

Claremont Graduate University Department of Politics & Policy
PP 485: Qualitative and Mixed Methods Research
Spring 2016

Time: Thursdays, 4-7pm
Location: McManus 35

Contact Information

Course Instructor: Professor Melissa Rogers
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Office hours: Thursday, 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., or by appointment

Course Description

This course introduces students to qualitative research methods, general research design principles, and mixed method approaches to social science. The main goal of the course is to provide students with knowledge on the benefits and limitations of the different research methods as well as to teach students how to best choose methods that fit the research question at hand. The course will also provide students with tools that are necessary to apply qualitative and mixed methods approaches to their own research. The first part of the course introduces research design principles, especially inference and causality. The next part of the course addresses specific qualitative methods, such as case studies, interviews, focus groups, fieldwork, participant observation, and content analysis. The third part of the course discusses how to mix methods appropriately within research to gain maximum leverage on causal analysis.

This course fulfills one of the specialized tools requirements for students in the Department of Politics and Policy. If you are a student in another school, please check with your advisor for whether they will accept this class as part of your program.

Background Preparations (Prerequisites)

While there are no formal prerequisites, a background in statistical methods such as that attained in PP 481 is helpful.

Texts and Journal References Books:

The following books are available at the Huntley Bookstore or on Amazon.com.

- Gerring, John. 2011. *Social Science Methodology: A Unified Approach*. Cambridge University Press. Available for Ipad or Kindle on Amazon for \$20.
- Weller, Nicholas and Jeb Barnes. *Finding Pathways: Mixed-method Research for Studying Causal Mechanism*. Cambridge University Press. Available online on library site.
- George, Alexander L. and Andrew Bennett. 2005. *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. Print or ebook on Amazon.
- King, Gary, Robert Keohane and Sidney Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry*. Princeton University Press. 2 copies in the library, available used or ebook on Amazon.
- Mosley, Layna. 2013. *Interview Research in Political Science*. Cornell University Press. Available online on library site.

Journal articles and other book chapters are listed in the list of weekly readings section. Unless otherwise stated, journal articles can be accessed through the library website. Chapters from other books will be available in the resources section of the Sakai class website.

Course Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Understand the research approaches to establishing causality in social sciences
2. Understand different types of qualitative designs and their respective strengths and limitations.
3. Think critically about qualitative designs.
4. Weigh the ethics involved in research involving human subjects and fill out a human subjects protocol.
5. Develop a mixed method research design with a qualitative approach.
6. Code and analyze qualitative data.

Course Requirements & Assignments:

Homework-50%

We will have bi-weekly homework assignments. The assignment listed in a given week will be due by 1:00 p.m. on the following Tuesday. This will give people time to read each other's assignments before the next class. Each day an assignment is late (which starts at 1:05 on Tuesday), you lose 1/3 of a grade.

Qualitative or Mixed Methods Paper-25%

You are required to submit a qualitative research paper. The paper should use one of the qualitative methodologies learned in Part II of the course. The paper should not exceed 20 double spaced pages (excluding appendices), and you will present the paper to the class.

Course Exam- 25%

On April 7th you will take an at home exam. The exam will ask you to apply the research design, causality, and the qualitative methods frameworks to specific substantive questions. The point of this will be to evaluate your process in answering the question in a rigorous manner. We will discuss the format in detail on March 31st.

Optional Assignments for Method Students: For each week that we are covering a particular method, find an article that uses the given method. Summarize the article and discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the given method, especially with respect to internal and external validity. These assignments are optional, but may help with preparation for the qualifying exam.

Attendance

Students are expected to attend all classes. Students who are unable to attend class must seek permission for an excused absence from the course instructor. Unapproved absences or late attendance for two or more classes may result in a lower grade. If a student has to miss a class, he or she should arrange to get notes from a fellow student and is strongly encouraged to meet with the professor or teaching assistant to obtain the missed material.

Scientific and Professional Ethics

The work you do in this course must be your own. Feel free to build on, react to, criticize, and analyze the ideas of others but, when you do, make it known whose ideas you are working with. You must explicitly acknowledge when your work builds on someone else's ideas, including ideas of classmates, professors, and authors you read. If you ever have questions about drawing the line between others' work and your own, ask the course professor who will give you guidance. Any violations of academic integrity will be reported to the provost.

Grading

Letter Grade	Grade Point	Description	Learning Outcome
A	4.0	Complete mastery of course material and additional insight beyond course material	Insightful
B	3.0	Complete mastery of course material	Proficient
C	2.0	Gaps in mastery of the course material; not at level expected by the program	Developing
U	0.0	Unsatisfactory	Ineffective

Expectations and Logistics

The format of the class will vary depending on the topics in a given week. Some weeks will be mixed with lecture and discussion. Other weeks may have a combination of presentations, group activities, and discussion. It is expected that you will have completed and thought carefully about the reading before attending class. It is incumbent on every participant in the class (instructor and students alike) to maintain an environment conducive to learning. We should always remember that people bring differences with them into the classroom and that these differences should be respected. It is imperative that each of us maintain civility and professionalism when asking questions and making comments.

Since this is a seminar, participants should be talking to each other, rather than to computer screens. Typing away on a computer can be distracting to the conversation, so try to keep it to a minimum. It is fine to take notes on a computer or tablet if the instructor is lecturing, but note taking is not generally necessary during the discussion portion of class. It is expected that you are not using the computer for other activities during class (e.g. checking your face book page).

Please respect your fellow classmates—be on time, don't be disruptive, and really listen to them. In any given week, I will ask a subset of students to circulate their homework assignment with the class on Canvas. The goal will be to discuss the particular assignments at the start of class. Late assignments will lose 1/3 of a grade each day they are late, unless there is a documented emergency.

I will post information for the course on Canvas. Please check it often.

Any student with a documented disability (physical, learning, or psychological) needing academic accommodations should speak with me in the first few weeks of the course so we can make proper arrangements for course assignments.

Important Dates

Western Political Science Association Conference: March 24

Course Exam: April 7

Qualitative Paper Due: May 4th

Qualitative Paper Presentations: May 4

Detailed Schedule

Part I. Research Design, Causality and Ethics

January 21st: Intro and Organizational Meeting

- King, Keohane and Verba, Chapter 1
- Gerring, Chapter 1;
- Research Methods Knowledge Base (Language of Research, Foundations of Research)
<http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/contents.php> (read all sub-categories within these categories)

Assignment: Write a research question/puzzle and discuss how it would be a contribution to the scholarly literature. Discuss some preliminary hypotheses. (1-3 double-spaced pages)

January 28th: Research Design

- Research Methods Knowledge Base:* Sampling, Measurement, Design, Analysis
<http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/contents.php> (including all sub-categories)
- David Thunder, "Back to Basics: Twelve Rules for Writing a Publishable Article," *PS: Political Science and Politics*, vol. 37, no. 3 (2004): 493–495.

February 4th: Causality

- King, Keohane and Verba, Chapter 2 and 3
- Gerring, Chapters 2-4, 8-12

Assignment: Refine your hypotheses and discuss how you would diagram your research as discussed in the Research Methods Knowledge Base. Discuss how you might test them with any methodological approach you would like. What are the strengths and limitations of the methodological approach you propose with respect to establishing causality? (3-5 double-spaced pages)

February 11th: Conceptualization and Measurement

- Gary King, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994), 150–207.
- Gary Goertz, *Social Science Concepts: A User's Guide* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2006), 1–24. Available Online
- Robert Adcock and David Collier, "Measurement Validity: A Shared Standard for Qualitative and Quantitative Research," *American Political Science Review*, vol. 95, no. 3 (2001): 529–546.
- Rawi Abdelal, Yoshiko M. Herrera, Alastair Iain Johnston, and Rose McDermott, "Identity as a Variable," *Perspectives on Politics*, vol. 4, no. 4 (2006): 695–711.
- Gerardo Munck and Jay Verkuilen, "Conceptualizing and Measuring Democracy: Evaluating Alternative Indices," *Comparative Political Studies*, vol. 35, no. 1 (2002): 5–34.

February 18th: Ethics in Research

- Research Methods Knowledge Base*, Ethics in Research
- Mosley book, Chapter 2 (Brooks), Chapter 3 (MacLean), Chapter 8 (Reno)
- Montana Field Experiment Case Study:
—Prof's Bumble into Big Legal Trouble after Election Experiment Goes Way Wrong! Dylan Scott, Talking Points Memo, October 27, 2014: <http://talkingpointsmemo.com/dc/montana-election-mailer-state-seal-stanford-dartmouth-professors>

—Ethical Challenges and some Solutions for Field Experiments, Scott Desposato:

<http://desposato.org/ethicsfieldexperiments.pdf>

—Messing with Montana: Get out the Vote Experiment Raises Ethical Questions, Melissa R. Michelson: <http://thewpsa.wordpress.com/2014/10/25/messing-with-montana-get-out-the-vote-experiment-raises-ethics-questions/>

Go through slide show on <http://www.prisonexp.org>

Assignment: Do IRB training: <http://www.cgu.edu/pages/5327.asp>. Submit certificate. Review the sample protocol posted in Canvas. Discuss any human subjects concerns that you have with the protocol (3-5 double spaced pages).

Recommended

Milgram, Stanley. 1974. *Obedience to Authority: An Experimental View*. New York: Harper and Row. Chapters 1 and 2.

Part II. Qualitative Methods

February 25th: Case Studies

-King, Keohane and Verba, Chapters 4-6

-George and Bennett, Chapters 4-6, 8-9

-Seawright, Jason, and John Gerring. 2009. —Case Selection Techniques in Case Study Research: A Menu of Qualitative and Quantitative Options. *Political Research Quarterly* 61: 294-308

-Lily Lee Tsai, “Cadres, Temple and Lineage Institutions, and Governance in Rural China,” *China Journal*, no. 48 (2002): 1–27.

-Barbara Geddes, “How the Cases You Choose Affect the Answers You Get: Selection Bias in Comparative Politics,” *Political Analysis*, vol. 2 (1990): 131–150.

Assignment: Process tracing exercise (see assignment section in Canvas for details).

March 3rd: Participant Observation, Field Work Strategies, and Focus Groups

-Wedeen, Lisa. 2010. "Reflections on Ethnographic Work in Political Science." *Annual Review of Political Science* 13: 255-272.

-Fenno, Richard F., Jr. 1978. *Home Style: House Members in their Districts*. Introduction, (pp. xi-xvi), Chapter 5 (pp. 136-170), and Skim Appendix (pp. 249-295).

Krueger, Richard A. and Mary Anne Casey. 2009. *Focus Groups: A Practical Guide for Applied Research*, 4th Edition. Sage Publications. Chapters 1-3, Chapter 4 optional.

-Gamson, William A. 1992. *Talking Politics*. Chapter 1 (pp. 1-12), Chapter 2 (pp. 13-27), Chapter 4 (pp. 59-83). Skim Appendix A (pp. 189-201).

Assignment: There will be a set of focus group transcripts posted to Canvas. Write up the results of these transcripts (3-5 double spaced pages).

March 10th: Interviews

Mosley, Layna, Ed. 2013. *Interview Research in Political Science*. Cornell University Press: Ithaca and London, Intro-Chapter 1 (review Chapters 2 and 3), Chapters 4-6, Chapter 9, read either Chapter 10, 11, or 12

Assignment: Propose an interview protocol for your research topic. The protocol should address the sample, how you will recruit participants, the location of the study, as well as the questions that will be asked and why. (3-5 double-spaced pages)

March 17th: NO CLASS, SPRING BREAK

March 24th Attend Western Political Science Association Annual Conference, San Diego

I realize that not all students will be able to take the day to attend WPSA. Your grade will not be influenced by your attendance at WPSA. You may also attend the conference on Friday or Saturday if Thursday is not viable for you.

Assignment if you attend WPSA: attend one full panel (be sure to give details on the name of the panel, participants, time, etc.). For each paper, describe and critique their research designs. Did they consider threats to validity, did they look for observable implications? What methods did they use? Does the theory match the methods?

Assignment if you cannot attend WPSA: choose three articles from the most recent issue of your field's top journal (you may choose what you think is the top journal). Evaluate and critique their research designs.

March 31st Archival Data, Documents and Content Analysis

Guest Speaker: Jeanine Kraybill

-Bowen, Glenn. 2010. —Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method. *Qualitative Research Journal* 9: 27-40.

-Druckman, James N., Martin J. Kifer, and Michael Parkin. 2009. —Campaign Communications in U.S. Congressional Elections. *American Political Science Review* 103: 343-366.

-Hopkins, Daniel J. and Gary King. 2010. —A Method of Automated Nonparametric Content Analysis for Social Science. *American Journal of Political Science* 54(1): 229-247.

-Grimmer, Justin and Brandon M. Stewart. 2013. —Text as Data: The Promise and Pitfalls of Automatic Content Analysis for Political Texts. *Political Analysis* 267-297.

April 7th Course Exam

Part III: Mixed Methods Research

April 14: Mixed Methods Research

-Lieberman, Evan. 2005. Nested Analysis as a Mixed Method Strategy for Comparative Research. *American Political Science Review* 3(August): 435-452.

-Mahoney, James, and Gary Goertz. 2006. A Tale of Two Cultures. *Political Analysis* 14(3): 227-249.

-Howard, Mark and Phillip Roessler. 2006. Liberalizing Electoral Outcomes in Competitive Authoritarian Regimes. *American Journal of Political Science*. Volume 50, Issue 2, pages 365–381

-Michael Coppedge, "Thickening Thin Concepts and Theories: Combining Large N and Small in Comparative Politics," *Comparative Politics*, vol. 31, no. 4 (1999): 465–476.

Assignment: adapt your project to a mixed methods approach and explain the logic used to integrate those methods. Do you think this approach will help or hurt your research project?

April 21: Pathways Tracing

Weller and Barnes, Chapters 1-4, 8

April 28: Natural Experiments

-Thad Dunning, "Improving Causal Inference: Strengths and Limitations of Natural Experiments," *Political Research Quarterly*, vol. 61, no. 2 (2008): 282–293.

-Daniel N. Posner, "The Political Salience of Cultural Difference: Why Chewas and Tumbukas Are Allies in Zambia and Adversaries in Malawi," *American Political Science Review*, vol. 98, no. 4 (2004): 529–545.

-Rose McDermott, "Experimental Methods in Political Science," *Annual Review of Political Science*, vol. 5 (2002): 31–61.

- Banerjee, Abhijit V., and Lakshmi Iyer. 2002. "History, institutions and economic performance: the legacy of colonial land tenure systems in India." *The American Economic Review*, Vol. 95, No. 4. (Sep., 2005), pp. 1190-1213.

May 5: Paper Presentations, Papers Due