

University of Florida  
Department of Political Science

Fall 2020

Room: online - make sure you can access the zoom platform through canvas

Time: Tuesday 3 PM to 6 PM

Course Convener: Dr. Sebastian Elischer

Office: AND 212

Office hours: Tuesday: 11AM-12 PM (online)

Thursday: 4 PM-6 PM (online)

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 a mixed-methods research design. It helps students to advance their understanding of causal inference and to generate higher confidence in the findings of their own studies. It further enable students to create and critically review research designs. In class we discuss concepts and measurements, the differences and similarities between qualitative and quantitative methodology, individual and small-N comparisons, appropriate case selection procedures, how to plan fieldwork and 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 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 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 application go what is in the readings as part of the assignments. Careful reading and active participation are essential if you want to benefit from this class. There are several assignments, which determine your final grade.

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 the discussion of these assignments 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 Q&A session follows each presentation). In addition to the oral presentation students have to provide a written analysis summarizing the methodological parameters of the book (five 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 (see also the end of this document). If students wish to present a book of their choice, they have to discuss their choice with me during class or office hours. The written analysis is due one week after your presentation in class and should be email to all seminar participants. *Please do not underestimate the importance of this assignment!* All seminar participants will provide feedback about each student presentation. The feedback will influence your grade for this assignment. Oral presentations take place between Week 5 and Week 12.
  
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 if you 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 two weeks of class.*

**Grading:** participation in class -- 20%; oral presentation and paper -- 40%; final research design paper -- 40%.

### **Books**

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

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

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

Goertz, Gary (2017). *Multimethod Research, Causal Mechanisms, and Case Studies*. Princeton: Princeton 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:

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

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.

Cyr, Jennifer (2019). *Focus Groups for the Social Science Researcher*. New York: Cambridge 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 Virtual Classes**

Our class sessions may be audio-visually recorded for students in the class to refer back and for enrolled students who are unable to attend live. Students who participate with their camera engaged or utilize a profile image are agreeing to have their video or image recorded. If you are unwilling to consent to have your profile or video image recorded, be sure to keep your camera off and do not use a profile image. Likewise, students who un-mute during class and participate verbally are agreeing to have their voices recorded. If you are not willing to consent to have your voice recorded during class, you will need to keep your mute button activated and communicate exclusively using the "chat" feature, which allows students to type questions and comments live. The chat will not be recorded or shared. As in all courses, unauthorized recording and unauthorized sharing of recorded materials is prohibited. **Please note: as a general rule I do not intend to audio-visually record classes.**

### **Policy on Cheating and Plagiarism**

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. 4

### **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, September 3: 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.

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

### **Week 2, September 10: The Basics of 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 17: Concepts and Measurement**

Gerring, John and McDermott, Rose (2007): An Experimental Template for Case Study Research. *APSR* 51 (3): 688-701.

Coppedge (2012): 1-48.

Gerring (2012): 107-194.

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

### **Week 4, September 24: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods**

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

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 5, October 1: Case Studies and Theory Development**

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

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

Collier, David and James Mahoney (1996): Insights and Pitfalls: Selection Bias in Qualitative Research. *World Politics* 49(1): 56-91. Gerring, John (2007): *Case Study Research. Principles and Practices*. New York: Cambridge University, Press, p.68-150.

**Week 6, October 8: Longitudinal Analysis, Process Tracing and Historically-Grounded Research 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 7, October 15: Longitudinal Analysis, Process Tracing and Historically-Grounded Research II**

Goertz (2017): Chapter 2 and 3.

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

**Week 8, October 22: 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.

**Week 9, October 29: Causal Complexity and Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) I**

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 10, November 5: 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 1 – 4.

**Week 11, November 12: 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.

Goertz (2017): Chapter 4, 5 and 8.

**Week 12, November 19: Focus Groups**

Cyr, Jennifer (2019). *Focus Groups for the Social Science Researcher*. New York: Cambridge University Press, Chapter 1-5.

**Week 13, December 3: No class. Time to Work on Your Final Assignment**

### Selection of suitable studies for the book presentation

Date and Presenter	Title	Keywords
	Demanding Democracy: Reform and Reaction in Costa Rica and Guatemala by Deborah Yashar	Democratization, Latin America (qualitative-comparative)
	Constitutional Change and Democracy in Indonesia by Donald Horowitz	Democratization, Asia (individual case study)
	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)
	Inside Rebellion by Jeremy Weinstein	Conflict, Insurgency, Sub-Saharan Africa (mixed methods)
	Ethnic Politics and State Power in Africa. The Logic of the Coup-Civil War Trap by Philip Roessler	Conflict, Insurgency, Sub-Saharan Africa (mixed methods)
	Conservative Parties and the Birth of Democracy by Daniel Ziblatt	Democratization, Western Europe (qualitative-comparative)
	The Politics of Resentment: Rural Consciousness in Wisconsin and the Rise of Scott Walker by Katherine Cramer	US politics (mixed methods)



