

**01:790:392**

**Qualitative Methods: Research Design and Analysis  
Department of Political Science, Rutgers University**

**Overview:** This course is an introduction to principles of research design and to the collection and analysis of qualitative data in the social sciences. Many of the methods traditionally considered to be qualitative actually employ quantitative data, and vice versa; and that many of the principles underlying research design, case selection, and the process of data collection are common across empirically-oriented research methods, whether qualitative, quantitative, or formal. Readings encompass theory, how-to, and examples drawn from political science and cognate social science disciplines. This course fulfills the methods requirement for Political Science. There are no prerequisites for the course.

**Learning Objectives:** Over the course of this class, you will:

- Learn fundamental principles and theories. This means you should be familiar with the key characteristics, roles, and importance of qualitative research. You will learn the fundamental principles that undergird qualitative research, and be able to evaluate research using these approaches, and offer feedback accordingly.
- Learn a range of qualitative methods. You will familiarize yourself with and learn to apply a range of methods that fall under the heading of 'Qualitative Methods'. You will learn to compare the different methods throughout the course. Each week you will complete exercises that offer an opportunity to apply, reflect, and refine the different methods we encounter.
- Design research questions to apply your knowledge. You will design and complete the analysis for an original research project with the help of the professor. This will allow you to put your knowledge into practice.

**Course requirements:**

**A. Active and informed participation in seminar discussion (15% of final grade)**

Informed, active participation in seminar is a requirement of the course. Read carefully; take notes; come prepared to discuss and participate. While a variety of lesson formats offer opportunities for different kinds of participation (oral and written, individual and collaborative, large and small group), you will be graded on both the quality and quantity of your required contributions to the seminar. See the rubric at the end of this syllabus for scoring.

**B. Exercises (25% of final grade)**

Brief weekly exercises are designed to give you practice applying the tools we are discussing each week. Before the start of class, complete the exercise for the week. You will need it during class and will also often use it in partner and group work during class. These exercises are graded on a check-check minus-check plus basis for timely completion and will inform your participation from week to week.

Write-ups of the exercises should generally not require more than 3 double-spaced pages. Some students choose to use the exercises to address different aspects of a single substantive problem throughout the course of the semester. This strategy can facilitate a deeper understanding of qualitative methods and research design for a potential final paper topic. However, this is not required. Many students find it helpful to use the written assignments to explore a variety of topics over the course of the semester.

### **C. Feedback (20% of final grade)**

Each week you will be responsible for giving written feedback on one of your classmates' exercises. After class you will collect your partner's exercise and devote at least 30 minutes to giving critical and constructive written feedback on the exercise. What did the author of the exercise do well or poorly? What concepts might she have misunderstood or misapplied, and what could he do to fix the problem? Where possible, point to specific places in the readings to provide further clarification.

### **D. Final Project (40% of final grade)**

For this course you will write one longer papers in which you put into practice the methodological tools covered in the course, selecting from among the topics provided on the syllabus. Papers are due during finals week, and students will meet with the professor to discuss their topic prior to the due date (see syllabus for meeting days). In addition, students will present a sketch of their research design during the last class of the semester. Extensions can be negotiated in advance. Please reach out to the Professor directly via email.

Papers should roughly 15 pages double-spaced. You can think of these papers as half of a journal article: the methods section plus presentation/ discussion of results, with only the barest nod to an introduction, lit review, synthesis or conclusion. These assignments require that you undertake a small piece of original research before you can write the paper.

### **Readings:**

Readings for each week are listed in recommended reading order. Most readings are available on CANVAS or downloadable directly. Please be sure to bring to each class the required readings: books, printouts, easily readable computer files.

#### Required books (available for purchase at Barnes and Noble):

King, Gary, Robert Keohane, and Sidney Verba. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press (1994).

Mosley, Layna, ed. *Interview Research in Political Science*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press (2013).

Schatz, Edward, ed. *Political Ethnography: What Immersion Contributes to the Study of Power*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press (2010),

Yanow, Dvora and Peregrine Schwartz-Shea, eds. *Interpretation and Method: Empirical Methods and the Interpretive Turn*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe (2014).

**\*Readings preceded by an asterix are on the Canvas site**

**Course policies and information:**

- Class citizenship is made up of attendance and participation, which is mandatory. More than two absences will begin to affect your class citizenship grade. Please be in touch with the professor if circumstances arise that will result in more than two absences.
- Submission of all assignments is required to pass the course.
- Please note the University's policy on disability accommodations. I will gladly make accommodations for any student who needs them, though students must work with the Office of Disability Services (dsoffice@echo.rutgers.edu). Their website is at <http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/>
- Please note the University's policy on academic integrity and plagiarism: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy/>

I especially recommend the resources under "For Students" in the upper right corner of the page. I encourage you to discuss the course readings and the issues that they raise with your classmates. But all work turned in with your name on it must be entirely your own. You are responsible for familiarizing yourself with, and abiding by, the University's academic integrity policy. (See also <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-tutorial/>.) Violations of academic integrity will be handled personally by the professor and prosecuted through the Office of Student Conduct.

- Please note the University's religious observance policy: <https://scheduling.rutgers.edu/scheduling/religious-holiday-policy>

You should consider yourself excused when class falls on a religious holiday that you observe. You should inform the professor in advance, and you must make up any class notes or assignments that you miss.

- Announcements and course information will be posted to the course Canvas site and at times sent via email, through Canvas, to the class email list. The system automatically sends email to your official Rutgers address. If you don't know this email address, please find out and be sure to check it regularly.

**SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

## **Week 1**

### **Introduction to the Course**

\*Course Syllabus [available on CANVAS site]

## **Week 2**

### **Epistemology, ontology, methodology**

\*King, Gary, Robert Keohane, and Sidney Verba. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton: Princeton University Press (1994). Chapter 1 and pp. 34-49.

\*Brady, Henry and David Collier, eds., *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield (2010), pp. 1-10, 15-26, 177-196, and skim Glossary.

Yanow, Dvora. "Neither Rigorous Nor Objective? Interrogating Criteria for Knowledge Claims in Interpretive Science." In Yanow, Dvora and Peregrine Schwartz-Shea, eds. *Interpretation and Method: Empirical Methods and the Interpretive Turn*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe (2014), Chapter 6.

\*Mona Lena Krook. *Teaching Gender and Politics: Feminist Methods in Political Science*. *Qualitative Methods* 7:1 (2009), pp. 24-29.

*Epistemology Exercise Due in Class*

## **Week 3**

### **Concepts, indicators, measures**

\*Gerring, John. "What Makes a Concept Good? A Criterial Framework for Understanding Concept Formation in the Social Sciences." *Polity* 31:3 (1999), pp. 357-393.

\*Sartori, Giovanni. "Concept Misformation in Comparative Politics." *The American Political Science Review* 64:4 (1970), pp. 1033-46 [you can skim the rest].

\*Adcock, Robert, and David Collier. "Measurement Validity: A Shared Standard for Qualitative and Quantitative Research." *American Political Science Review* 95:3 (2001), pp. 529-547.

*Concept Formation Exercise Due in Class*

## **Week 4**

### **Explanation**

King, Gary, Robert Keohane, and Sidney Verba. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton: Princeton University Press (1994), Chapter 3.

\*Mahoney, James. "Strategies of Causal Inference in Small-N Analysis." *Sociological Methods and Research* 28:4 (2000), pp. 387-424.

\*Falleti, Tulia and Julia Lynch. "Context and Causal Mechanisms in Political Research." *Comparative Political Studies* 42:9 (2009), pp. 1143-1166.

*Explanation Exercise Due in Class*

## **Week 5** **Case Studies**

\*Gerring, John. "What is a Case Study and What is it Good For?" *APSR* 98:2 (2004), pp.341-354.

\*George, Alexander and Andrew Bennett. *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press (2004), Chapter 4.

King, Gary, Robert Keohane, and Sidney Verba. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton: Princeton University Press (1994), Chapter 4.

*Case Study Exercise Due in Class*

## **Week 6** **Case Studies Cont'd**

\*Collier, David, James Mahoney, and Jason Seawright. "Claiming Too Much: Warnings about Selection Bias" RSI Supplemental Chapter 1.

\*MacLean, Lauren Morris. *Informal Institutions and Citizenship in Rural Africa*. (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2010). Chapter 1.

\*Tarrow, Sidney. "The Strategy of Paired Comparison: Toward a Theory of Practice." *Comparative Political Studies* 43:2 (2010), pp. 230-259.

*Case Study Exercise Revision Due in Class*

## **Week 7** **Process tracing**

\*Beach, Derek and Rasmus Brun Pedersen, *Process-Tracing Methods: Foundations and Guidelines* (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 2019).

\*Collier, David. "Process Tracing: Introduction and Exercises." To Accompany Rethinking Social Inquiry, 2nd Ed. Beta Version (September 22, 2010).

\*Goertz, Gary and James Mahoney. "A Tale of Two Cultures: Causal Mechanisms and Process Tracing." *Qualitative & Multi-Method Research* 8:2 (2010), pp. 24-30.

*Process Tracing Exercise Due in Class*

## **Week 8**

### **History and archival research**

\*Lustick, Ian. "History, Historiography, and Political Science: Multiple Historical Records and the Problem of Selection Bias." *American Political Science Review* 90:3 (1996), pp. 605-18.

\*Bercovitch, Jacob. "Social Research and the Study of Mediation: Designing and Implementing Systematic Archival Research." *International Negotiation* 9:3 (2005), pp. 415-428.

*Archive Exercise Due in Class*

## **Week 9**

### **In-depth interviewing**

\*Soss, Joe. "Talking Our Way to Meaningful Explanations: A Practice-Centered View of Interviewing for Interpretive Research." Chapter 8 in Dvora Yanow and Peregrine Schwartz-Shea, eds. *Interpretation and Method: Empirical Research Methods and the Interpretive Turn*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe (2014), pp.161-182.

*Interview Exercise Due in Class*

## **Week 10**

### **Ethnography and participant observation**

\*Wedeen, Lisa. "Reflections on Ethnographic Work in Political Science." *Annual Review of Political Science* 13 (2010), pp. 255–272.

Pachirat, Timothy. "The Political in Political Ethnography: Dispatches from the Kill Floor." In Schatz, Edward, ed. *Political Ethnography: What Immersion Contributes to the Study of Power*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press (2010), Chapter 6.

Pader, Ellen. "Seeing with an Ethnographic Sensibility: Explorations Beneath the Surface of Public Policies." In Yanow, Dvora and Peregrine Schwartz-Shea, eds. *Interpretation and Method: Empirical Methods and the Interpretive Turn*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe (2014), Chapter 10.

*Ethnography Exercise Due in Class*

### **Week 11**

#### **Field Experiments, Natural Experiments, and Quasi-Experiments**

\*Campbell, Donald and H. Laurence Ross, "The Connecticut Crackdown on Speeding: Time-Series Data in Quasi-Experimental Analysis." *Law & Society Review* 3:1 (1968), pp. 33-54.

\*McDermott, Rose. "Experimental Methods in Political Science." *Annual Review of Political Science* V. Palo Alto, CA: Annual Reviews (2002), pp. 31-61.

\*Dunning, Thad. "Natural and Field Experiments: The Role of Qualitative Methods." *Qualitative Methods* 6:2 (2008), pp. 17-23.

*Experiment Exercise Due in Class*

### **Week 12**

#### **Content analysis and discourse analysis**

\*Shapiro, Gilbert and John Markoff. "A Matter of Definition." In Carl Roberts, ed. *Text Analysis for the Social Sciences: Methods for Drawing Statistical Inferences from Texts and Transcripts*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum (1997), Chapter 1.

\*Herrera, Yoshiko, Bear Braumoeller et al. "Symposium: Discourse/Content Analysis." *Qualitative Methods* 2:1 (2004). Contributions by Hardy et al., Crawford, Laffey and Weldes, Hopf, Neuendorf.

*Content Analysis Exercise Due in Class*

### **Week 13**

\*\*\*Final Project Meetings with Professor\*\*\*

*Methods Outline for Final Paper Due in Class*

### **Week 14**

\*\*\*Final Project Meetings with Professor\*\*\*

*Thesis Statement and Introduction Due in Class*

**Week 15**  
**Course Wrap-Up**

\*\*Final Project due during scheduled course final\*\*

**Qualitative Research Methods**  
**Attendance and Participation Rubric**

**15%- Attendance and Participation.** Students are expected to attend each class meeting and be an active participant. Active participation involves engaging in class discussion, as well as participating in interactive class exercises.

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Assessment Performance Level</b>	<b>Points</b>
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student actively follows along with in-class activities and exercises, and collaborates with other students during class when asked to work in groups, often taking a leadership role.</li> <li>• Student provides constructive comments or questions in a timely manner without trying to dominate discussion.</li> <li>• Comments and questions are substantive that show the student is actively engaged in class material.</li> </ul>	90-100
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student actively follows along with in-class, activities and exercises, and collaborates with other students during class when asked to work in groups, offering contributions and questions to help solve problems, but often does not take a leadership role.</li> <li>• Student provides constructive comments or questions during class, but not on a regular basis.</li> <li>• Comments and questions are substantive that show the student is actively engaged in class material.</li> </ul>	80-89
C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student generally follows along with in-class activities and exercises.</li> <li>• Student may raise hand to offer questions or comments occasionally but responses do not show the student has been engaged with the material.</li> <li>• In group exercises, the student collaborates constructively but allows others to lead the work. Student offers contributions, but generally only those that are clarifying.</li> </ul>	70-79
D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student just sometimes follows along with in-class activities and exercises.</li> <li>• Student demonstrates insufficient regard for the contributions of others, such as by ignoring or dominating others in class discussion or group work.</li> <li>• In group work, student only occasionally provides contributions (comments/questions) toward helping to solve the problem or helping others solve the problem in small group exercises.</li> </ul>	60-69
F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student is disruptive in class, such as offering inappropriate comments or disparaging remarks toward other students.</li> <li>• Student generally does not engage, does not comment during class discussion, or actively follow along with in-course activities or exercises.</li> </ul>	59 or less

Each unexcused absence will result in a 5% penalty to your attendance grade,