

14335.0105: Research Design and Research Logic in Comparative Politics

Summer Term 2019

Time: Tue 4pm-5:30pm

Location: Building 203, room: 6
Institutshörsaal, Gottfried-Keller-Str., 6

Core Course at Cologne Graduate School and International Max Planck Research School,
Forschungsprojekt Vergleichende Politik for MA Students

6 ECTS points

Dr. Sarah Berens

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Outline of the Course

This course provides essential knowledge of research design problems and solutions in comparative social research. The course follows the main stages of a research project: identification of a research question – concept formation and formulation of hypotheses – selection of research design – case selection – data collection and analysis. Examples will be based on political economy theories (with a strong emphasis on micro theories), examples from the research frontier on distributive politics and political economy questions on developing countries.

Goal

The goal of the seminar is to establish a genuine understanding of the ingredients of theory building and the elements needed to develop a rigorous research design that allows addressing social science questions. The seminar provides participants with an overview of seminal approaches to theory building, research design and empirical identification.

Prerequisites

A good knowledge of general political science concepts, theories and basic quantitative and qualitative methods is required. Students should be able to understand and articulate themselves in English as this will be the general classroom language. Of course, perfection is not required but you should be able to make yourself understood. The term paper should be written in English as well.

Requirements

The sessions in class are designed as a very participatory seminar format. This means that the class also depends on your in-class participation. In order to ensure the quality of

participation I expect you to have prepared the required readings prior to class and to attend all meetings. The mandatory readings will be provided electronically on Ilias. You should be prepared to give a spontaneous 5 minutes presentation on the required readings in class. Moreover, each participant will prepare a **10 minutes presentation** based on the MA thesis or dissertation project in the final sessions of the class and act as a **discussant** for another presenter (**2-4 minutes**).

The **term paper** should contain all the steps of a research design as discussed in class and contain no more than 6.000 words (approximately 15-20 pages). A list of references and appendices do not count towards the page limit. You should be clear about your theory, data and methodological approach. It is vital to develop a clear research design that supports your analytical interest. You are expected to hand in a 2-page proposal for the paper by **May 31st** (as PDF via email). It should describe the puzzle/research question, working hypotheses, and the methods (and possibly data) you are planning to use.

The final paper is due on **September 6th 2019** (24:00). Please submit your paper electronically as a PDF document to sarah.berens@uni-koeln.de. Late papers will be punished. The final grade is composed of the term paper, in-class participation and the individual presentation.

In addition to the electronic paper version (which will be checked for plagiarism), please submit a paper version in the course of the week of the due date at the secretary of the [CCCCP](#) (please check our homepage for opening hours). The paper version must contain the following signed statement:

http://www.cccp.uni-koeln.de/fileadmin/wiso_fak/cccp/Lehre/ErklaerungzuArbeiten.pdf

General References:

Gschwend, Thomas/Schimmelfennig, Frank (eds) (2007). *Research Design in Political Science: How to Practice What They Preach*. London: Palgrave Macmillan [= GS].

Geddes, Barbara (2002). *Paradigms and Sand Castles. Theory Building and Research Design in Comparative Politics*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press [= GEDDES].

Gerring, John (2001). *Social Science Methodology. A Criterial Framework*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

King, Gary/Keohane, Robert/Verba, Sidney (1994). *Designing Social Inquiry. Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton: Princeton University Press [= KKV].

Morton, Rebecca (1999). *Methods and Models. A Guide to the Empirical Analysis of Formal Models in Political Science*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press [= MORTON].

Course Schedule:

1. April 2nd 2019: Introduction and Overview *Attention!* **In the first week, the course takes place in the same room BUT at 17:45-19:15!**

I. Logic

2. April 9th 2019: Identification of a Research Question

- GS 21-38. : Lehnert, Matthias, Miller, Bernhard and Wonka, Arndt (2007). Increasing the Relevance of Research Questions: Considerations on Theoretical and Social Relevance in Political Science, in: Gschwend, Thomas/Schimmelfennig, Frank (eds) (2007). *Research Design in Political Science: How to Practice What They Preach*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 21-38.
- GEDDES 1-88.

3. April 16th 2019: Description and Causality

- KKV 3-33 and 75-114.
- Gerring, John (2005). Causation: A Unified Framework for the Social Sciences. *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 17(2), 163-98.
- Ganghof, Steffen (2005). Vergleichen in qualitativer und quantitativer Politikwissenschaft: X-zentrierte versus Y-zentrierte Forschungsstrategien, in: Sabine Kropp and Michael Minkenberg (eds), *Vergleichen in der Politikwissenschaft*. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag, 76-93.

4. April 23th 2019: Theory and Concept Formation

- MORTON 33-97.: Chapter 2 & Chapter 3
- GS 62-79: : Lehnert, Matthias (2007). Typologies in Social Inquiry, in: Gschwend, Thomas/Schimmelfennig, Frank (eds) (2007). *Research Design in Political Science: How to Practice What They Preach*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 62-79.
- Goertz, Gary (2006): *Social Science Concepts: A User's Guide*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Ch. 2-4.

5. April 30th 2019: Formulation of Hypotheses and Models: (a) Game Theory & (b) Simulations

- Scharpf, Fritz W. (1997). *Games Real Actors Play. Actor-Centered Institutionalism in Policy Research*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 69-96.
- Laver, Michael (2005). Policy and the Dynamics of Political Competition. *American Political Science Review* 99(2), 263-81.
- Laver, Michael and Ernest Sergenti (2012). *Party Competition: An Agent-based Model*.

Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 5-9.

II. Designs

6. May 7th 2019: Experiments and Quasi Experiments

- Druckman, James N. et al. (2006). The Growth and Development of Experimental Research in Political Science. *American Political Science Review* 100(4), 627-35.
- Morton, Rebecca B. and Kenneth C. Williams (2008). Experimentation in Political Science, in: Janet Box-Steffensmeier, David Collier and Henry Brady (eds): *The Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 339-56.
- Dunning, Thad (2008). Improving Causal Inference: Strengths and Limitations of Natural Experiments. *Political Research Quarterly* 61 (2), 282-93.
- Lupu, N., & Michelitch, K. (2018). Advances in survey methods for the developing world. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 21, 195-214.

Recommended:

- Humphreys, M. (2015). Reflections on the ethics of social experimentation. *Journal of Globalization and Development*, 6(1), 87-112.
- Humphreys, M., & Weinstein, J. M. (2009). Field experiments and the political economy of development. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 12, 367-378.

7. May 14th 2019: Case Studies and Criteria of Case Selection

- KKV 34-74 and 208-230.
- GEDDES 89-129.
- Gerring, John (2007). Case Study Research: Principles and Practices. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: Ch. 5.
- Collier, David, and James Mahoney (1996). Insights and Pitfalls: Selection Bias in Qualitative Research. *World Politics* 49(1), 56-91.

8. May 21st 2019: Analytic Narratives

- Bates, Robert et al. (2000). The Analytical Narrative Project. *American Political Science Review* 94(3), 696-702.

III. Empirical Applications

9. May 28th 2019: Small N Studies

- KKV 115-149.
- GEDDES 131-173.
- Lieberson, Stanley (1991). Small Ns and Big Conclusions: An Examination of the Reasoning in Comparative Studies Based on a Small Number of Cases. *Social Forces* 70(2), 307-320.
- Mahoney, James (1999). Nominal, Ordinal, and Narrative Appraisal in Macrocausal Analysis. *American Journal of Sociology* 104(4),1154-96.

10. June 4th 2019: Large N Studies and Mixed-Methods Designs

- GS 127-144: Thiem, Janina (2007). Dealing Effectively with Selection Bias in Large-n Research, in: Gschwend, Thomas/Schimmelfennig, Frank (eds) (2007). *Research Design in Political Science: How to Practice What They Preach*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 62-79.
- Schrodt, Philip A. (2006). Beyond the Linear Frequentist Orthodoxy. *Political Analysis* 14(3), 335-9.
- Thomson, Robert (2007). Time to Comply: National Responses to Six EU Labour Market Directives Revisited. *West European Politics* 30(5), 987-1008.
- Falkner, Gerda (2007). Time to Discuss: Data to Crunch or Problems to Solve? A Rejoinder to Robert Thomson. *West European Politics* 30(5), 1009-21.
- Lieberman, Evan S. (2005). Nested Analysis as a Mixed-method Strategy for Comparative Research. *American Political Science Review* 99(3), 435-52.
- Rohlfing, Ingo (2008). What You See and What You Get: Pitfalls and Principles of Nested Analysis in Comparative Research. *Comparative Political Studies* 41(11), 1492-1514.

IV. Paper Presentations

11. June 18th 2019: Presentation and Discussion of Research Projects

12. June 25th 2019: Presentation and Discussion of Research Projects

13. July 2nd 2019: Presentation and Discussion of Research Projects

14. July 9th 2019: Presentation and Discussion of Research Projects