

**17.850**  
**Graduate Scope and Methods**

Fall 2011  
Thursday 3:00-5:00  
Room E53-485

**Professor:**  
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This class is intended to provide you with an introduction to the enterprise of scientific research on politics. Through a combination of methodological works and notable applications of various research designs and methods, the class introduces the basic principles of research design, methods of data collection, and approaches to data analysis. By the end of the course, you should have a solid understanding of what you need to know in order to participate effectively in the discipline of political science, both by being a sophisticated consumer of diverse empirical research from all subfields of political science and by being able to design and conduct your own independent scholarly research.

### **Course Requirements**

Class attendance and participation are mandatory and essential to the intellectual life of class discussions. We expect that you will come to each week's class prepared to discuss the week's required readings.

Learning to design original scholarly research is a central component of this course. You will therefore be required to prepare and submit an application to the National Science Foundation's Graduate Research Fellowship Program. You will first submit a one-paragraph description of their proposed research topic on September 29<sup>th</sup>, followed by a rough draft of their application proposal on October 13<sup>th</sup>. Final drafts of the application will be due in class on November 3<sup>rd</sup>, and the NSF deadline for the application is November 16<sup>th</sup>.

Finally, building on your proposal for the NSF application, you will submit a more detailed 15-page research proposal at the end of the course, on December 8<sup>th</sup>.

### **Course Outline**

#### **I: Principles of research design**

**1. Models and theories, key terms and concepts, inductive and deductive model-building, internal and external validity (September 8)**

Freedman, David A. 2008. "On types of scientific inquiry: The role of qualitative reasoning." In *The Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology*, ed. Janet M. Box-Steffensmeier, Henry E. Brady and David Collier. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. (Chapter 12; 19 pages)

Krehbiel, Keith. 1997. *Pivotal Politics: A Theory of U.S. Lawmaking*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. Chapters 1-2. (43 pages)

Shively, W. Phillips. 1998. *The Craft of Political Research*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall. Chapters 1, 2, 11. (33

pages)

Snidal, Duncan. 2004. "Formal Models of International Politics." In *Models, Numbers, and Cases*, ed. Detlef F. Sprinz and Yael Wolinsky-Nahmias. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press. (Chapter 10; 38 pages)

## 2. Basics of hypothesis testing and causal inference. The experimental ideal. (September 15)

Campbell, Donald T. and Julian Stanley. 1963. *Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs for Research*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing. Pgs. 1-71. (71 pages)

Dunning, Thad. 2004. "Design-Based Inference." In *Rethinking Social Inquiry* ed. Henry E. Brady and David Collier. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc. (Chapter 14; 40 pages)

Gerring, John. 2001. *Social Science Methodology: A Critical Framework*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 7. (14 pages)

Sekhon, Jasjeet S. 2008. "The Neyman-Rubin Model of Causal Inference and Estimation via Matching Methods." In *The Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology*, ed. Janet M. Box-Steffensmeier, Henry E. Brady and David Collier. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. (Chapter 11; 29 pages)

### *Recommended:*

Chattopadhyay, Raghavendra and Esther Duflo. 2004. "Women as Policy Makers: Evidence from a Randomized Policy Experiment in India." *Econometrica* 72 (5): 1409—1443. (34 pages)

King, Gary, Kehohane, Robert O., and Sidney Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press. Chapters 1-5. (203 pages).

Posner, Daniel N. 2004. "Measuring Ethnic Fractionalization in Africa." *American Journal of Political Science* 48 (4): 849—863. (14 pages)

Shively, W. Phillips. 1998. *The Craft of Political Research*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall. Chapter 6. (# pages)

Van Evera, Stephen. 1997. *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science*. New York: Cornell University Press. Chapter 1. (43 pages)

## II: Data Collection

### 3. Selecting and sampling cases (September 22)

#### *DUE: Experimental Analysis Exercise*

Achen, Christopher H. and Duncan Snidal. 1989. "Rational Deterrence Theory and Comparative Case Studies." *World Politics* 41 (2): 143-169. (26 pages)

Geddes, Barbara. 1991. "How the Cases You Choose Affect the Answers You Get: Selection Bias in Comparative Politics." *Political Analysis* 2 (1):131-50. (29 pages)

Gerring, John. 2007. *Case Study Research: Principles and Practices*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 5. (86-150; 64 pages)

Lieberman, Evan S. "Nested Analysis as a Mixed-Method Strategy for Comparative Analysis." *American Political Science Review* 99 (03): 435-443. (8 pages)

Rohlfing, Ingo. "What You See and What You Get: Pitfalls and Principles of Nested Analysis in Comparative Research." *Comparative Political Studies* 41 (11): 1492. (23 pages)

### *Recommended:*

Kalton, Graham. 1983. "Introduction to survey sampling." California: Sage Publications, Inc. (90 pages)

King, Gary, Kehohane, Robert O., and Sidney Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press. Chapter 4. (34 pages).  
Shively, W. Phillips. 1998. *The Craft of Political Research*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall. Chapter 7. (13 pages)

#### 4. Conceptualization and measurement (September 29)

*DUE: One paragraph on research topic for NSF application*

Brady, H.E. and Herron, M.C. and Mebane, W.R. and Sekhon, J.S. and Shotts, K.W. and Wand, J. "Law and Data: The Butterfly Ballot Episode." *Political Science & Politics* 34(1): 59—69. (10 pages)  
Collier, David and Steven Levitsky. 1997. "Democracy with Adjectives: Conceptual Innovation in Comparative Research." *World Politics* 49 (3): 430-451. (21 pages)  
Jackman, Robert W. and Ross A. Miller. 1996. "A Renaissance of Political Culture?" *American Journal of Political Science* 40 (3): 632—659. (27 pages)  
Nisbett, Richard E. and Timothy D. Wilson. 1977. "Telling More Than We Can Know: Verbal Reports on Mental Processes". *Psychological Review* 84(3): 231-259. (28 pages)  
Putnam, Robert. 2002. *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press. Chapters 3 and 4. (56 pages)  
Jonathan N. A. Wand, Kenneth W. Shotts, Jasjeet S. Sekhon, Walter R. Mebane, Jr., Michael C. Herron and Henry E. Brady. 2001. "The Butterfly Did It: The Aberrant Vote for Buchanan in Palm Beach County, Florida." *American Political Science Review* 95 (4): 793-810. (17 pages)

#### *Recommended:*

Collier, David and James E. Mahon, Jr. 1993. "Conceptual Stretching Revisited." *American Political Science Review* 87(4): 845—855. (10 pages)  
Shively, W. Phillips. 1998. *The Craft of Political Research*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall. Chapter 3. (9 pages)

#### 5. Measurement theory and principles of scaling (October 6)

Jackman, Simon. 2008. "Measurement." In *The Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology*, ed. Janet M. Box-Steffensmeier, Henry E. Brady and David Collier. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. (Chapter 6; 33 pages)  
King, Gary and Murray, C.J.L. and Salomon, J.A. and Tandon, A. 2004. *American Political Science Review* 98(1): 191-207. (16 pages)  
Locke, Richard and Kathleen Thelen. 1995. "Apples and Oranges Revisited: Contextualized Comparisons and the Study of Comparative Labor Politics." *Politics and Society* 23(3): 337—368. (31 pages)  
Locke, Richard and Kathleen Thelen. 1998. "Problems of Equivalence in Comparative Politics: Apples and Oranges Again." Newsletter of the APSA Organized Section in *Comparative Politics* 9(1):9-12. (3 pages)  
Treier, Shawn and Simon Jackman. 2008. "Democracy as a Latent Variable." *American Journal of Political Science* 52(1): 201—217. (16 pages)

#### *Recommended:*

Shively, W. Phillips. 1998. *The Craft of Political Research*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall. Chapters 4 and 5. (33 pages)

**6. Techniques and technologies for data collection – survey research, content analysis, interviewing, archival research, ethnographic fieldwork (October 13)**

*DUE: Rough draft of NSF application*

Hothschild, Jennifer. 1981. *What's Fair: American Beliefs About Distributive Justice*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Chapters 1 and 9, Appendices A and B. In-depth interviewing. (53 pages)

Lustick, Ian H. 1996. "History, Historiography, and Political Science: Multiple Historical Records and the Problem of Selection Bias." *American Political Science Review* 90(3): 605—618. (13 pages)

Quinn, Kevin M. Forthcoming, 2012. "Large-scale, Computerized Analysis of Text in Political Science." *Annual Review of Political Science* 15(1).

**III: Data Analysis**

**7. Large-N quantitative analysis of experimental data (October 20)**

Berinsky, Adam J. and Donald R. Kinder. 2006. "Making Sense of Issues Through Media Frames: Understanding the Kosovo Crisis." *Journal of Politics* 68(3): 640–656. (16 pages)

Druckman, James N. 2004. "Political Preference Formation: Competition, Deliberation, and the (Ir)relevance of Framing Effect." *American Political Science Review* 98(4): 671–686 (15 pages)

Gerber, Alan S, Green, Donald P., and Christopher W. Larimer. 2008. "Social Pressure and Voter Turnout: Evidence from a Large-Scale Field Experiment." *American Political Science Review* 102: 33–48. (15 pages)

Habyarimana, James. and Humphreys, Macartan, Posner, Daniel .N. and Weinstein, Jeremy M. "Why Does Ethnic Diversity Undermine Public Goods Provision?" *American Political Science Review* 101: 709–725. (16 pages)

Humphreys, Macartan and Jeremy M. Weinstein. 2009. "Field Experiments and the Political Economy of Development." *Annual Review of Political Science* 12: 367–378 (11 pages)

**8. Large-N quantitative analysis of observational data (October 27)**

Berinsky, Adam J. 2007. "Assuming the Costs of War: Events, Elites, and American Public Support for Military Conflict." *Journal of Politics* 69(4): 975–997. (22 pages)

Braumoeller, Bear and Anne E. Sartori. "The Promises and Perils of Statistics in International Relations." *In Models, Numbers, and Cases*, ed. Detlef F. Sprinz and Yael Wolinsky-Nahmias. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press. (Chapter 6; 23 pages)

Lenz, Gabriel. 2009. "Learning and Opinion Change, Not priming: Reconsidering the Priming Hypothesis." *American Journal of Political Science* 53(4): 821—837. (16 pages)

Lyall, Jason. 2009. "Does Indiscriminate Violence Incite Insurgent Attacks?" *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 53(3): 331–362. (31 pages)

**9. Small-N comparative case study analysis (November 3)**

*DUE: Final draft of NSF application*

Gerring, John. 2007. *Case Study Research: Principles and Practices*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 6. (14 pages)

Bennett, Andrew. 2004. "Case Study Methods: Design, Use and Comparative Advantages." *In Models, Numbers, and Cases*, ed. Detlef F. Sprinz and Yael Wolinsky-Nahmias. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press. (Chapter 2; 37 pages)

Maclean, Lauren M. *Informal Institutions and Citizenship in Rural Africa*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Chapters 1-3 (pages 3-95)

- Posner, Daniel N. 2004. "The Political Salience of Cultural Difference: Why Chewas and Tumbukas Are Allies in Zambia." *American Political Science Review* 98(4): 529-545 (16 pages).
- Ziblatt, Daniel. 2004. "Rethinking the Origins of Federalism: Puzzle, Theory, and Evidence from Nineteenth-Century Europe." *World Politics* 57(1): 70-98. (28 pages)

*Recommended*

- King, Gary, Kehohane, Robert O., and Sidney Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press. Chapter 6. (21 pages).
- Van Evera, Stephen. 1997. *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science*. New York: Cornell University Press. Chapter 2. (# pages)

**10. Within-case "process tracing" (November 10)**

- Bennett, Andrew. 2008. "Process Tracing and Causal Inference." In *Rethinking Social Inquiry* ed. Henry E. Brady and David Collier. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc. (Chapter 10; 14 pages)
- Brady, Henry. 2008. "Data-Set Observations versus Causal-Process Observations: The 2000 U.S. Presidential Election," in *Rethinking Social Inquiry*, eds. Brady and Collier. (Chapter 12; 16 pages) (see also website materials on Rowman and Littlefield website)
- Gerring, John. 2007. *Case Study Research: Principles and Practices*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 7. (12 pages)
- Harding, David J., Fox, C., and Jal D. Mehta. 2002. "Studying Rare Events Through Qualitative Case Studies Lessons from a Study of Rampage School Shootings." *Sociological Methods & Research* 31(2): 174-217. (43 pages).
- Levi, Margaret. 1989. *Of Rule and Revenue*. California: University of California Press. Chapters 1, 2, 4 (pages 1-40, 71-94; 63 pages)

*Recommended*

- King, Gary, Kehohane, Robert O., and Sidney Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press. Chapter 6. (21 pages).
- Van Evera, Stephen. 1997. *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science*. New York: Cornell University Press. Chapter 2. (40 pages)

*NSF APPLICATION DEADLINE (NOVEMBER 15)*

**11. Combining multiple methodologies (November 17)**

- Bamberger, Michael, Vijayendra Rao, and Michael Woolcock. 2001. "Using Mixed Methods in Monitoring and Evaluation: Experiences from International Development." *BWPI Working Paper No. 107*. (27 Pages)
- Fearon, James D. and David D. Laitin 2008. "Integrating Qualitative and Quantitative Methods." In *The Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology*, ed. Janet M. Box-Steffensmeier, Henry E. Brady and David Collier. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. (Chapter 33; 23 pages)
- Rodden, Jonathan. 2006. *Hamilton's Paradox: the Promise and Peril of Fiscal Federalism*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Chapters 4, 6, 7 (pages 75-118, 140-187)
- Paluck, E.L. (2010). "The Promising Integration of Field Experimentation and Qualitative Methods." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 628: 59-71. (12 pages)
- Tsai, L.L. 2007. *Accountability without democracy: Solidary groups and public goods provision in rural China*. New York:

Cambridge University Press. Chapter 5. (28 pages)

*Recommended:*

Miguel, Edward. 2004. "Tribe or nation?: Nation building and public goods in Kenya versus Tanzania."

*World Politics* 56:3: 327-362. (35 pages)

[Paluck, Elizabeth L. \(2010\)](#). The Promising Integration of Field Experimentation and Qualitative

Methods. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 628: 59-71. (27 pages)

#### **IV. Wrap-Up**

#### **12. Ethics and IRB (December 1)**

Milgram, Stanley. "Some Conditions of Obedience and Disobedience to Authority." *Human Relations* 18: 57-76. (19 pages)

MIT COUHES materials and human subjects training:

<http://web.mit.edu/committees/couhes/index.shtml>

#### **13. Philosophy of science (December 8)**

*DUE: 15 page research proposal*

Almond, Gabriel A. and Stephen Genco. "Clouds, Clocks, and the Study of Politics." *World Politics* 29(4): 489—522. (33 pages)

Kuhn, Thomas. 1996. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (Skim; 212 pages)

Popper, Karl R. 1959. *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*. London: Hutchinson. Chapter 1.