

First Term, Academic Year 2026-2027

Seminar: Introduction to qualitative methods

Given by: **Tasha Fairfield and Llorenç Soler**

Time and Place: **Monday 11:00-13:00, Seminar Room 2**

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This course introduces students to core elements of qualitative research methods and practice. The first part of the course will cover conceptualization and description; crafting theory and hypotheses with an emphasis on explanation; and approaches to inference including process tracing, comparative case studies, and qualitative Bayesian analysis. The second part of the course will cover field research strategies, interview techniques, focus groups, and an introduction to Atlas for data management.

The course will be highly interactive, with the goal of equipping students to critically consume and effectively conduct qualitative research, whether as part of a stand-alone project or in the context of multi-method designs—after all, nearly all research is informed to some extent by qualitative information. Group exercises will draw on published empirical research from a range of disciplines in the social and political sciences. During the second part of the course, students will develop and conduct either an individual or a group project. Students can choose from a list of suggestions or consult with the instructors to develop alternative ideas for their project.