



Introduction to Research Methods

Seminar, 2st term academic year 2018-2019

Mondays, 9:00-11:00, Seminar Room 2

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Register [online](#)

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Description

The course offers an introduction to qualitative methods in social research, which is compulsory for all first-year researchers in the EUI SPS Department. The aim of the course is to introduce researchers to state-of-the-art knowledge in qualitative research and methods, including their respective strengths and weaknesses. The course has two parts. The first is concerned with the crafting of research puzzles and qualitative research designs, that is, case-based research. In the second part, we turn to specific methodological approaches: process-tracing, archival work, interviewing and ethnography. We will focus on readings that either explain the purpose and logic of these approaches, or apply them, or provide guidance on how to carry out the research. The course will also draw on the concrete experiences of doctoral researchers doing qualitative research.

Requirements

- Preparation of Class discussion questions (1 time in group, random assignment)
- Research Puzzle and Design Questionnaire due January 25th (1-1/2 pages)
- Archive Visit report due February 15th (2 pages)
- Critique of Design and Execution of Qualitative Study of either Epstein or Cramer due March 15th (3 pages)

Term paper option: to be discussed with instructors

This seminar is worth 20 credits.

Schedule

The seminar takes place on **Mondays 09:00-11:00**, in Seminar Room 2 in the Badia Fiesolana, for any changes please refer to the full list of seminar sessions below:

Session 1: **Wednesday 9th January** Seminar room 2 **9.30-11.30**

Session 2:	Monday	14 th January	Seminar room 2
Session 3:	Monday	21 st January	Seminar room 2
Session 4:	Monday	28 th January	Seminar room 2
Session 5:	Monday	4 th February	Seminar room 2
Session 6:	Monday	11th February	Seminar room 2
Session 7:	Monday	18 th February	Seminar room 2
Session 8:	Monday	25 th February	Seminar room 2
Session 9:	Monday	4 th March	Seminar room 2
Session 10:	Monday	11 th March	Seminar room 2

Seminar topics and readings

Part one: Crafting Qualitative Research

Session 1: Introduction (January 9 at 9.30)

- Gerring, John. 2012. "Mere Description." *British Journal of Political Science* 42: 721–746.
- Rueschemeyer, Dietrich. 2003. "Can One or a Few Cases Yield Theoretical Gains?" In *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*, ed. James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, Chapter 9, pp. 305-306 (published online 05 June 2014, <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511803963.010>).
- Brady, Henry E., 2010. "Doing Good and Doing Better: How Far Does the Quantitative Template Get Us." In *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards, 2nd Ed*, ed. Henry Brady and David Collier, Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, Chapter 3.

Suggested reading:

- Geddes, Barbara. 1990. "How the Cases You Choose Affect the Answers You Get: Selection Bias in Comparative Politics." *Political Analysis* 2: 131–150.

Session 2: Crafting a puzzle and literature review (January 14)

- Van Evera, Stephen. 1997. *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science*, Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, pp. 48-133.
- Hancké, Bob. 2009. *Intelligent Research Design: A Guide for Beginning Researchers in the Social Sciences*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 1-85.
- Gustafsson, Karl & Linda Hagstrom (2017). "What is the point? Teaching Graduate Students how to Construct Political Science Research Puzzles." *European Political Science*, pp. 1-15 (first online, 31 July 2017).

Session 3: Case based research (January 21)

- Gerring, John. 2017. "Qualitative Methods." *Annual Review of Political Science* 20: 15–36.
- Beach, Derek, and Rasmus Brun Pedersen. 2016. *Causal Case Study Methods: Foundations and Guidelines for Comparing, Matching, and Tracing*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, chapter 6.

Assignment 1: Research Puzzle and Design Questionnaire due **January 25th** (1-1/2 pages)

Session 4: Comparative historical analysis (January 28)

- Mahoney, James, and Kathleen Thelen. 2015. "Comparative Historical Analysis in Contemporary Political Science." In *Advances in Comparative-Historical Analysis*, ed. James Mahoney and Kathleen Thelen, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 3–36.
- Capoccia, Giovanni. 2015. "Critical Junctures and Institutional Change." In *Advances in Comparative-Historical Analysis*, ed. James Mahoney and Kathleen Thelen, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 147–79.

Part 2 Methods of data collection

Session 5: Process tracing (February 4)

- Beach, Derek, and Rasmus Brun Pedersen. 2016. *Causal Case Study Methods: Foundations and Guidelines for Comparing, Matching, and Tracing*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, chapters 8 and 9.

Session 6: Archival work (February 11):

Guest: Dieter Schlenker, Director of the Historical Archives of the European Union

- Andrew Moravcsik, "Economic and Monetary Union: Negotiating the Maastricht Treaty, 1988-1991." In *The Choice for Europe: Social Purpose and State Power from Messina to Maastricht*, London & New York: Routledge [Cornell University Press], 1988, chapter 6, pp. 379-471.
<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/eui/detail.action?docID=1474568>
- Ashoka Moody. 2014. "Kohl's Euro, 1982–1998." In *EuroTragedy: A Drama in Nine Acts*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, Chapter 2.
<http://www.oxfordscholarship.com.ezproxy.eui.eu/view/10.1093/oso/9780199351381.001.0001/oso-9780199351381>

Visit to the EUI archives:
14 Feb 14-17
15 Feb 9-13

Assignment 2: Archive Visit Report due **February 15th** (2 pages)

Session 7: Interviewing (February 18)

- Mosley, Layna. 2013. "Introduction. 'Just Talk to People'? Interviews in Contemporary in Political Science." In *Interview Research in Political Science*, edited by Layna Mosley, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1–30.
- Gallagher, Mary. 2013. "Capturing Meaning and Confronting Measurement." In *Interview Research in Political Science*, edited by Layna Mosley, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 181–95.
- Leech, Beth L., Baumgartner, Frank R., Berry, Jeffrey M., Hojnacki, Marie, and Kimball, David C. 2013. "Lessons from the 'Lobbying and Policy Change' Project." In *Interview Research in Political Science*, edited by Layna Mosley, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 209–224.

Session 8: Ethnography (February 25)

- Cramer, Katherine J. 2016. *The Politics of Resentment: Rural Consciousness in Wisconsin and the Rise of Scott Walker*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, Chapters 1, 2, 5 (6 & 7 optional), and Appendices B & C.

Session 9: Discourse analysis (March 4)

- Epstein, Charlotte. 2008. *The Power of Words in International Relations: Birth of an Anti-Whaling Discourse*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, Chapters 1, 5, 6, 8, and 12.

Session 10: Experiences from the field (March 11)

- 2-3 doctoral students report their experiences (and assign 1 reading which helped them for their field work)

Assignment: Critique of Design and Execution of Qualitative Study of either Epstein or Cramer due **March 15th** (3 pages)