

Summer Term 2025
Prof. Dr. André Kaiser

(14335.0105) **Research Design and Research Logic in Comparative Politics**

Friday, 12:00 – 13:30 in Room S105 (IBW Building), except 18 July Room 3.40 (IBW Building, third floor) workshop 12:00 – 18:00.

This class is organized in three parts:

(1) You are expected to read a textbook on research design that is online available via the University Library: Gschwend, Thomas/Schimmelfennig, Frank (eds) (2007). *Research Design in Political Science: How to Practice What They Preach*. London: Palgrave Macmillan. Please organize this on a weekly basis. You are expected to write an exposé that deals with the different steps 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. This exposé may be based on a research paper that you have written in the past (e.g. your BA thesis) or – ideally – that you plan to write in the near future (e.g. your planned MA thesis or PhD thesis).

(2) This exposé will be used (a) for your presentation (6 minutes max.) in class (see 3) and (b) for the term paper that you will need to hand in on September 1st 2025 at the latest (no exceptions possible!).

(3) We will meet in presence throughout.

Friday, April 11, 12:00 - 13:30

Friday, April 25, 12:00 - 13:30

Friday, May 2, 12:00 - 13:30

Friday, May 16, 12:00 - 13:30

Friday, June 6, 12:00 - 13:30

Friday, June 20, 12:00 – 13:30 (probably with some student presentations)

Friday, July 4, 12:00 - 13:30 (probably with some student presentations)

Friday, July 18, 12:00 - 18:00 (student presentations)

This course provides essential knowledge of research design problems and solutions in comparative social research. I take illustrations mainly from my own research in comparative politics. 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. Students are expected to present their own research projects in class as well as to draft a paper of about 5 to 10 pages (MA students)/10 to 15 pages (PhD students) in length.

General References:

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.

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

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) Introduction and Overview
- (2) Identification of a Research Question

GS 21-38.
GEDDES 1-88.

- (3) 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) Theory and Concept Formation

MORTON 33-97.
GS 62-79.
Goertz, Gary (2006): Social Science Concepts: A User's Guide. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Ch. 2-4.

- (5) Formulation of Hypotheses and Models

- (a) Game Theory
- (b) Simulation

GEDDES 27-88.
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.

- (6) Designs: 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. and Michelitch, K. (2018). Advances in Survey Methods for the Developing World. *Annual Review of Political Science* 21, 195-214,

(7) Designs: 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) Designs: Analytic Narratives

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

(9) Designs: 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), 307-20.

Mahoney, James (1999). Nominal, Ordinal, and Narrative Appraisal in Macrocausal Analysis. *American Journal of Sociology* 104(4), 1154-96.

(10) Designs: Large N Studies and Mixed-Methods Designs

GS 127-144.

Pommeranz, Dina (2017). Impact Evaluation Methods in Public Economics. *Public Finance Review* 45(1), 10-43.

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.

(11) Presentation and Discussion of Research Projects