



UCD SCHOOL OF POLITICS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

POL 41410: Introduction to Research Design 2013-14

Lecturer

Dr. Aidan Regan

Room:**E-mail:****Office Hours:****Course Timetable**

Seminars will be held from 9am-11am on Fridays in Room G317 of the Newman Building.

Synopsis

This course introduces students to the logic of research design. Students will emerge better equipped to undertake research that will produce valid casual inferences about the political and social world.

Active participation in class discussion is required throughout the course. Students must read the core readings before coming to class.

Programme

Week 1/ Feb	How to think about research questions and design
Week 2/ Feb	How to build a causal explanation
Week 3/ Feb	How to operationalize concepts and construct typologies
Week 5/ Mar	How to analyse and measure empirical data
Week 4/ Mar	How to select cases and comparisons
Week 6/ Mar	Taking stock: constructing intelligent research design

Assessment

40%	Over the course students must submit at least one 500-word response paper to a reading for a given session and post that paper on blackboard the night before class. The response papers are fundamental for the holding of a good discussion of the reading materials.
60%	4,000 word essay related to the research question/design of your MA thesis.

Required Books

- Henry E Brady and David Collier (eds) 2004 (or 2010). Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools and Shared Standards. Lahman, MD: Roman and Littlefield.
- Bob Hancké (2009). Intelligent Research Design. Oxford University Press.
- Gary King, Robert Keohane, Sidney Verba (1994). Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research, Princeton. Princeton University Press.

Week 1 (Jan 31st). How to Think about Research Design

Required:

Bob Hancké (2009). *Intelligent Research Design*. Oxford University Press. Chapter 1

Henry E Brady, “Doing Good and Doing Better: How Far Does the Quantitative Template Get Us?” Chapter 3 in Brady and Collier (2004). *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards*, New York: Rowman and Littlefield.

King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane and Sidney Verba. (1994). *Designing Social Inquiry*, Chapter 1, Pages 3-28

Additional:

Firebaugh, Glenn (2008). *The Seven Rules of Social Research*, Chapter 1: “There Should Be the Possibility of Surprise”, read only pages 1-13. **PDF** at <http://press.princeton.edu/chapters/s8593.pdf>

Geddes, Barbara (2003). *Paradigms and Sandcastles*, Chapter 2: “Big Questions, Little Answers: How the Questions You Choose Affect the Answers You Get”. **PDF** at carbon.ucdenver.edu/~kkrizek/pdfs/Geddes.pdf

Watts, Michael. “Holy Grail: In Pursuit of the Dissertation Proposal.” **PDF** available at: <http://iis.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/InPursuitofPhD.pdf>

Schmitter, P. (2008). The design of social and political research. In *Approaches and Methodologies in the Social Sciences: A Pluralist Perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 263–295.

Week 2 (Feb 7th). How to Build a Causal Explanation

Required:

Bob Hancké (2009). *Intelligent Research Design*. Oxford University Press. Chapter 2

James Mahoney (2008). Toward a Unified Theory of Causality. *Comparative Political Studies*, 41, pp.412–436.

John Goldthorpe (2001). “Causation, statistics, and sociology” *European Sociological Review* 1-10 (first ten pages only).

Additional:

King, Keohane, and Verba (1994). *Designing Social Inquiry*, 75-85, 99-114, 168-196 and 199-207.

Elster, Jon (1989). *Nuts and Bolts for the Social Sciences*. Pages 3-10 in the Introduction.

Héritier, A. (2008). Causal explanation. In *Approaches and Methodologies in the Social Sciences: A Pluralist Perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 61–79.

Ragin, C.C. (2008). *Redesigning Social Inquiry: Fuzzy sets and beyond*, Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, pp.13-23.

Week 3 (Feb 14th). How to Operationalize Concepts and Construct Typologies

Required:

David Collier and James E Mahoney (1993). Conceptual Stretching Revisited. *American Political Science Review* 87:4, 845-55.

David Collier, Jody LaPorte & Jason Seawright (2012). Putting Typologies to Work. Concept Formation, Measurement, and Analytic Rigor. *Political Research Quarterly*, 65(1), pp.217–232.

John Gerring (2001). *Social Science Methodology: A Criterial Framework*, Chapter 3: “Concepts: General Criteria” **PDF available**.

Additional:

Collier, David, Henry E. Brady, and Jason Seawright (2004) “Conceptualization and Measurement,” pp. 202-09 in Henry Brady and David Collier, eds., *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield).

Sartori, G (1970). Concept Misformation in Comparative Politics. *The American Political Science Review*, 64(4), pp.1033–1053.

Goertz, Gary. “Increasing Concept-Measurement Consistency” in *Social Science Concepts: A User’s Guide*, Pp 95-127. **PDF available**.

Week 4 (Feb 21). How to Analyse and Measure Empirical Data

Required:

Bob Hancké (2009). *Intelligent Research Design*. Oxford University Press. Chapter 4

Robert Adcock and David Collier. (2001). “Measurement Validity: A Shared Standard for Qualitative and Quantitative Research.” *American Political Science Review* pp 529-546

Kathleen Thelen (2009). Institutional change in advanced political economies. *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, 47(3), 471-498.

Additional:

King, Keohane, and Verba (1994). *DSI*, pages 150-157. **PDF available**.

Alan Bryman (2004). *Social Research Methods*. pp. 65-74.

Gerardo L Munck & Jay Verkuilen (2002). ‘Measuring Democracy: Evaluating Alternative Indices,’ *Comparative Political Studies* 35:1, 5-34

Shively, W.P. (2005). *The Craft of Political Research* 6th ed., Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall. Ch. 4 and 5.

For data theory and scaling techniques:

Jacoby, W.G., 1991. *Data Theory and Dimensional Analysis*, Newbury Park, Calif: SAGE.

Week 5 (Feb 28th). How to Select Cases and Comparisons

Required:

Bob Hancké (2009). *Intelligent Research Design*. Oxford University Press. Chapter 3

Jason Seawright and John Gerring (2008). Case Selection Techniques: A Menu of Quantitative and Qualitative Options. *Political Research Quarterly* 61:294.

"What is A Case?, Exploring the Foundation of Social Inquiry, Cambridge University Press, pp. 1-18. What is a case? <http://poli.haifa.ac.il/~levi/res/case3.htm>

Additional:

Gerring, John (2008). "Case Selection for Case-Study Analysis: Qualitative and Quantitative Techniques" in *Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology*. **PDF available**.

APSA Organized section for qualitative and multi-method research, symposium: case selection, case studies and causal inference, pages 2-14 available at: <http://polisci.berkeley.edu/people/faculty/CollierD/Symposium%20-%20Case%20Selection.pdf>

Collier, David. 1995. "Translating quantitative methods for qualitative researchers: the case of selection bias". *American Political Science Review* **PDF available at** <http://polisci.berkeley.edu/people/faculty/CollierD/APSR%201995.pdf>

John Stuart Mill, "Two Methods of Comparison," in *A System of Logic*, as excerpted in Charles Ragin, *The Comparative Method: Moving beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies*. **PDF:**

<http://poli.haifa.ac.il/~levi/res/logic1.htm>

<http://poli.haifa.ac.il/~levi/res/logic2.htm>

Della Porta, D (2008). Comparative analysis: case-oriented versus variable-oriented research. In D. Della Porta & M. Keating, eds. *Approaches and Methodologies in the Social Sciences: A Pluralist Perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Read pp.208-217.

Week 6 (Mar 7th) Taking Stock: Constructing Intelligent Research Design

Each student will be expected to discuss the following questions:

What is the puzzle of your research?

What is your specific question?

What is the theoretical debate in the literature?

What are the observable implications of your argument?