

POLI 2000: Designing Political Research

Yue Hu

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Office Hours: 12:30 – 15:30 M

Office: 313 Shaeffer Hall

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Class Hours: 15:30 – 16:45 MW

Class Room: 105 EPB

Overview

Why do candidates win elections? Why do states get involved in international crises and wars? Why do states cooperate on transnational problems like climate change? What explains differences in how countries treat their citizens? What explains the choices of violent non-state actors like terrorists? There are just some of the questions that political scientists study. The goal of this course is for you to understand how political scientists study these questions. This course will introduce students to political science research and the many different ways that research is undertaken.

This class will help students understand how social scientists study political phenomena. You will learn how to develop causal explanations about politics and society, develop testable research hypotheses, and design different approaches to empirically studying these theories. Emphasis will be on an active hands-on learning environment (TILE classroom). You will also be able to more fully understand research that is produced in Political Science.

Requirements

I will base your grade for the course on your performance in the four areas below. For each component of the course grade, I assign a numerical score. I then calculate the course grade with the weighted average of the component scores. Scores of 90-100 correspond to A, 80-89 to B, etc., with pluses and minuses for the top and bottom third of each decile.

1. Class attendance and performance (30%: 10% participation + 10% leading discussion + 10% attendance). Regarding participation, I am looking for you to show that you have read and critically evaluated the assigned readings and are engaged with our in-class discussions. Each student will
2. In-class quizzes (24%)
3. Midterm examination (20%)
4. Final examination (26%)

Readings

Required textbook:

Earl R. Babbie. *The Practice of Social Research*. 13th ed. Australia: Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2012. ISBN: 9781133049791 1133049796.

S. Van Evera. *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science*. Cornell paperbacks. Cornell University Press, 1997. ISBN: 9780801484575.

Week 1 (2017-08-21~2017-08-27): Being a Political Scientist

Robert O Keohane. “Political Science as a Vocation”. *PS: Political Science and Politics* 42.02 (2009), pp. 359–363.

John S Dryzek. “Revolutions without Enemies: Key Transformations in Political Science”. *American Political Science Review* 100.04 (2006), pp. 487–92.

Recommended:

Max Weber. “Politics as a Vocation”. 1968.

Max Weber. “Science as a Vocation”. In: *Science and the Quest for Reality*. Springer, 1946, pp. 382–394.

Week 2 (2017-08-28~2017-09-03): Being Scientific

Babbie (2012), pp.1-27, 112-120.

Recommended:

Imre Lakatos and Musgrave Alan. “Falsification and the Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes”. *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge* (1970), pp. 91–180.

Week 3 (2017-09-04~2017-09-10): What’s A Good Question (Labor Day)

Barbara Geddes. “Big Questions, Little Answers: How the Questions You Choose Affect the Answer You Get”. In: *Paradigms and Sand Castles: Theory Building and Research Design in Comparative Politics*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010. Chap. 2, pp. 27–88.

Van Evera (1997), pp.97-99.

Week 4 (2017-09-11~2017-09-17): How to Find Research Question

Babbie (2012), pp.91-112.

Charles C Ragin and Lisa M Amoroso. *Constructing Social Research: The Unity and Diversity of Method*. Pine Forge Press, 2010. (Chapter 1, 2)

Week 5 (2017-09-18~2017-09-24): Concepts

Babbie (2012), pp.165-177.

David Collier and Steven Levitsky. “Democracy with Adjectives: Conceptual Innovation in Comparative Research”. *World politics* 49.03 (1997), pp. 430–451.

David Collier and James E Mahon. “Conceptual “Stretching” Revisited: Adapting Categories in Comparative Analysis”. *American Political Science Review* 87.04 (1993), pp. 845–855.

Giovanni Sartori. “Concept misformation in comparative politics”. *American political science review* 64.04 (1970), pp. 1033–1053.

Recommended:

Michael Barnett and Raymond Duvall. “Power in International Politics”. *International Organization* 59.01 (2005), pp. 39–75.

Peter Bachrach and Morton S Baratz. “Two Faces of Power”. *American Political Science Review* 56.04 (1962), pp. 947–952.

Week 6 (2017-09-25~2017-10-01): Measurement

Babbie (2012), pp.177-194, 197-223.

Recommended:

Jason Seawright and David Collier. “Rival Strategies of Validation Tools for Evaluating Measures of Democracy”. *Comparative Political Studies* 47.1 (Jun. 14, 2017), pp. 111–138. (Visited on 06/14/2017).

Week 7 (2017-10-02~2017-10-08): Theory

Van Evera (1997), pp.7-50.

Midterm Review

Week 8 (2017-10-09~2017-10-15): Experimental Logic and Design

Midterm.

Babbie (2012), pp.271-291.

Recommended:

Alex Mintz, Steven B Redd and Arnold Vedlitz. “Can We Generalize from Student Experiments to the Real World in Political Science, Military Affairs, and International Relations?” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 50.5 (Jun. 14, 2017), pp. 757–776. (Visited on 06/14/2017).

Alex Mintz. “Foreign Policy Decision Making in Familiar and Unfamiliar Settings”. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 48.1 (2004), pp. 91–104.

Week 9 (2017-10-16~2017-10-22): Principles of Case Study

Jack S Levy. “Case Studies: Types, Designs, and Logics of Inference”. *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 25.1 (2008), pp. 1–18.

John Gerring. “What is a Case Study and What is it Good for?” *American Political Science Review* 98.02 (2004), pp. 341–354.

Adam Przeworski and Henry Teune. “Research Design”. In: *The Logic of Comparative Social Inquiry*. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1970, pp. 31–46.

Recommended:

Benjamin A Most and Harvey Starr. “Theoretical and Logical Issues in the Study of International Diffusion”. *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 2.4 (1990), pp. 391–412.

Week 10 (2017-10-23~2017-10-29): Case Study in Practice

Van Evera (1997), pp.49-88.

Barbara Geddes. “How the Cases You Choose Affect the Answers You Get: Selection Bias in Comparative Politics”. *Political analysis* 2.1 (1990), pp. 131–150.

Recommended:

Alexander De Juan and Jan Henryk Pierskalla. “Civil War Violence and Political Trust: Microlevel Evidence from Nepal”. *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 33.1 (2016), pp. 67–88.

Week 11 (2017-10-30~2017-11-05): A Glance of Other Small-N Methods

Babbie (2012), pp.295-321.

Giovanni Capoccia and R Daniel Kelemen. “The Study of Critical Junctures: Theory, Narrative, and Counterfactuals in Historical Institutionalism”. *World Politics* 59.03 (Jun. 14, 2017), pp. 341–369. (Visited on 06/14/2017).

Andrew Bennett. “Process Tracing: A Bayesian Perspective”. In: *Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology*. Ed. by Janet Box Steffensmeier, Henry Brady and David Collier. 2008, pp. 702–21.

Clifford Geertz. “Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture”. *Readings in the Philosophy of Social Science* (1994), pp. 213–31.

Week 12 (2017-11-06~2017-11-12): Understanding Large-N Analyses

Babbie (2012), pp.415-438.

Wenfang Tang, Yue Hu and Shuai Jin. “Affirmative Inaction: Language Education and Labor Mobility among China’s Muslim Minorities”. *Chinese Sociological Review* (4 2016), pp. 346–66.

Emilie M Hafner-Burton and Alexander H Montgomery. “Power Positions: International Organizations, Social Networks, and Conflict”. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 50.1 (2006), pp. 3–27.

Week 13 (2017-11-13~2017-11-19): Professionalization

Babbie (2012), pp.498-519.

Van Evera (1997), pp.99-111.

Apple talk

Ted talk

Week 14 (2017-11-20~2017-11-26): Thanks Giving Week

Week 15 (2017-11-27~2017-12-03): Presentation

Week 16 (2017-12-04~2017-12-10): Presentation

Week 17 (2017-12-11~2017-12-17): Final Week

Babbie, Earl R. 2012. *The Practice of Social Research*. 13th ed. Australia: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

Van Evera, S. 1997. *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science*. Cornell Paperbacks. Cornell University Press.