

PLSC 308: Introduction to Political Research

Christopher Zorn

January 19, 2016

The Scientific Model

“The game of science is, in principle, without end. He who decides one day that scientific statements do not call for any further test, and that they can be regarded as finally verified, retires from the game.”

– Karl Popper, *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*

The Scientific Model

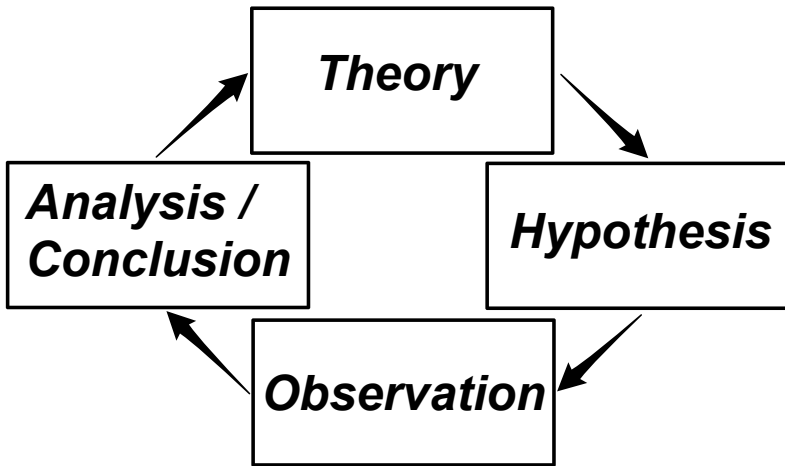
There's no single model of scientific reasoning / inquiry.

Some common characteristics:

- Reality is uncertain.
- → Reasoning is probabilistic
- → Inquiry is ongoing.
- Inquiry proceeds via falsification.

How do we do this?

(One) Scientific Approach



The Scientific Model: Consequences

- Importance of patterns/trends over cases
- Emphasis on (measurable) outcomes
- Emphasis on the positive over the normative
- Importance of method

Key Components of Empirical Research

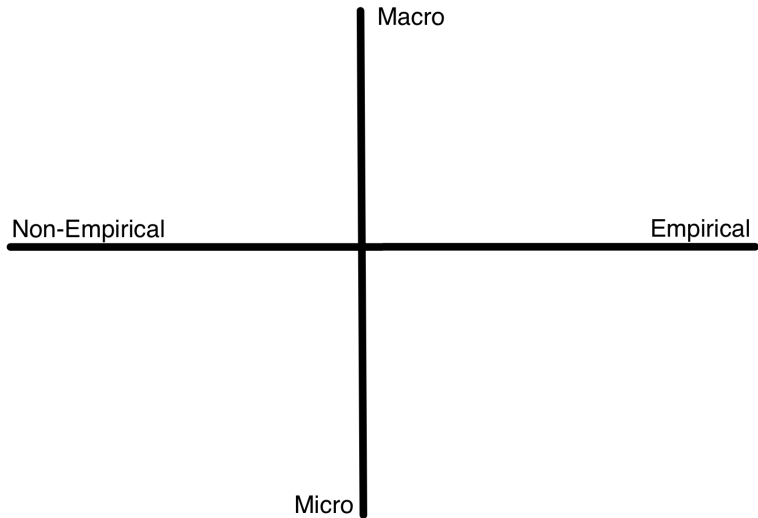
- Research *Design*
- *Operationalization*
- *Measurement* / Data Collection
- Data *Analysis*
- *Communication* of Findings

(U.S.) Political Science: An Overview

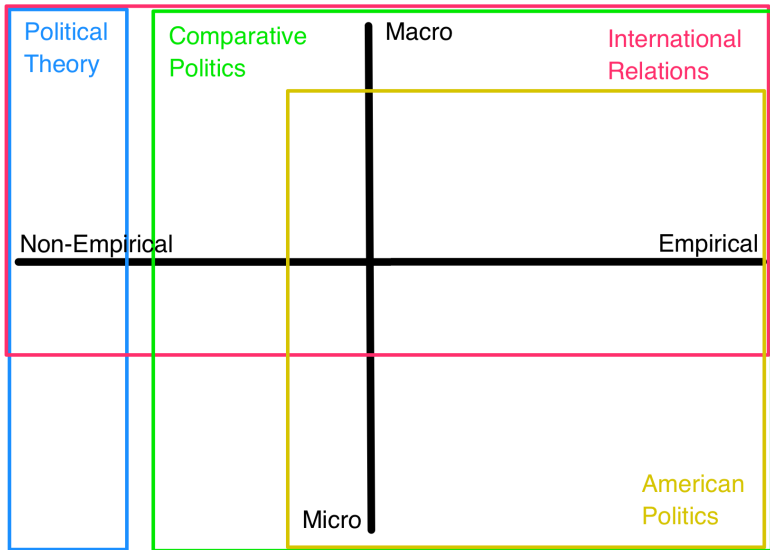
Four “subfields”:

- Political Theory
- International Relations
- Comparative politics
- American Politics

Political Science: An Overview



Political Science: An Overview



Political Science: An Alternative View

