

SPRING 2000

GINT 709

Qualitative Methods

Professor Betty Glad

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

The goal of this course is twofold: 1) to suggest the kinds of phenomena for which qualitative approaches are apt to be useful and 2) to equip the students with the skills that will make such studies as rigorous as the subject being studied permits. The epistemological bases for such approaches and the complimentary aspects of quantitative and qualitative approaches will be explored early in the seminar. The emphasis, however, will be on a hands-on approach on how to do field research, case studies, interviews etc. In addition to a common core of readings, the students may choose from a wide menu of readings in terms of their particular research interests. Weekly reports will be provided on the evolving research projects including the possible utility of the various approaches listed. Colleagues who are experts at doing field research, analysis, interviewing etc., will be asked to make their contributions at relevant places in the course.

For the last five or six years, there has been burgeoning literature on the value of qualitative research, and guidelines on how to do it well. Most of these earlier studies have drawn from other disciplines. The popularity of the recently published King, Verba, Keohane volume, as well as the

Stephen van Evera book, indicates that political scientists are now turning their attention in that direction.

#### COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. At the beginning of the semester, each student will choose a major research project in progress (dissertation, thesis, paper for another course) and, throughout the semester keep a log indicating how each of the techniques of research delineated in the readings could be applicable or inapplicable to that research project. The student will employ one new technique (e.g. archival research, field work, interviews, content analysis, focus group exchanges, content analysis) that may enrich his/her research project. An historical case study, for example, may be supplemented by one or two interviews, or a short field trip, the creation of a focus group, or design of a questionnaire. These choices will be made in close co-ordination with the instructor.

2. A log should be kept throughout the course. It should contain the abstracts of works read for each seminar session and a discussion of the possible utility for your research project of each research technique studied. Weekly progress reports on the development and utilization of the new research technique to be employed should also be included in the log. A final comprehensive entry shall include the student's description and evaluation of the new research technique he/she has employed. The final, comprehensive log will be due at the final session of the seminar.

#### METHOD OF EVALUATION:

Course evaluations will be based on the student's preparation for and participation in the weekly discussions (40%): and the instructor's evaluation of the final, comprehensive log (60%). The log will be used to 1) evaluate the students understanding of the nature of qualitative research and the potential contribution of the various techniques featured in the seminar, and 2) the students commitment to and creative employment of the new skills s/he has employed during the course of the seminar.

REQUIRED READINGS:

(The following books, most of them very short, should be purchased by each student. )

Gorden, Raymond (1992). *Basic Interviewing Skills*. Itasca, Illinois: F.E. Peacock Publishers.

Morgan, David (1988). *Focus Groups as Qualitative Research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, Qualitative Research Methods Series.

Schwartzman, Helen (1993). *Ethnography in Organizations*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, Qualitative Research Methods Series.

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

Wolcott, Harry (1990). *Writing Up Qualitative Research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, Qualitative Research Methods Series.

Yin, Robert (1994). *Case Study Research: Designs and Methods*, second edition. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, Applied Social Research Methods Series.

ARTICLES and BOOK CHAPTERS ON RESERVE: (approximately two to choose per week. Titles will be organized by section topics.)

Almond, Gabriel, and Stephen Genco (1977). "Clouds, Clocks, and the Study of Politics," *World Politics* 40:489-522.

Eckstein, Harry. "Case Study and Theory in Political Science." in *The Handbook of Political Science*, vol. 7, *Strategies of Inquiry*, Fred Greenstein and Nelson Polsby, eds., Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1975: 79-137.

Fenno, Richard (1986). "Observation, Context, and Sequence in the Study of Politics." *APSR* 80:3-15.

George, Alexander L., and Timothy McKeown (1985). "Case Studies and Theories of Organizational Decision-Making," *Advances in Information Processing in Organizations* (2): 21-58.

George, Alexander "Case Studies and Theory Development: The Method of Structured, Focused Comparison," in Paul Gordon Lauren, ed., *Diplomacy: New Approaches in History, Theory and Policy*. New York: Free Press, 1979. Chapters TBA.

Glad, Betty. "Contributions of Psychobiography" in *Handbook of Political Psychology*. Jeanne Knutson, ed. Washington: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1973, pp. 296-321.

Greenstein, Fred "Analysis of Single Political Actors" in *Personality and Politics: Problems of Evidence, Inference, and Conceptualization* Chicago: Markham Publishing Company, 1969, 63-119.

King, Gary, Robert Keohane, and Sidney Verba. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Interference In Qualitative Research*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996. (Chapters 1 and 2).

Larson, Deborah Welch (1988). "Problems of Content Analysis in Foreign Policy Research: Notes From The Study of the Origins of Cold War Belief Systems." *International Studies Quarterly* 32(2): 241-255.

Lebow, Richard N. (1981) , *Cognitive Closure and Crisis Politics*, in *Between Peace and War: The Nature of International Crisis* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press). Chapters TBA.

Lijphart, Arend. "Comparative Politics and Comparative Method." In *American Political Science Review* 65 (September 1971): 682-693.

Ragin, Charles 1987. *The Comparative Method: Moving Beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies*. (Berkeley: University of California Press.) Chapters TBA.

Russett, Bruce "International Behavior Research: Case Studies and Cumulation," in Michael Haas and H. Kariel, *Case and Correlational Studies*. Chapters TBA.

Sartori, Giovanni. "Concept Misinformation in Comparative Politics," *The American Political Science Review* 64 (No 4, December): 1033-1053.

Simon, Herbert, 1985 "Human Nature in Politics: The Dialogue of Psychology with Political Science."  
APSR. Vol. 79, No2, June.

Julian Simon, op cit., Ch. 20: "Classifying and Measuring" pp. 292- 308 Basic Research Methods in Social  
Sciences.

Smith, M. Brewster, Jerome Bruner, Robert White. "A Postscript: Approaches to Opinions and  
Personality," in Opinions and Personality New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc. 1956, pp. 280-287. in  
Opinions and Personality New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc. 1956, pp. 280-287. Chapter 10.

Verba, Sidney (1966). "Some Dilemmas in Comparative Research," World Politics