



Hello, Political Science!

Design Political Research: Week 1

Yue Hu

Overview

Who am I?

- A Comparativist
- A Methodologist
- An Expert in Chinese Politics



Why taking this class?

- Because you can become:
 - *The scientist outside the laboratory, the master of social complexity, the protector of political truth, and the breaker of rumors and conspiracies*
 -



Why taking this class (seriously)?

- Learn how to conduct research in **political science**.
- Learn how to **evaluate** arguments, evidence, and data.
- Contribute to your *degree*.

Some highlights.

- No final exam!
- Only one response paper!
- Only one final project!

More details?

- Let's go through the [syllabus](#).



Let's call it for a day!

Being a Political Scienist

Who are the political scientists?

- Are they?



- How about them?



- Or them?



- **NONE OF THEM!**

These are!



Why are they political scientists?

- They believe that they are scientists ($\text{III} \neg \omega \neg$).



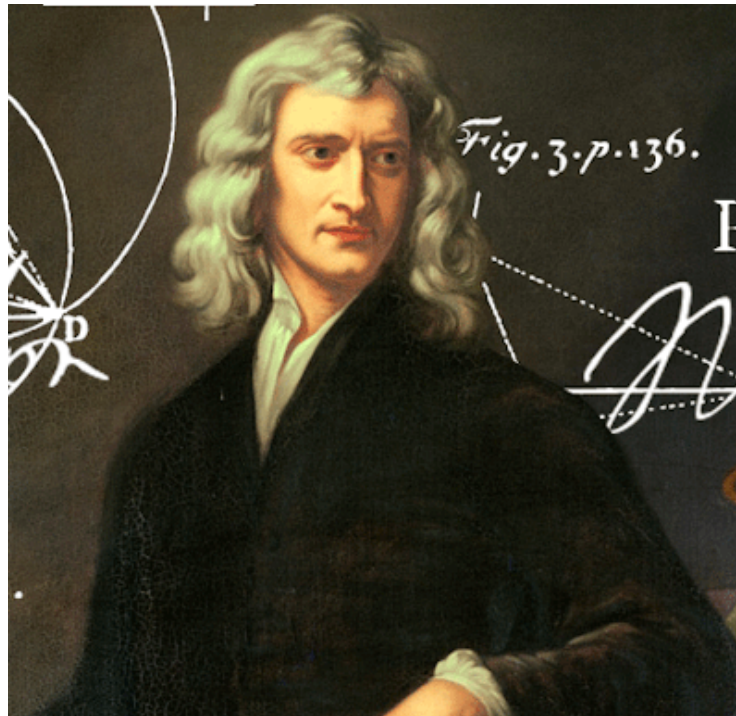
- They follow the same understanding of political science.
- They follow the same principles and procedures to study politics.

What's political science?

- Politics: attempts
 - Organize human groups to determine internal rules
 - Compete and cooperate with other organized groups
 - Reactions to such attempts.

What's Science?

- Can we use the criteria from social science?



- Science: Procedure
 - Publicly known
 - Make and evaluate inferences
 - Self-conscious application of methods that are themselves subject to public evaluation.
- Political Science: *The study of politics through the procedures of science.*

How to do it correctly?

Step I : Ask a question

- How did the Charlottesville event happen?
- Commonly acceptable national health plan?
- How dare Kim Jong-un go against the whole world?
- Are they proper questions?



- Yes and no
 - Puzzle: what we observe **does not fit** with our preconceptions based on established theory.
 - Substantively important: **Whose mind are you going to change about what?**

Step II: Clarify your object

- Conceptualization
 - Explicit
 - Consistent

Step III: Inference

- Descriptive inference:

Established premises + a particular set of facts → general conclusions.

- e.g., Democratic Peace, IOs reduce conflicts
- Reliability
- Validity

- Causal Inference: Counterfactual situation

- e.g., ?
- Difficult

Step IV: Presentation

- Structure
 - Title:
 - "The effect of IGOs on interstate conflict"?
 - Key point + Argument
 - "Mediating interstate conflicts: Regional vs. global international organizations"
 - Abstract: short + powerful
 - Following professional presenting procedure
 - Clear words and plain languages

A good political science research?

- They should look like her/him!



Who can do it right?

William Howard Taft vs. Robert Maynard Hutchins

