

Instructor: Milos Popovic, Vigyazo Ferenc 2, Phone: +36 30 2866184

Office Hours: Fridays 14:00-15:00, or by appointment

Course Outline: This course provides an introduction into qualitative research design and methods. Its aim is to present students with the tools to conceptualize their theses in terms of research questions and design, methodology, data collection and qualitative analysis. In particular, we will discuss concept measurement, theories and hypotheses, as well as methods that can be used when comparing a small number of cases, such as process-tracing and case study analysis. We will also examine and work with some of the tools for qualitative research, including interviewing and content analysis.

The aims of this course are:

- to give an overview of a wide range of methodological tools,
- to help you understand where and why some methods are used in existing research and publications,
- and to prepare you for choosing an approach that is most appropriate for your research project.

The sessions will include some lectures introducing the various methodological approaches and, most importantly, workshop-style seminars where you will assess methods used in existing published research and have an opportunity to prepare for your own research.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of the course, you should be able to:

- evaluate comparative and qualitative methodological approaches in IR research,
- be aware of the range of qualitative approaches to research,
- understand the strengths and weaknesses of different methodological approaches, and
- choose and justify the methodological approach for your MA thesis.

Evaluation: Attendance at the seminars and workshops is essential. If you will be unable to attend a seminar, please inform the instructor in advance via email. There will be two assignments during the semester. The first assignment is collaborative work and will ask students to evaluate the methodological approaches in a selected published research. The second assignment can be done individually or in pair, and requires student(s) to conduct a semi-structured interview on a theoretical or practical issue pertaining to international relations with a journalist, expert policymaker etc. Students should submit a written transcript of the interview, a typed version of notes taken during and after the interview, and a write-up analysis (the analysis should not exceed 1000 words). Towards the end of the course we will conduct a workshop where students will present their research topic, including their research aim and question, the methodological approach that will be used, and information or data they will need to conduct the research project. The final paper is a written statement (1500-2000 words) that summarizes students' research aim and question, (briefly) justifies why they do it, and summarizes the methodological approach that will be used in their thesis. Depending on the research approach, the methodological section will have different requirements, but students should clarify what evidence, information, or data they will need to conduct the research project. More details about the content will be provided in class.

Grading:

Participation	10%
Assignments	30%
Workshop	20%
Final Paper	40%

Important Notice: Students are expected to recognize and uphold the standards of academic honesty. Failure to comply with this requirement will result in automatic failure in this course and incur additional disciplinary action on higher levels.

Class Schedule:

Week	Class	Topic	Required Readings
1	1	Concepts and measurement	Adcock and Collier (2001)
2	2	Theories and hypotheses	Van Evera (2001: ch 1)
3	3	Process-tracing, causality	Bennett and Checkel (2012)
4	4	Case studies and case selection	Van Evera (1997), George and Bennett (2005: ch 5)
5	5	Conducting case studies	TBA
6	6	Content analysis	Grimmer and Stewart (2013)
7	7	Interviewing	Leech (2002), Rivera et al. (2002)
8	8	Doing fieldwork	APSA (2004)
9	9	WORKSHOP	-
10	10	WORKSHOP	-

Extra Help: Do not hesitate to come to my office during office hours or by appointment to discuss a homework problem or any aspect of the course.

Deadlines:

Assignment 1	Monday of Week 3
Assignment 2	Friday of Week 6
Workshop	Wednesday of Week 7/8
Final paper	TBA

Books:

George, Alexander and Andrew Bennett. 2005. *Case studies and theory development in the social sciences*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

Van Evera, Stephen. 1997. *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Articles:

Adcock, Robert and David Collier. 2001. "Measurement Validity: A Shared Standard for Qualitative and Quantitative Research," *American Political Science Review*. 95: 529-546.

APSA. 2004. Symposium: Field Work. *Qualitative Methods* 2(1): 1-15.

Bennett, Andrew and Jeffrey Checkel. 2012. "Process Tracing: From Philosophical Roots to Best Practices." Simons Papers in Security and Development 21/2012, School for International Studies, Simon Fraser University: Vancouver.

Grimmer, J., and B.M. Stewart. 2013. "Text as data: The promise and pitfalls of automatic content analysis methods for political texts". *Political Analysis* 21(3):267-297.

Leech, Beth. 2002. "Asking Questions: Techniques for Semistructured Interviews." *Political Science and Politics* 35: 665-668.

Rivera, Sharon Werning, Polina Kozyreva and Eduard Sarovskii. 2002. "Interviewing Political Elites: Lessons from Russia." *Political Science and Politics* 35: 683-688.