

## **E232: Qualitative Methods (Fall 2013)**

Tuesday, 10:15-12:00

Room S4

### **Instructor**

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*This practice-oriented course introduces first year Ph.D. students to qualitative methods in political science. The class begins with a consideration of how epistemological and ontological issues impact methodological choices, including research design and approaches to theory testing. It then introduces strategies for concept development and measurement, typological theorizing, the comparative method, case studies, and counterfactual analysis. The second half of the course presents a series of techniques for data collection and analysis, including archival and historiographic research, fieldwork, interviews, ethnography, and textual analysis. Students will develop their methodological skill sets through a series of hands-on assignments.*

### **ACCESS TO READINGS:**

Articles are available through the course website, while most book sections are available in a polycopié. The three books you will need to purchase are:

- Mark Trachtenberg (2006) *The Craft of International History*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Herbert J. Rubin and Irene S. Rubin (2011) *Qualitative Interviewing*, **third edition**. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Robert M. Emerson, Rachel I. Fretz and Linda L. Shaw (2011) *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*, **second edition**. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

One copy of each will also be on reserve at the library.

We will be using selections from many of the following texts and, depending on your research plans, you may want to purchase some of them for reference purposes. They will also be on reserve at the library.

- Dvora Yanow and Peregrine Schwartz-Shea, eds. (2006) *Interpretation and Method*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe.  
<http://site.ebrary.com/lib/graduateinstitute/docDetail.action?docID=10178122>
- Charles Ragin (1987) *The Comparative Method: Moving Beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Alexander George and Andrew Bennett (2005) *Case Studies and Theory Development*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

- John Gerring (2006) *Case Study Research: Principles and Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Christopher B. Barrett and Jeffrey W. Cason (2010) *Overseas Research: A Practical Guide*. New York: Routledge.
- Edward Schatz, ed. (2009) *Political Ethnography: What Immersion Contributes to the Study of Power*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Johnny Saldaña, *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.
- Kimberley A. Neuedorf (2001) *The Content Analysis Guidebook*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

## CLASS GOALS, EXPECTATIONS, AND EVALUATION

This is a very hands-on, participation-based seminar. You are expected to complete all of the readings prior to class and be prepared to discuss them. You are also expected to participate fully in class activities. However, you are not expected to perform each of the research techniques perfectly in your first attempt! The goal of this class is to investigate ideas, methods, and techniques, in a relatively low stakes environment, so that you will be better prepared to use them in the future, in your dissertation research. You are encouraged to use this opportunity to take chances and make mistakes; the class is a learning experience, not a test. You are also encouraged to work collaboratively; most of the assignments are suitable for group work and many can be turned in collectively.

Because of these expectations, evaluation will be based on effort and on a demonstrated grasp of the materials and the principles at stake in the methods—not a mastery of techniques. You will receive written feedback on assignments, but not grades; if you would like to discuss your standing in the course, in terms of numbers, you can come talk to me in office hours.

## ASSIGNMENTS

### 1) “What’s your research program?” 800-1200 words. Due by 23:59 on Friday, October 4.

Building on the readings from weeks 2 and 3, outline your current ontological and epistemological commitments. How do you see the world, how do you think we can study it, and how do we assess our claims? Use the course readings to guide your discussion, considering who do you agree/disagree with and why. Rather than falling back on simple labels like “positivist,” “interpretivist,” and “pragmatic,” consider what those terms mean, in practice. For this assignment, each student must turn in an individual paper, but you are encouraged to discuss the issues together, to refine your understandings of the concepts and develop your positions.

**2) Group presentation. In class, weeks 4-7 (October 8-Oct 29).**

For each week of the “Methods” section, we’ll start class with a 15-20 minute presentation of the materials, by groups of 3-4 people. Presenters should aim to distill the week’s fairly dense material into key concepts and highlight how the different methods can be deployed in practice. Groups are **STRONGLY DISCOURAGED** from simply assigning 1-2 articles to each person. Instead, work to identify themes. As this material can be rather dry, you are encouraged to be creative in your presentation: using real world examples, visual aids, cartoons, videos, etc.

**3) FOIA request. Due in class, November 12.**

Draft a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) or Mandatory Declassification Review (MDR) request. For guidance, see the [Effective FOIA Requesting for Everyone: A National Security Archive Guide](http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nsa/foia/foia_guide.html), available on the course website or at [http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nsa/foia/foia\\_guide.html](http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nsa/foia/foia_guide.html). Chapter 1-Chapter 4 of the guide (pp. 1-22) outline the process, Appendix 2 lists US agencies subject to FOIA, Appendix 3 consists of sample request letters, and Appendix 5 lists additional resources. For this assignment, you can work in groups of up to four and hand in one assignment. Be sure to choose the right process and adhere to the specific requirements of the agency you select.

**4) Institutional Review Board (IRB) forms. Due in class, November 19.**

Review the University of Minnesota’s IRB Social and Behavioral Sciences Application Form (available on the course website). Complete sections 6, 8 and 13. To complete sections 6 and 8, you will need to invent a research project; this does not need to be detailed or relate to your actual research plans. You are also not required to attach any additional forms (for example, those mentioned in sections 6.4 and 13.9). However, you should review the University of Minnesota document on the Process of Consent (available on the course website) to answer the questions in section 13. For this assignment, you can work in groups of up to four and hand in one assignment.

**5) Interview**

This assignment is to design and conduct at least one interview. You will analyze the transcript of this interview for Assignment #7. The interview can be tied to your dissertation research or can be on an unrelated topic. However, the interview must have a purpose; never waste an informant’s time! It is recommended that you schedule the interview for some time after November 26, as the materials in our Fieldwork and Ethics session (November 19) and Interview session (November 26) will be useful for designing and conducting the interview. When scheduling the interview, you should verify that the interviewee will permit recording, as you will need an interview transcription for Assignment #7. You will turn in your interview guide and your interview transcription with Assignment #7.

**6) Escalade Field Notes, 800-1200 words, due in class, December 10. BRING 3**

**DOUBLE-SPACED COPIES.** “La Course de l’Escalade” is an annual Genevois tradition involving soup and foot races. It will occur on December 7 this year (information at <http://www.escalade.ch>). For the assignment, you will attend a portion of

the festivities as an ethnographer, observing a group's behavior. Write up your field notes to produce a descriptive account to turn in. No interpretation of the event is required. Each student should submit an individual account, although you are welcome to attend the event in groups and discuss your methods together. We will be coding your notes in class on December 10.

**7) Textual Analysis, 1500-2000 words, due by 23:59 on Friday, December 20. Attach interview guide and transcription.**

In this assignment, you'll be analyzing and interpreting the interview(s) you conducted for Assignment #5. Your analysis should identify the research question that guided your interview, explain your interviewee selection, discuss your interview strategy, and describe your method of textual analysis. The assignment should also identify some preliminary findings, based on the interview(s) and discuss avenues for further interview-based research.

**Sept 17: Introduction**

*What are Qualitative Methods?*

**Sept 24: The Positivist Perspective**

- Gary King, Robert O. Keohane and Sidney Verba (1994) *Designing Social Inquiry*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, **pp. 1-33**.
- Henry E. Brady and David Collier, eds. (2004) *Rethinking Social Inquiry*, Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, **Chapter 2, pp. 22-50 and Chapter 9, pp. 139-167**.
- James Mahoney and Gary Goertz "A Tale of Two Cultures: Contrasting Quantitative and Qualitative Research." *Political Analysis* 14: 227-249.
- Evan Lieberman (2005) "Nested Analysis as a Mixed-Method Strategy for Comparative Research," *American Political Science Review* 93(3): 435-452.

**Oct 1: Beyond Positivism**

- Patrick Thaddeus Jackson (2011) *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations*. New York, NY: Routledge, **pp. 24-40. In polycopié**.
- Alexander Wendt (1998) "On Constitution and Causation in International Relations," *Review of International Studies*, 24: 101-117.
- Max Weber (1977) "Objectivity in Social Science and Social Policy," in Fred R. Dallmayr and Thomas A. McCarthy, eds., *Understanding and Social Inquiry*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, **pp. 24-37. In polycopié**.
- Clifford Geertz, "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture," in *The Interpretation of Cultures*. **In polycopié**.
- J. Ann Tickner (2005) "What Is Your Research Program? Some Feminist Answers to International Relations Methodological Questions." *International Studies Quarterly* 49: 1-21.

- Jörg Friedrichs and Friedrich Kratochwil (2009) “On Acting and Knowing: How Pragmatism Can Advance International Relations Research and Methodology.” *International Organization* 63(4): 701-731.

**ASSIGNMENT #1 DUE BY 23:59 FRIDAY, October 4.**

## *Qualitative Methodology*

### **Oct 8: Concepts and Typologies**

- Giovanni Sartori (1970) “Concept Misinformation in Comparative Politics,” *American Political Science Review* 64(4): 1033-1053.
- David Collier and Steven Levitsky (1997) “Democracy with Adjectives: Conceptual Innovation in Comparative Research,” *World Politics* 49(3): 430-451.
- Mark Bevir and Asaf Kedar (2008) “Concept Formation in Political Science: An Anti-Naturalist Critique of Qualitative Methodology,” *Perspectives on Politics* 6(3): 503-517.
- Ido Oren, “Political Science as History: a Reflexive Approach,” in Dvora Yanow and Peregrine Schwartz-Shea, eds., *Interpretation and Method*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, **pp. 215-227. In polycopié.**
- Alexander George and Andrew Bennett (2005) *Case Studies and Theory Development*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, Chapter 11, “Integrating Comparative and Within-Case Analysis: Typological Theory,” **pp. 233-251 only. In polycopié.**

### **Oct 15: Comparative Method**

- John Stuart Mill, “Of the Four Methods of Experimental Inquiry,” from *A System of Logic*, Book 3, Chapter VIII, 1888.
- Arend Lijphart (1971) “Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method” *American Political Science Review* 65: 682-693.
- Sidney Tarrow (2010) “The Strategy of Paired Comparison: Toward a Theory of Practice” *Comparative Political Studies* 43(2): 230-259.
- Stanley Lieberman (1991) “Small N's and Big Conclusion: An Examination of the Reasoning in Comparative Studies Based on a Small Number of Cases.” *Social Forces* 70(2): 307-320.
- Charles Ragin (1998) “The Logic of Qualitative Comparative Analysis” *International Review of Social History* 43: 105-124.

### **Oct 22: Case Studies**

- Eckstein, Harry (1975). “Case Study and Theory in Political Science” in Greenstein, F.I. and N.W. Polsby (eds.), *Handbook of Political Science*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley. **In polycopié.**
- Alexander George and Andrew Bennett (2005) *Case Studies and Theory Development*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, **pp. 67-98. In polycopié.**
- Barbara Geddes (1990) “How the Cases You Choose Affects the Answers You Get: Case Selection in Comparative Politics” *Political Analysis* 2(1): 131-150.

- David Collier and James Mahoney (1996) “Insights and Pitfalls: Selection Bias in Qualitative Research,” *World Politics* 49: 56-91.
- James Mahoney and Gary Goertz (2004) “The Possibility Principle: Choosing Negative Cases in Comparative Research,” *American Political Science Review* 98: 653-669.

**Oct 29: Counterfactuals and Critical Junctures**

- Richard Ned Lebow (2010) *Forbidden Fruit: Counterfactuals and International Relations*. Princeton University Press: Princeton, NJ. **Chapter 2, pp. 29-66 and Chapter 4, pp. 103-133. In polycopié.**
- James Fearon (1991) “Counterfactuals and Hypotheses Testing in Political Science,” *World Politics* 43: 169-95.
- Giovanni Capoccia and Daniel Kelemen (2007) “The Study of Critical Junctures: Theory, Narrative, and Counterfactuals in Historical Institutionalism,” *World Politics* 59(3): 341-369.

**Nov 5: Causal Mechanisms and Process Tracing**

- Elster, Jon (1998), “A Plea for Mechanisms,” chapter 3 (pp. 45-73) in Peter Hedström and Richard Swedberg (eds.) *Social Mechanisms: An Analytical Approach to Social Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. **In polycopié.**
- Jeffrey A. Checkel (2006) “Tracing Causal Mechanisms,” *International Studies Review* 8(2): 362-370.
- Alexander George and Andrew Bennett (2005) *Case Studies and Theory Development*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, Chapter 10, “Process Tracing and Historical Explanation,” **pp. 205-224 only. In polycopié.**
- John Gerring (2006) *Case Study Research: Principles and Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. **Chapter 7, pp. 172-185. In polycopié.**
- David Collier (2011) “Understanding Process Tracing,” *PS*

## *Collecting Qualitative Data*

**Nov 12: Historiography and Archival Research**

**ASSIGNMENT #3 DUE IN CLASS**

- Mark Trachtenberg (2006) *The Craft of International History*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, **pp. 30-168.**
- Ian Lustick (1996) “History, Historiography, and Political Science: Multiple Historical Records and the Problem of Selection Bias,” *American Political Science Review* 90: 605-18.
- Hope Harrison (1996) “Inside the SED Archives: A Researcher's Diary.” *CWIHP Bulletin*.

**Nov 19: Fieldwork and Ethics**

**ASSIGNMENT #4 DUE IN CLASS**

- Christopher B. Barrett and Jeffrey W. Cason (2010) *Overseas Research: A Practical Guide*. New York, NY: Routledge, pp. 6-26, 43-50, 82-89, 102-119.  
**Ebook available at:**  
<http://site.ebrary.com/lib/graduateinstitute/docDetail.action?docID=10382521>
- (2004) "Symposium: Field Research," *Qualitative Methods*.
- Elisabeth Jean Wood (2006) "The Ethical Challenges of Field Research in Conflict Zones," *Qualitative Sociology* 29(3): 373-386.
- Jillian Schwedler (2006) "The Third Gender: Western Female Researchers in the Middle East," *PS: Political Science and Politics* 39(3): 425-428.

**REMEMBER TO SCHEDULE YOUR INTERVIEW FOR ASSIGNMENT #5**

**Nov 26: Interviewing**

- Layna Mosley, ed. (2013) *Interview Research in Political Science*. Chapter 1, pp. 1-30. **In polycopié.**
- David Richards (1996) "Elite Interviewing: Approaches and Pitfalls" *Politics* 16(3): 199-204.
- Philip H.J. Davies (2001) "Spies as Informants: Triangulation and the Interpretation of Elite Interview Data in the Study of the Intelligence and Security Services" *Politics* 21(1): 73-80.
- (2002) "Symposium on Interview Methods in Political Science," *PS: Political Science and Politics* 35:662-688. **Selections by Goldstein (pp. 669-672), and Berry (pp. 679-682).**
- Oisín Tansey (2007) "Process Tracing and Elite Interviewing: A Case for Non-probability Sampling," *PS*.
- **(skim for class, read more closely for the assignment)** Herbert J. Rubin and Irene S. Rubin (2011) *Qualitative Interviewing*, third edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, pp. 1-10, 77-84, 95-169.

**Dec 3: Ethnography**

- Lisa Wedeen (2010) "Ethnographic Work in Political Science," *Annual Review of Political Science* 13: 255-272.
- Carol Cohn (1987) "Sex and Death in the Rational World of Defense Intellectuals," *Signs* 12(4): 687-718.
- Robert M. Emerson, Rachel I. Fretz and Linda L. Shaw (2011) *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*, second edition. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, pp. 1-88.
- Samer Shehata (2006) "Ethnography, Identity, and the Production of Knowledge," in *Interpretation and Method*. pp. 244-263. **In polycopié.**

## *Analyzing Qualitative Data*

### **Dec 10: Coding**

**ASSIGNMENT #6 DUE IN CLASS. BRING 3 DOUBLE-SPACED COPIES.**

- Robert M. Emerson, Rachel I. Fretz and Linda L. Shaw (2011) *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*, pp. 171-199.
- Johnny Saldaña, *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*, Los Angeles: Sage Publications. Chapter 1, pp. 1-40. **In photocopié.**
- Herbert J. Rubin and Irene S. Rubin (2011) *Qualitative Interviewing*, pp. 190-211.
- Kimberley A. Neuendorf (2002) *The Content Analysis Guidebook*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, pp. 1-25, 50-51, 121-124. **In photocopié.**

### **Dec 17: Discourse Analysis and Genealogy**

- Jennifer Milliken (1999) "The Study of Discourse in International Relations: A Critique of Research and Methods" *European Journal of International Relations*. 5(2): 225-54.
- (2004) "Symposium on Discourse and Content Analysis." *Qualitative Methods*, pp. 15-38. **Read all except the Lowe selection (pp. 25-27).**
- Jutta Weldes (2006) "High Politics and Low Data: Globalization Discourses and Popular Culture," in *Interpretation and Method*, pp. 176-186. **In photocopié.**
- Kevin C. Dunn (2006) "Examining Historical Representations," *International Studies Review* 8(2): 370-381
- Michel Foucault, reading TBA

**ASSIGNMENT #7 DUE BY 23:59 ON FRIDAY, DECEMBER 20**