class Meeting Time: Wednesday 11.45am-2.45pm

Dr. Sebastian Elischer
Office: AND 212
Office hours: Wednesday: 4pm-6pm
Thursday: 2pm-3pm
Email: selischer@ufl.edu

CPO 6096 Comparative Qualitative and Mixed Methods

Prerequisites: None. All graduate students are welcome.

Description: The course encourages students to develop and improve their qualitative and mixed-methods research skills. The focus of the class is on the qualitative part of mixed-methods research designs. It helps students to advance their understanding of causal inferences and to generate higher confidence in their findings. It further enables students to create and critically review research designs. We discuss concepts and measurements, the differences and similarities between qualitative and quantitative methodology, how to conduct and read small/medium/large-N comparisons, how to engage in appropriate case selection procedures, how to plan fieldwork and how to reconcile the methodological challenges of combining qualitative with quantitative methods.

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 structuring qualitative research. Simultaneously regression analyses and other methods gained prominence in the discipline's leading journals. These developments triggered awareness of the potentials and the pitfalls of different methodologies. Equally important, it led to a renaissance of methodological thinking among qualitative researchers. Today there are recognized limitations to what quantitative social science using the regression model can study. Many interesting and worthwhile questions demand the use of alternative strategies of research or the combination of more than one method. The expansion of large-n studies using the regression model in the last twenty years has made the issue of how to generate legitimate inference and the explicit study of method a central concern of the discipline. Many qualitative social scientists have begun to consider how their styles of work generate valid inferences about the social world, and how their logic of inference departs from that of other modes of inquiry. The centrality of these questions across many schools of social science has been fruitful in thinking about how multiple forms of inquiry complement each other and allow us to make stronger logical inferences about the social world.

All political science graduate student must be aware of these developments independently of their own methodological preferences. 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, deliberation in class, and the transfer/application what is in the readings to your own thinking/research.

1. *Active participation in class and in the class assignments.* In class we discuss the basic content of the required reading. During class assignments, I ask students to apply the content of the reading. Active participation in class discussions and your ability to apply the content of the required reading to applied research designs accounts for 20% of your final grade.
2. *One oral presentation* evaluating an empirical book-length study, which applies qualitative or mixed methods (around 30 minutes including power point slides; a 15-minute Q&A session to follow). In addition to the oral presentation students provide a written analysis summarizing the methodological parameters of the book (three pages, Times New Roman 12, single spaced). The idea is to critically review the book's research design (research question, hypothesis, data generation, quality of analysis, 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 research design skills. I will provide students with a list of suitable books (some suggestions can be found at the end of the document). If students wish to present a book of their choice, they must discuss their choice with me during office hours. The written analysis is due one week after the oral presentation. *Please do not underestimate the importance of this assignment!* Oral presentations take place each week between Week 3 and Week 13. Due to the high enrollment, Week 9 features 3-4 student presentations.
3. *A final research design paper* (around ten pages, Times New Roman 12, single spaced excluding bibliography). For the final assignment, students design a qualitative or mixed-methods study of their own. I strongly encourage all doctoral 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). Students who are not enrolled in a PhD program OR students who do not want to work on your dissertation project should design a hypothetical research design. We will discuss the final assignment several times throughout the semester. We will determine the due date for this assignment during the first two weeks of class. *The deadline for the final paper will be determined during the first three weeks of class.*

Grading: participation in class -- 20%; oral presentation and paper -- 30%; final research design paper -- 50%.

Books

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

Goertz, Gary (2020). *Social Science Concepts and Measurement*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Goertz, Gary and James Mahoney (2013). *A Tale of Two Cultures: Qualitative and Quantitative Research in the Social Sciences*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

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

Schneider, Carsten and Claudius Wagemann (2012). *Set-Theoretic Methods for the Social Sciences. A Guide to Qualitative Comparative Analysis*. New York: Cambridge 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.

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.

Health and Wellness

U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit U Matter, We Care website to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

Counseling and Wellness Center: Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.

Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit the Student Health Care Center website.

University Police Department: Visit UF Police Department website or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website.

GatorWell Health Promotion Services: For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the GatorWell website or call 352-273-4450.

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 Plagiarism

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

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
The outline may be subject to change

Week 1, August 23: Course Overview

Discussion of syllabus, readings and assignments. Discussion about new developments in comparative qualitative research. A chance for you to talk about your research and your reasons to take this class.

Week 2, August 30: No class. American Political Science Association Annual Meeting

Please note that everyone will conduct a small research assignment. The assignment is due electronically by August 30 at 5pm.

Week 3, September 6: A Few Basics

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

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

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

Week 4, September 13: Concepts and Measurements

Goertz, Gary (2020): Social Science Concepts and Measurement, p.1-135

Gerring, John (2012): Social Science Methodology, p.105-139.

Week 5, September 20: Case Selection I

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. Cambridge, MIT Press: 57-63.

Simmons, Erica and Nicholas Smith (2021): Rethinking Comparison, p.1-28.

Slater, Dan, & Ziblatt, Daniel (2013): The Enduring Indispensability of the Controlled Comparison. *Comparative Political Studies*, 46(10), 1301–1327.

Mahoney, J. (1999): Nominal, Ordinal, and Narrative Appraisal in Macrocausal Analysis. *American Journal of Sociology*, 104(4), 1154–1196.

Week 6, September 27: Case Selection II

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

Rohlfing, Ingo (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 7, October 4: Process-Tracing I

Büthe, Tim (2002): Taking Temporality Seriously: Modeling History and the Use of Narratives as Evidence. *American Political Science Review* 96 (3): 481-493.

Collier, David (2011): Understanding Process Tracing. *Political Science and Politics* 44 (4): 823-830.

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

Week 8, October 11: Process-Tracing II

Trampusch, Christine and Bruno Palier (2016): Between X and Y: How Process Tracing Contributes to Opening the Black Box of Causality. *New Political Economy* 21 (5): 437-454.

Mahoney, James and Kathleen Thelen (2015): *Advances in Comparative-Historical Analysis*, p.3-38 and 97-122

Sherry Zaks (2017): Relationships Among Rivals (RAR): A Framework for Analyzing Contending Hypotheses in Process Tracing. *Political Analysis* 25 (3): 344-362.

Week 9, October 18: Time to Work on Your Final Research Paper

We will meet in class, but we will not discuss articles. Given the high enrollment numbers this week is reserved for three to four student presentations.

Week 10, October 25: Field Research

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.

Yom, Sean (2015): From Methodology to Practice: Inductive Iteration in Comparative Research. *Comparative Political Studies* 48 (5): 616-644.

Week 11, November 1: Causal Complexity and Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) I

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 – 2.

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

Ragin, Charles (1999). Using Qualitative Comparative Analysis to Study Causal Complexity. *Health Service Research* 34 (5): 1225-1239.

Week 12, November 8: Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) II

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 3 – 4.

Mahoney, J., & Vanderpoel, R. S. (2015): Set Diagrams and Qualitative Research. *Comparative Political Studies*, 48(1), 65–100.

Week 13, November 15: Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) III

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.

Vis, B. (2012). The Comparative Advantages of fsQCA and Regression Analysis for Moderately Large-N Analyses. *Sociological Methods & Research*, 41(1), 168–198.

Week 14, November 22: No class. Happy Thanksgiving!

Week 15, November 29: Time to work on your final paper (individual meetings are optional)

Week 16, December 6: Time to work on your final paper (individual meetings are optional)

Suitable books for oral presentation

Date and Presenter	Title	Keywords
	Demanding Democracy: Reform and Reaction in Costa Rica and Guatemala by Deborah Yashar	Democratization, Latin America (qualitative-comparative)
	Shaping Strategy. The Civil-Military Politics of Strategic Assessment by Risa Brooks	Civil-Military Relations (qualitative-comparative)
	Defeating Authoritarian Leaders in Postcommunist Countries by Valerie Bunce and Sharon Wolchik	Democratization, Political Contest, Eastern Europe (qualitative-comparative)
	Colonialism and Postcolonial Development. Spanish America in Comparative Perspective by James Mahoney	Democratization, Development, Latin America (qualitative-comparative)
	The Rise of Christian Democracy in Europe by Stathis Kalyvas	State, Democratization, Western Europe (qualitative-comparative)
	Property and Political Order in Africa by Catherine Boone	State, Institutions, Conflict, Sub-Saharan Africa (qualitative-comparative)
	Steadfast Democrats: How Social Forces Shape Black Political Behavior by Ismail White and Chryl Laird	US politics (mixed methods)
	Sacred Foundations by Anna Grzymaka-Busse	European Politics (mixed methods)
	Conservative Parties and the Birth of Democracy by Daniel Ziblatt	Democratization, Western Europe (qualitative-comparative)
	Resisting Backsliding by Laura Gamboa	Autocratic Politics, Latin America (qualitative-comparative)
	Everyday Crusade. Christian Nationalism in American Politics by Eric McDaniel, Irfan Noodruddin, and Allyson Shortle	US politics (mixed methods)
	Revolution and Dictatorship by Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way	Autocratic Politics, Global (qualitative-comparative)
	Jihad & Co by Aisha Ahmad	African Politics (qualitative-comparative)

	From Development to Democracy by Dan Slater and Joseph Wong	Asian Politics (qualitative-comparative)
	The Emancipation of Europe's Muslims by Jonathan Laurence	European Politics (qualitative-comparative)
	Secularism and State Policies toward Religion: The United States, France, and Turkey by Ahmet T. Kuru	Religious politics (qualitative-comparative)