

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 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; one is 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 30 November.

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 30 November.

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 5 March 2022. On the first day of class – Tuesday, 30 November - 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 Thursday, 2 December, 0800 - 1030, when there will be no formal class sessions.

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 want to purchase books, the Autesserre, Bennett/Checkel, Cohen, Pouliot and Straus volumes are available as e-books, which your university library may have.

In the syllabus below, students can access journal articles through their local university libraries; we have also provided direct links to a number of readings. In addition, 12-13 readings have been uploaded to the seminar Dropbox, including pdf copies of the Bennett/Checkel and Gerring books.

Syllabus and Class Schedule

Day #1: Tuesday, 30 November

Session I (1000 – 1300): 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.

Jackson, Patrick, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics, Second Edition* (London: Routledge, 2016), chapters 1, 2.

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.

Kapiszewski, Diana and Elisabeth Jean Wood, “[Ethics, Epistemology, and Openness in Research with Human Participants](#),” *Perspectives on Politics* (FirstView – 15.03.21).

Hoover Green, Amelia and Dara Kay Cohen, “[Centering Human Subjects: The Ethics of ‘Desk Research’ on Political Violence](#),” *Journal of Global Security Studies* 6/2 (2021).

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 (1400 - 1600): 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.

Day #2: Wednesday, 1 December

Session III (0900 – 1100): 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.

Session IV (1100 - 1300): 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 - 22.11.20).

Session V (1400 - 1600): 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* 27/3 (2021): 936-959.

Checkel, Jeffrey T. “[Process Tracing - Towards a New Research Agenda](#),” Paper presented at the Annual Convention of the American Political Science Association (Seattle, Washington: 29 September - 3 October 2021).

Day #3: Thursday, 2 December

Session VI (0800 - 1030): Individual Meetings on Course Essays

Session VII (1030 - 1300): 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 VIII (1400 - 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 #4: Friday, 3 December

Session IX (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.