

Methods of Comparative Analysis
Spring 2015
Political Science 490.21/Sociology 476.22

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Course Description

This seminar offers a broad and advanced introduction to the field of comparative methodology. The emphasis is on what are conventionally regarded in political science as “qualitative” methods for the analysis of a relatively small number of cases. In sociology, this field is generally known as comparative-historical methodology. The course focuses on recent methodological writings, though a few classical pieces are also included. The readings are not specific to any substantive subfield in political science or sociology. The course assumes no prior background in qualitative methodology, but the material is advanced.

The seminar is organized into three parts: (1) background; (2) concepts and measurement; and (3) within-case and cross-case analysis. The reading load is heavy. The assignment load is also heavy. Students should be prepared to devote considerable time to this class. I plan to offer the course again within the next two years in case you do not have the time for it this quarter.

Requirements

- (1) Seminar Discussion (30%):** Students are expected to read the assigned chapters and articles for each seminar meeting and come prepared to discuss them.
- (2) Concept Paper (20%):** An essay of 6-8 pages in which students analyze a concept of their choice. This essay will be due on Monday, May 4.
- (3) Within-Case Analysis Assignment (10%):** A set of short exercises focused on within-case methods, especially process tracing. Due on Monday, May 11.
- (4) Cross-Case Analysis Assignment (10%):** A set of short exercises focused on cross-case methods, including Millian methods and Qualitative Comparative Analysis. Due on Monday, June 1.
- (5) Research Design Paper (30%):** An essay of approximately 12-15 pages in which students develop a research design for carrying out a project using qualitative methods. This research design can form the basis for a project that is pursued at a later date. Due on Monday, June 8.

Books to Purchase

- Henry Brady and David Collier, eds., *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards*, second ed. (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2010).
- Gary Goertz and James Mahoney, *A Tale of Two Cultures: Qualitative and Quantitative Research in the Social Sciences* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012).
- Gary King, Robert Keohane, and Sydney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).
- Charles C. Ragin, *Redesigning Social Inquiry: Fuzzy Sets and Beyond* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008).

Course Outline

Part I: Background

1. Overview of the Field (April 3)

- Goertz, Gary, and James Mahoney, "Introduction" and "Mathematical Prelude" in *A Tale of Two Cultures: Qualitative and Quantitative Research in the Social Sciences* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), pp. 1-38. [Book]
- Mahoney, James, "After KKV: The New Methodology of Qualitative Research," *World Politics* 62:1 (January 2010), pp. 120-147.
- Brady, Henry, David Collier, and Jason Seawright, "Introduction to the Second Edition: A Sea Change in Political Methodology" and "Refocusing the Discussion of Methodology," in Henry Brady and David Collier, eds., *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards*, second ed. (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2010), pp. 1-10 and 15-32. [Book]
- King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba, "The Science in Social Science," in King, Keohane, and Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), pp. 3-34. [Book]

2. Substantive Examples (April 10)

- Dreze, Jean, and Amartya Sen, "China and India," in Dreze and Sen, *Hunger and Public Action* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), pp. 204-225.
- Tannenwald, Nina, "The Nuclear Taboo: The United States and the Normative Basis of Nuclear Non-Use," *International Organization* 53:3 (Summer 1999), pp. 433-68.
- Weaver, Vesla M., "Frontlash: Race and the Development of Punitive Crime Policy," *Studies in American Political Development* 21(2007), pp. 230-265.

Wickham-Crowley, Timothy P. "A Qualitative Comparative Approach to Latin American Revolutions," *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* 32 (1991), pp. 82-109.

Part II: Conceptualization and Measurement

3. Approaches to Concepts and Measurement (April 17)

Goertz, Gary, *Social Science Concepts: A User's Guide* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), pp. 1-94.

Weldon, S. Laurel, "Intersectionality," in Gary Goertz and Amy G. Mazur, eds., *Politics, Gender, and Concepts: Theory and Methodology* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp. 193-218.

Goertz, Gary, and James Mahoney, "Concepts: Definitions, Indicators, and Error" and "Meaning and Measurement" in *A Tale of Two Cultures: Qualitative and Quantitative Research in the Social Sciences* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), pp. 127-149. [Book]

Adcock, Robert N., and David Collier, "Measurement Validity: A Shared Standard for Qualitative and Quantitative Research," *American Political Science Review* 95:3 (September 2001), pp. 529-46.

*******No Class on April 24*******

4. Illustrations from Work on Democracy (May 1)

Munck, Gerardo L., and Jay Verkuilen, "Measuring Democracy: Evaluating Alternative Indices," *Comparative Political Studies* 35:1 (February 2002), pp. 5-34.

Collier, David, and Steven Levitsky, "Democracy with Adjectives: Conceptual Innovation in Comparative Research," *World Politics* 49:3 (April 1997), pp. 430-51.

Bowman, Kirk, Fabrice Lehoucq, and James Mahoney, "Measuring Political Democracy: Case Expertise, Data Adequacy, and Central America," *Comparative Political Studies* 38:8 (October 2005), pp. 939-970.

Paxton, Pamela, "Women's Suffrage in the Measurement of Democracy: Problems of Operationalization," *Studies in Comparative International Development* 35:3 (September 2000), pp. 92-111.

Parts III: Within-Case and Cross-Case Comparative Methods

5. Within-Case Analysis I (May 8)

Collier, David. "Understanding Process Tracing," *PS: Political Science and Politics* 44:4 (2011), pp. 823-830. See also Collier, David, "Teaching Process Tracing: Examples and Exercises."

Collier, David, Henry E. Brady, and Jason Seawright, "Sources of Leverage in Causal Inference: Toward an Alternative View of Methodology," in Henry Brady and David Collier, eds., *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards*, second ed. (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2010), pp. 161-199. [Book]

Brady, Henry E., "Data-Set Observations versus Causal Process Observations: The 2000 U.S. Presidential Election," in Henry Brady and David Collier, eds., *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards*, second ed. (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2010), pp. 237-242. [Book]

Lerner, Daniel, "The Grocer and the Chief: A Parable," Chapter 1 in Lerner, *The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle East* (New York: Free Press, 1958).

6. Cross-Case Analysis I (May 15)

Skocpol, Theda, and Margaret Somers, "The Uses of Comparative History in Macrosocial Inquiry," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 22 (1980), pp. 174-197.

Rueschemeyer, Dietrich, and John D. Stephens, "Comparing Historical Sequences – A Powerful Tool for Causal Analysis," *Comparative Social Research* 17 (1997), pp. 55-72.

Mahoney, James, "Strategies of Causal Inference in Small-N Analysis," *Sociological Methods and Research* 28: 4 (May 2000), pp. 387-424.

Elman, Colin. "Explanatory Typologies in Qualitative Studies of International Politics," *International Organization* 59 (2005), pp. 293-326.

7. Within-Case Analysis II (May 22)

Bennett, Andrew, "Process Tracing and Causal Inference," in Henry Brady and David Collier, eds., *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards*, second ed. (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2010), pp. 207-219. [Book]

Bennett, Andrew, "Disciplining our Conjectures: Systematizing Process Tracing with Bayesian Analysis," Appendix in Andrew Bennett and Jeffrey T. Checkel, eds., *Process Tracing: From Metaphor to Analytic Tool* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp. 276-

298..

Mahoney, James, Erin Kimball, and Kendra Koivu, "The Logic of Historical Explanation in the Social Sciences," *Comparative Political Studies* 42:1 (January 2009), pp. 114-146.

Mahoney, James, "The Logic of Process Tracing Tests in the Social Sciences," *Sociological Methods and Research*, 41:4 (November 2012), 566-590.

Goertz, Gary, and James Mahoney, "Counterfactuals" in *A Tale of Two Cultures: Qualitative and Quantitative Research in the Social Sciences* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), pp. 115-124. [Book]

8. Cross-Case Analysis II (May 29)

Ragin, Charles C. *Redesigning Social Inquiry: Fuzzy Sets and Beyond* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 1-105. [Book]

Lieberman, Evan. "Nested Analysis as a Mixed-Method Strategy for Comparative Research," *American Political Science Review* 93: 3 (August 2005), pp. 435-52.

9. Alternative Approaches to Causality (June 5)

James Mahoney and Rachel Sweet Vanderpoel, "Set Diagrams and Qualitative Research," *Comparative Political Studies* 48:1 (January 2015), pp. 65-100.

King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba, "Causality and Causal Inference," in King, Keohane, and Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), pp. 75-114. [Book]

Goertz, Gary, and Harvey Starr, "Introduction: Necessary Condition Logics, Research Design, and Theory," in Gary Goertz and Harvey Starr, eds., *Necessary Conditions: Theory, Methodology, and Applications* (Lanham: Roman and Littlefield, 2003), pp. 1-24.

Goertz, Gary, and James Mahoney, "Causes-of Effects versus Effects-of-Causes" and "Causal Models" in *A Tale of Two Cultures: Qualitative and Quantitative Research in the Social Sciences* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), pp. 41-63. [Book]