

CPO 6096  
Spring 2014  
Room:  
Time: R 8:30-11:30

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Office Hours: T 9:00-12:00  
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### **Seminar: Comparative Qualitative and Mixed Methods**

**AUDIENCE:** Prerequisites: none. Open to all graduate students.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course has been designed to help students refine their qualitative research design skills and to think about how combining more than one form of inference can lead to greater confidence in one's research findings. Class time will be devoted to discussing causal and probabilistic forms of inference, concept formation and measurement, small-n comparison, the use of in-depth case studies, nested analysis using large and small-n components, and a range of alternative methods which lend themselves to combined strategies of investigation (ethnography, game theory, QCA, and experiments).

**WHY SHOULD YOU TAKE THIS COURSE?** Within the discipline qualitative and mixed methods are important tools of research. Within the APSA the launching of a Qualitative and Mixed Methods section has been seen as an important step in integrating these two different modes of investigation. Many political scientists are committed to this ecumenical view of methods and for this reason the section is one of the largest in the association. With the increased prominence of normal science models and the regression model to provide inference in the social sciences, qualitative methods have experienced a revival as well. The nature of this is two-fold. First, there are recognized limitations to what quantitative social science using the regression model can study. Many interesting and worthwhile questions demand the use of alternative strategies of research or the combination of more than one method. Second, the expansion of large-n studies using the regression model in the last twenty years has made the issue of how to generate legitimate inference and the explicit study of method a central concern of the discipline. This trend has led to a renaissance of explicit methodological thinking on the part of qualitative social scientists. Many qualitative social scientists have begun to consider how their styles of work generate valid inferences about the social world, and how their logic of inference departs from that of other modes of inquiry. The centrality of these questions across many schools of social science has been fruitful in thinking about how multiple forms of inquiry complement each other and allow us to make stronger logical inferences about the social world.

**REQUIREMENTS:** There is substantial reading each week (several articles or a book, or some combination thereof). Careful reading and preparation for active and cogent participation in

class discussions is essential. Students will prepare summary papers for individual readings in several weeks, and will also prepare a research paper.

**Summary Paper Assignments:** Each week several students will be responsible for the summarization of one specific chapter or article in the weeks reading. This assignment entails writing a short summary of the relevant reading assignment (1-2 pages). The paper should summarize the major research questions raised by the reading and the major theses of the author(s). It should also, if relevant, discuss the hypotheses framed, structures of inference, and evidence used in each piece of research. Papers that raise topics for further discussion, critically evaluate the literature, and, if relevant, relate that week's readings to those of earlier weeks will be seen in a more favorable light. Discussion papers are due the Wednesday before the week's seminar meeting at 9:00am and should be distributed via email. All participants should read the summaries carefully before the seminar. All students are still responsible for doing all the reading each week. Someone else's notes are not a substitute for your own preparation. These notes will be helpful when you study for your comparative comprehensive exam.

**Research paper:** I am looking for three types of research papers in this course. You should consider these as strictures unless you discuss an alternative way of meeting the paper requirement with me. The first kind of paper that I would like to see would be explicitly methodological. That is, it would address one of the methodological controversies that are raised in the literature. The second kind of paper I would like to see would consciously use one of the research methods discussed in the course and apply it to a research question (e.g. case study, QCA, analytic narrative, ethnographic, small-n comparison, nested regression, etc.). Such a paper would need to be methodologically explicit in the framing of its design and execute the test/validation of a hypotheses/proposition using the method selected. The third kind of paper that is appropriate to this course is the execution of a research design for a larger project. Here I would expect the framing of a very defined research question, and falsifiable hypotheses/propositions about it that grow out of a survey of the relevant theoretical literature. I would also expect a detailed discussion of the kind of inferential strategy or strategies that would be used to provide verification of your hypothesis/proposition, and a discussion of the data or sources that would be used. Students should take this as an invitation to do a trial run of dissertation or funding proposals they will be floating in the near future.

**PROCEDURES FOR EVALUATION:** Course requirements will be weighted in the following manner. Paper -- 60%, research meetings -- 5% (10% total), research presentation -- 5% (failure to make the first draft submission deadline – minus 2%), participation -- 15%, discussant assignments 10%.

### **Books Available for Purchase**

Required (you will read most of these):

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

Goertz, Gary. 2005. *Social Science Concepts*. Princeton, Princeton University Press.

George, Alexander and Andrew Bennett. 2005. *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge, MIT Press.

Recommended (you will read less of these but they are good books that are worth having in your personal library):

Ed Schatz. 2009. *Political Ethnography*. Chicago, University of Chicago Press.

Barbara Geddes. 2003. *Paradigms and Sand Castles: Theory Building and Research Design in Comparative Politics*. Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press.

Mahoney, James and Dietrich Rueschmeyer, eds. 2003. *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Carles Boix and Susan Stokes. 2008. *The Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology*. Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Janet Box-Steffensmeier, David Brady, and David Collier. 2007. *The Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology*. Oxford, Oxford University Press

## **Course Outline**

### **A. Fundamentals**

*Week 1 (January 10): Course Overview*

*Week 2 (January 17): Causal and Probabilistic Logics of Inference*

#### *Readings:*

Ragin, Charles. 1987. In *The Comparative Method: Moving Beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies*. Berkeley, University of California Press: 1-84.

Bernhard, Michael. 2009. "Methodological Disputes in Comparative Politics." *Comparative Politics* 41: 495-515.

Mahoney, James and Gary Goertz. 2006. "A Tale of Two Cultures: Contrasting Quantitative and Qualitative Research." *Political Analysis* 14: 227-249.

Collier, David and Colin Elman. 2008. "Qualitative and Multimethod Research." *The Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology*. Oxford, Oxford University Press: 779-795.

Franklin, Charles. 2008. "Quantitative Methodology." *The Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology*. Oxford, Oxford University Press: 796-813.

*Week 3 (January 24): Causation*

*Readings:*

Henry Brady. 2008. "Causation and Explanation in Social Science," *The Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology*. Oxford University Press: pp. 217-249.

Levy, Jack S. 2008. "Counterfactuals and Case Studies." *The Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology*. Oxford University Press: 627-644.

Fearon, James. 1991. "Counterfactuals and Hypotheses Testing in Political Science." *World Politics* 43: 169-95.

Tilly, Charles. 2001. "Mechanisms in Political Processes". *Annual Review of Political Science* 4: 21-41.

Hall, Peter A. 2003. "Aligning Ontology and Methodology in Comparative Politics." In James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschmeyer, eds. *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge University Press: 373-406.

*Week 4 (January 31): The Comparative Method*

*Readings:*

Lijphart, Arendt. 1971. "Comparative Politics and Comparative Method." *APSR* 65: 682-693.

Collier, David. 1993. "The Comparative Method." In Finifter, Ada, ed. *Political Science: The State of the Discipline II*. Washington, DC., American Political Science Association: 105-119.

Przeworski, Adam and Henry Teune. 1970. *The Logic of Comparative Social Inquiry*. New York, Wiley-Interscience: 31-46, Chapter 2: Research Designs.

Sartori, Giovanni. 1991. "Comparing and Miscomparing." *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 3(3): 243-257.

George, Alexander and Andrew Bennett. 2005. *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge, MIT Press: 1-36, Chapter 1: Case Studies and Theory Development.

Adcock, Robert. 2008. "The Curious Career of 'the Comparative Method': The Case of Mill's Methods." Paper presented at APSA's Annual Meeting, Boston, August 30: 1-22.

*Week 5 (February 7): Concepts and Measurement*

*Readings:*

Sartori, Giovanni. 1970. "Concept Misformation in Comparative Politics." *APSR* 64(4): 1033-1053.  
(read mainly 1033-1046).

Sartori, Giovanni. 1984. "Guidelines for Conceptual Analysis." In Sartori, Giovanni. ed. *Social Science Concepts: A Systematic Analysis*. Beverly Hills, Sage Publication: 15-85.

Goertz, Gary. 2005. *Social Science Concepts*. Princeton, Princeton University Press: Chapters 1-5 (1-156).

**B. Small-n Analysis, Case Study, and Causal Assessment**

*Week 6 (February 14): Introduction to Case Study*

*Readings:*

Gerring, John. 2007. "The Case Study: What it is and What it Does?" *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*. Oxford, Oxford University Press: 90-122.

Rueschemeyer, Dietrich. 2003. "Can One of a Few Cases Yield Theoretical Gains." In James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer, eds. *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press: 305-336.

George, Alexander and Andrew Bennett. 2005. *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge, MIT Press: Chapter 4--"Phase One: Designing Case Study Research," Chapter 5 --"Phase Two: Carrying Out the Case Studies," and Chapter 6 --"Phase Three: Drawing Out the Implications of Case Findings for Theory," "Case Studies and the Philosophy of Science," (Chapter 7), 73 -150.

*Week 7 (February 21): Case Studies: Design, Selection, Theory Testing vs. Development, Structured-Focused vs. Controlled Comparison, Theory Testing*

*Readings:*

Geddes, Barbara. 2003. "How the Cases You Choose Affect the Answers You Get." Chapter 3 in *Paradigms and Sandcastles*. University of Michigan Press: 89-130.

Collier, David and James Mahoney. 1996. "Insights and Pitfalls: Selection Bias in Qualitative Research". *World Politics* 49(1): 56-91.

Goertz, Gary. 2005. *Social Science Concepts*. Princeton, Princeton University Press: Chapters 6-8 (177-234).

Mahoney, James . 2003. "Strategies of Causal Assessment in Comparative-Historical Analysis". In James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschmeyer, eds. *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press: 337-372.

George, Alexander and Andrew Bennett. 2005. *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge, MIT Press: Chapter 3 -- "The Method of Structured, Focused Comparison" and Chapter 8 -- "Comparative Methods: Controlled Comparison and Within-Case Analysis," 67-72, 151-179.

Week 8: (February 28): *No Class Meeting*

Schedule a meeting with me this week for a preliminary discussion of your research interest.

Spring Break

*Week 9 (March 14): Longitudinal Analysis: Process Tracing, Congruence Testing, Critical Junctures, Pacing*

***Class to be rescheduled to earlier in the week.***

Readings:

Hall, Peter A. 2008. "Systematic Process Analysis: When and How to Use It." *European Political Science* 7: 304-317.

George, Alexander and Andrew Bennett. 2005. *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge, MIT Press: Chapter 9 -- "The Congruence Method" and Chapter 10 -- "Process-Tracing and Historical Explanation," 181-204, 205-232.

Pierson, Paul. 2003. "Big, Slow Moving, and ... Invisible: Macrosociological Processes in the Study of Comparative Politics." In James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschmeyer, eds. *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press. 177-207.

Capoccia, Giovanni and R. Daniel Kelemen. 2007. "The Study of Critical Junctures." *World Politics* 59: 341-369.

Michael Bernhard. "Institutional Syncretism and the Limitations of Path Dependence: A Theory of Instability." (manuscript).

### **C. Multiple, Mixed, and Diverse Methods**

*Week 10 (March 21): Nested Analysis, Mixing Casework and Statistical Analyses*

#### *Readings:*

Coppedge, Michael. 1999. "Thickening Thin Concepts and Theories: Combining Large-N and Small in Comparative Politics." *Comparative Politics* 31(4): 465-476.

Lieberman, Evan. 2005. "Nested Analysis as a Mixed-Method Strategy for Comparative Research." *American Political Science Review* 99(3):435-52.

Laitin, David and James Fearon. 2008. "Integrating Qualitative and Quantitative Methods." *The Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology*. Oxford, Oxford University Press: 756-776.

Rohlfing Ingo. 2007. "What You See and What You Get: Pitfalls and Principles of Nested Analysis in Comparative Research," *Comparative Political Studies* 41: 1492-1514.

Bernhard, Michael. 2009. "Methodological Disputes in Comparative Politics," *Comparative Politics* 41: 495-515.

*.Week 11 (March 28): Other Potential Elements of a Mixed Methodological Approach: Formal Models and Experiments, QCA, Ethnography*

#### *Readings:*

Geddes, Barbara. 2003. *Paradigms and Sandcastles*. Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press: 175-211.

Gerring, John and Rose McDermott. 2007. "An Experimental Template for Case Study Research." *American Journal of Political Science* 51(3): 688-701.

Thad Dunning. 2012. *Natural Experiments in the Social Sciences. A Design-Based Approach*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press: 1-62.

Ragin, Charles. 1987. *The Comparative Method: Moving Beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies*. Berkeley, University of California Press: 85-163.

Jan Kubik. 2009. "Ethnography of Politics," In *Political Ethnography*, Edward Schatz, ed. Chicago, University of Chicago Press: 25-52.

Week 12 (April) 4: Research Time

Rough drafts of papers due by class period.

Week 13 (April 11): Research Reports

Week 14: (April 18): Research Reports

**Papers Due: April 30.**