

FINAL SHORT description PhD course Fall 2016

Social Science Research Design and Methods

Fall 2016 (Part I: Aug 29th-31st and Part II: 3rd-5th Oct)

Faculty

Professor Susana Borrás, Department of Business and Politics (DBP)

Associate professor Antje Vetterlein, Department of Business and Politics (DBP)

Associate professor Nicholas Charron, Department of Political Science, University of Gothenburg (Sweden)

Course coordinator

Susana Borrás

Prerequisites

This is a course intended for PhD candidates with an MA/MSc in a relevant social and human science discipline. The course is relevant to PhD students at any stage in their career – from first year students, to more advanced. Only PhD students can participate in the course.

It is a precondition for receiving the course diploma that the PhD student attends the whole course and submits an initial paper and a final paper (See below on the paper).

Aim

The purpose of the course is to provide the PhD students with hands-on skills and an overview of key issues regarding research design and methods in the social sciences. Students will learn about and apply concepts of social science research design and learn to present these concepts in their own dissertations and future research articles. While students will inevitably specialize in a limited number of methods in their own work, the course is designed to give a broad overview of issues concerning a wide range of issues and pitfall in social science inquiry. One never knows what type of research one might be doing in ten years!

Learning objectives:

- Learn to better define and shape a research question
- Learn to position their work in a larger context within their respective literature and to critically assess this literature and show why their work is relevant.
- Improve skills in operationalizing concepts relevant to their work, thinking about validity and reliability of measures.
- Develop alternative research designs and to strengthen their skills within more familiar designs.

- Integrate the concepts learnt in the course into their own PhD projects and make a presentation of your work on the final workshop day.

Content

The course will begin with readings and discussions about research and the study of causation in the social sciences. The first session will therefore focus on what is a good research question, as well as theory and theory building in the social sciences. Next, we will talk about how one frames the research question in to a broader context – namely, what makes a good literature review? We will then discuss how one should think about operationalization of one’s concepts, issues around measurement – including the concepts of validity (internal and external) and reliability. Next we will discuss the basics of a research design, and how the design of the research should be structured. After that we will delve into some specific methods associated to different research designs, namely, comparative research, as well as some key qualitative and quantitative research methods, and how these are part and parcel of specific models of research design. Hence, we will be looking into some specific designs from which students can choose in addressing their research questions. These include: small-N case study work, interviews and content analysis, experimental and quasi-experimental designs, counterfactuals, statistical-large-N research and– discussing the advantages, and common problems associated with each type of design.

The course is intended for students at the PhD level, and will be as ‘applied’ as possible. The students will therefore be asked to take the key topics discussed in the course and apply them to their own work, presenting their progress in pairs or individually to the group. Students will therefore be expected to present and share their work as applied to this course during the term.

The course is divided into two parts:

- Part one will be held in 3 full consecutive days, and will deal with the most important issues issues of research design, and
- Part two will be held in 3 full consecutive days, and will focus on giving an overview of research methods, and the final workshop with the students.

Paper and assignment during the course:

In order to keep it ‘hands on’, the students have to prepare a paper before the course starts, as a precondition for attendance. The paper will be of max. 3.000 words and will be submitted to the course coordinator (Susana Borrás), latest August 21st. This paper will be the basis for the presentations and discussions during Part one of the course. The paper does not need to be original. It can be a copy/summary of the PhD project description/synopsis. It should contain the following elements of the student own PhD dissertation: a short introduction/problem formulation, the main research question (and sub-questions if relevant), a short presentation of the theory/ies that guide the dissertation, a short description of the methods and data to be used.

During the 1st and 2nd part of the course, the students will have time (a bit more than one month) to revise that paper on the basis of what they have learnt during Part one, and submit a revised paper (to Susana Borrás) before Part two commences (before Oct 3rd). That revised paper will be the basis for the discussions in the final workshop in Part two, where they will get substantive feedback about their projects. The revised paper should not be longer than 5.000 words.

Teaching style

The goal is to sharpen the research design in the PhD dissertations and/or individual research papers. To that end we will set aside sufficient time to carefully examine and discuss the papers submitted by the participants.

Therefore the course will be in seminar format, with a mix of lecturing, teacher-student discussions and student presentations of their own research and subsequent assignments during the course.

Lecture plan

PART I			
Session	Date & time	Teacher	Title
Day 1	Monday 29 aug	9.00-12.00 Susana Borrás lecture (4 lektioner) 13:00-16:00 Susana Borrás chairing PhD student presentations	Introduction, Research Questions and Literature Reviews
Day 2	Tuesday 30 aug	9.00-12.00 Susana Borrás lecture (4 lektioner) 13.00-16.00 Susana Borrás chairing PhD student presentations	Framing theories, deriving hypothesis, operationalization of concepts, and issues related to measurement.
Day 3	Wednesday 31 aug	9.00-12.00 Susana Borrás lecture (4 lektioner) 13.00-16.00 Susana Borrás chairing PhD student presentations	Key methodological issues in comparative research
PART II			
Day 4	Monday 3 rd Oct	9.00-12.00 Antje Vetterlein lecture (4 lektioner)	Case Studies and Small-N

		13:00-16:00 Antje Vetterlein lecture (4 lektioner)	Interview and Content Analysis
Day 5	Tuesday 4 th Oct	9.00-12.00 Nicholas Charron lecture (4 lektioner) 13:00-16:00 Nicholas Charron lecture (4 lektioner)	Large-N Quantitative Designs and Experiments Survey Research
Day 6	Wednesday 5 th Oct	9.00-11:15 Susana Borrás; Antje Vetterlein, Nicholas Charron – lecture (3 lektioner x 3 lærer) 11:45-12:30 PhD student presentations of assignment 4 (final paper) and feed back (1 lektion x 3 lærer) 13.30-17:00 PhD student presentations of assignment 4 (final paper) and feed back (3 lektioner x 3 lærer)	Summary of key topics Workshop with Student presentations Workshop with Student presentations

Course literature

Each session has a specific reading list, which is divided into obligatory readings and recommended readings. Please, note that the detailed course description with all the corresponding reading lists for each session will be distributed to the participants after their enrollment in the course.

Students are requested to read the corresponding literature ahead of each of the respective sessions.

Obligatory readings:

Books

Students are encouraged to buy or to borrow from the library the following two books:

- King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry*, Princeton: Princeton University Press
- Gerring, John. 2012. *Social Science Methodology: A Unified Framework*. 2nd edition. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Articles and book chapters (Provisional list):

All these readings will be uploaded onto LEARN

Gerring, John. 2005. "Causation: A Unified Framework for the Social Sciences." *The Journal of Theoretical Politics*, 17(2): 163-198.

Gerring, John. 2004. What Is a Case Study and What Is It Good For? *American Political Science Review* 98: 341-354.

King, Gary, et al. "Enhancing the validity and cross-cultural comparability of measurement in survey research." *American Political Science Review* 98.1 (2004): 191-207.

Knopf, Jeffery. 2006. "Doing a Literature Review." *PS*, January: 127-132.

Schelling, Thomas C. *Micromotives and macrobehavior*. WW Norton & Company, 2006. Chapter 1, pps. 11-43.

Geddes, Barbara. "How the cases you choose affect the answers you get: Selection bias in comparative politics." *Political analysis* 2.1 (1990): 131-150.

Ostrom, Elinor. "A behavioral approach to the rational choice theory of collective action: Presidential address, American Political Science Association, 1997." *American Political Science Review* (1998): 1-22.

Leeds, Brett Ashley. 1999. 'Writing a research paper for a graduate seminar in political science' <http://www.ruf.rice.edu/~leeds/documents/541rpf13.pdf>

Adcock, Robert and David Collier. 2001. "Measurement Validity: A Shared Standard for Qualitative and Quantitative Research." *The American Political Science Review*, 95(3):529-546

Sullivan, John, James Piereson, George Marcus. 1979. "An Alternative Conceptualization of Political Tolerance: Illusionary Increases 1950s-1970s." *American Political Science Review*, 73,3:781-794.

Jeffrey J. Mondak and Mitchell S. Sanders. 2003. *Tolerance and Intolerance, 1976-1998*. *American Journal of Political Science* 47: 492-502.

James L. Gibson. 2005. On the Nature of Tolerance: Dichotomous or Continuous? *Political Behavior* 27: 313-323.

Jeffrey J. Mondak and Mitchell S. Sanders. 2005. The Complexity of Tolerance and Intolerance Judgments: A Response to Gibson. *Political Behavior* 27: 325-337.

Jonathan Kirshner. 1996. 'Alfred Hitchcock and the Art of Research'. *PS: Political Science and Politics* 29: 511-513.

Bouchikhi, Hamid. "A constructivist framework for understanding entrepreneurship performance." *Organization Studies* 14.4 (1993): 549-570.

Blyth, Mark. "Structures do not come with an instruction sheet: Interests, ideas, and progress in political science." *Perspectives on Politics* 1 (2003): 695-706.

Olson, Mancur, *The logic of collective action: public goods and the theory of groups*. Vol. 124. Harvard University Press, 2009. Chapters 1 and 2, pps 5-60.

Flyvbjerg, Bent. "Five misunderstandings about case-study research." *Qualitative inquiry* 12.2 (2006): 219-245.

King, Gary. "How not to lie with statistics: Avoiding common mistakes in quantitative political science." *American Journal of Political Science* (1986): 666-687.

Cliff, Norman. "Some cautions concerning the application of causal modeling methods." *Multivariate behavioral research* 18.1 (1983): 115-126.

McDermott, Rose. "Experimental methods in political science." *Annual Review of Political Science* 5.1 (2002): 31-61.

Zaller, John, and Stanley Feldman. "A simple theory of the survey response: Answering questions versus revealing preferences." *American journal of political science* (1992): 579-616.

Verba, Sidney. "The citizen as respondent: sample surveys and American democracy presidential address, American Political Science Association, 1995." *American Political Science Review* (1996): 1-7.

Tourangeau, Roger, and Ting Yan. "Sensitive questions in surveys." *Psychological bulletin* 133.5 (2007): 859.

PhD School

PhD School in Organisation and Management Studies

ECTS

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Enroll no later than

Monday, August 5th 2016

Mac nr of participants

15

Practicalities

Participants will be offered lunch.