

***Advanced Qualitative Methods in Conflict Studies: Case Research and Process Analytics***

A Doctoral Course within the [Research School on Peace & Conflict](#)

**Overview:** This seminar provides an in-depth introduction to case-based methods and process analytics. We begin with some preliminaries (epistemology, ethics, transparency) and then survey key methods, including case studies, case selection and several techniques designed to capture process. The latter include interviewing, practice analytics and process tracing. Whenever possible, students will be introduced to both the positivist and interpretive variants of particular methods.

In the course's second part, we move from the conceptual to the applied, examining case and process methods in action - in conflict zones and post-conflict settings. Epistemology, ethics, measurement and data-access/transparency are key themes throughout. The fundamental goal is for students to acquire sufficient knowledge to be smart, epistemologically plural and rigorous users of case-based research in conflict and post-conflict settings.

**Credits:** 10 ECTS.

**Requirements:** There are two mandatory requirements; two others are optional.

**Mandatory**

**1) Active Participation in Class Discussions:** The course will be run as a seminar, where debate and discussion are the norm; for each session, written discussion questions will serve as our starting point. For this format to be successful, students need to read the seminar readings prior to our first meeting on 7 June.

**2) Preparation of Discussion Points:** For each class session, students should prepare a brief list of discussion questions and comments (3-5 in number), based on the readings. What are their strong and weak points? Their meta-theoretical, theoretical, methodological, ethical, empirical contributions/limitations? How do they relate to or build upon other readings or discussions? Your discussion questions should be uploaded to the seminar Dropbox prior to our first meeting on 7 June.

**Optional**

**1) Completion of an Analytic Essay:** If students wish to receive ECTS credit for the course, they must submit an analytic essay. You have two options. (I) Prepare an analytic review on a topic that is of special interest and is consistent with the course's purpose and theme; or (II) prepare a draft research design for a PhD project where qualitative methods and process analytics play some role. In either case, essays should be 6000-10000 words and are due by 15 September 2021. On the first day of class – Monday, 7 June - students should e-mail the instructor a 1-2 page introduction to their proposed essay. These overviews will then be discussed at one-on-one meetings on the morning of Wednesday, 9 June, 0900 - 1200, when there will be no formal class sessions.

**2) Participation in Half-Day Workshop:** On the afternoon of Wednesday, 9 June, 1315 - 1630, students will have the opportunity to attend a half-day workshop, where, in a hands-on, group setting they will apply the case/process literature to their own PhD projects.

The workshop – while not required – is open to all course participants. If you wish to have your dissertation project and its methods discussed, please upload to the seminar Dropbox a 3-5 page overview, and do so by Monday, 7 June. The overview should explain and justify your choice of methods and the practical/data-related/ethical challenges you are encountering as you seek to operationalize them.

**Readings:** The following six books should be purchased.

Autesserre, Severine, *The Trouble with the Congo: Local Violence and the Failure of International Peacebuilding* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010)

Bennett, Andrew and Jeffrey T. Checkel, Editors, *Process Tracing: From Metaphor to Analytic Tool* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015)

Cohen, Dara Kay, *Rape during Civil War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2016)

Gerring, John, *Case Study Research: Principles and Practices, Second Edition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017)

Pouliot, Vincent, *International Security in Practice: The Politics of NATO-Russia Diplomacy* (NY: Cambridge University Press, 2010)

Straus, Scott, *Making and Unmaking Nations: War, Leadership and Genocide in Modern Africa* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015)

If you do not wish to purchase books, the Autesserre, Bennett/Checkel, Cohen and Pouliot volumes are available as e-books, which your university library may have. Otherwise, students should be able to access much of the assigned reading – especially journal articles - through their local university libraries. In addition, we have uploaded 12 readings to the seminar Dropbox, including pdf copies of the Bennett/Checkel and Gerring books.

## **Syllabus and Class Schedule**

### ***Day #1: Monday, 7 June***

#### **Session I (0900 – 1100): The Preliminaries – Epistemology, Ethics, Transparency**

##### **Epistemology**

della Porta, Donatella and Michael Keating, “How Many Approaches in the Social Sciences? An Epistemological Introduction,” in Donatella della Porta and Michael Keating, Editors, *Approaches and Methodologies in the Social Sciences: A Pluralist Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), chapter 2.

Hopf, Ted, “The Limits of Interpreting Evidence,” in Richard Ned Lebow and Mark Lichbach, Editors, *Theory and Evidence in Comparative Politics and International*

*Relations* (NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), chapter 3.

## **Ethics**

Wood, Elisabeth Jean, "The Ethical Challenges of Field Research in Conflict Zones," *Qualitative Sociology* 29/3 (2006): 373-86.

Cronin-Furman, Kate and Milli Lake, "Ethics Abroad: Fieldwork in Fragile and Violent Contexts," *PS: Political Science & Politics* 51/3 (July 2018): 607-614.

## **Transparency**

Symposium, "[Data Access and Research Transparency \(DA-RT\)](#)," *Comparative Politics Newsletter: The Organized Section in Comparative Politics of the American Political Science Association* 26/1 (Spring 2016): 10-64.

Monroe, Kristen Renwick, "The Rush to Transparency: DA-RT and the Potential Dangers for Qualitative Research," *Perspectives on Politics* 16/1 (2018): 141-48.

Jacobs, Alan, *et al*, "The Qualitative Transparency Deliberations: Insights and Implications," *Perspectives on Politics* 19/1 (March 2021): 171-208.

## **Session II (1100 – 1200, 1315 - 1430): Case Studies – Background and Method**

Gerring, John, *Case Study Research: Principles and Practices, Second Edition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), chapters 1-3, 5, 7-8, 11.

George, Alexander and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005), chapters 1, 3-5.

## **Session III (1430 – 1630): Capturing Process – The Role of Interviewing**

Bryman, Alan and Edward Bell, *Social Research Methods, Fourth Edition* (NY: Oxford University Press, 2016), chapter 11.

Fujii, Lee Ann, *Interviewing in Social Science Research: A Relational Approach* (London: Routledge, 2018), chapters 1-2, 4-5.

## **Day #2: Tuesday, 8 June**

### **Session IV (0900 - 1200): Capturing Process – The Role of Social Practices**

Adler, Emanuel and Vincent Pouliot, "International Practices," *International Theory* 3/1 (2011): 1–36.

Pouliot, Vincent, *International Security in Practice: The Politics of NATO-Russia Diplomacy* (NY: Cambridge University Press, 2010), chapters 1-4, 7.

Cornut, Jérémié and Nicolas de Zamaróczy, "How Can Documents Speak about Practices? Practice Tracing, the Wikileaks Cables, and Diplomatic Culture," *Cooperation and Conflict* (Online First - 22.11.2020): <https://doi.org/10.1177/0010836720972426>.

### **Session V (1315 - 1630): Capturing Process – Using Process Tracing to Bring It All Together**

Bennett, Andrew and Jeffrey T. Checkel, Editors, *Process Tracing: From Metaphor to Analytic Tool* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), chapters 1-3, 7-10.

Schwartz, Rachel and Scott Straus, “What Drives Violence against Civilians in Civil War? Evidence from Guatemala’s Conflict Archives,” *Journal of Peace Research* 55/2 (2018): 222–235.

Norman, Ludvig, “Rethinking Causal Explanation in Interpretive International Studies,” *European Journal of International Relations* (Online First - 16.04.2021): <https://doi.org/10.1177/13540661211006454>.

### ***Day #3: Wednesday, 9 June***

**Session VI (0900 - 1200): Individual Meetings on Course Essays**

**Session VII (1315 - 1630): Workshop – Methods in Action (Optional)**

### ***Day #4: Thursday, 10 June***

**Session VIII (0900 - 1200): Case Methods and Conflict Studies - Cohen**

Cohen, Dara Kay, *Rape During Civil War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2016), Introduction, chapters 1-3, Conclusion.

**Session IX (1315 - 1630): Case Methods and Conflict Studies - Autesserre**

Autesserre, Severine, *The Trouble with the Congo: Local Violence and the Failure of International Peacebuilding* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), chapters 1-2, 4-5.

### ***Day #5: Friday, 11 June***

**Session X (0900 - 1130): Case Methods and Conflict Studies – Straus**

Straus, Scott, *Making and Unmaking Nations: War, Leadership and Genocide in Modern Africa* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015), Introduction, chapters 1-5, 9, Conclusion.