

PS 200B: Major Themes in Comparative Analysis

Version 2/14/19

Spring 2019
Monday 12-2 PM
202 Barrows Hall

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Office Hours: Monday 3-4:30

This course provides an introduction to research design in comparative politics; it is the second semester of the two-semester introductory graduate sequence for the comparative sub-field. We will focus on various topics relevant to doing research, such as how to formulate research questions; develop concepts and measures; improve the validity of descriptive and causal inferences; and use various qualitative and quantitative methods in the service of diverse substantive agenda. Most of the major approaches currently used in the subfield of comparative politics are represented. The readings will cover many of the topics from 200A but we will focus more on their research designs and methods. The course has two objectives: to developing your ability to critique research, and to provide a foundation for your dissertation and beyond.

There are three main requirements for the course, in addition to completion of all assigned readings and engaged participation in class discussions:

- (1) Respond to weekly readings in a written statement of no more than three double-spaced pages. Reading responses should be sent to me by Sunday evening and will sometimes be posted on the bCourses site. **Each student should complete six responses during the semester**, choosing from among the ten eligible sessions (excluding the first and last sessions).
- (2) Read the paper to be presented at each week's Comparative Politics Colloquium and attend the workshop itself, which meets Thursdays at 12:30 PM. (Many of you will be also registered for the colloquium as a course). We may devote some class time to discussing the CP Colloquium papers.
- (3) Write a research proposal in which you present a research question and devise a strategy for investigating that question. While you will not actually carry out the proposed research this semester, you should anticipate the steps that would be involved in doing so. In some cases, such proposals may provide a foundation for 2nd year M.A. essays and may help to orient fieldwork and data collection over the summer. The final proposal should be 10-15 double-spaced pages (plus an optional literature review supplement). Draft proposals should be ready by April 22 for discussion on April 29. The final version is due May 13.

There are two books you should purchase:

Gary King, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry: Statistical Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton University Press.

Thad Dunning. 2012. *Natural Experiments in the Social Sciences: A Design-Based Approach*. Cambridge University Press.

All readings not in the two aforementioned books are available on bCourses.

I reserve the right to amend the syllabus.

Schedule of Topics

January 28: Introduction

Smith, Munroe. 1886. "Introduction: The Domain of Political Science." *Political Science Quarterly* Vol. 1, No. 1, March, pp 1-8.

Lijphart, Arend. 1971. "Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method." *American Political Science Review* 65(3): 682-93.

Schmitter, Philippe. 2016. "Comparative Politics: its Past, Present, and Future." *Chinese Political Science Review* 1: 397-411.

February 4: What Is A Good Research Question?

Geddes, Barbara. 2003. "Big Questions, Little Answers: How the Questions You Choose Affect the Answers You Get." *Paradigms and Sand Castles: Theory Building and Research Design in Comparative Politics*. University of Michigan. Chapter 2.

Angrist, Joshua D. and Jörn-Steffen Pischke. 2009. *Mostly Harmless Econometrics: An Empiricist's Companion*. Princeton University Press. Chapters 1 ("Questions about Questions") and Chapter 2.

Shapiro, Ian. 2002. "Problems, Methods, and Theories in the Study of Politics, or What's Wrong with Political Science and What to Do About It." *Political Theory* Vol. 30, No. 4, August pp. 596-616.

February 11: Concepts and Measurement

Sartori, Giovanni. 1970. "Concept Misinformation in Comparative Politics." *American Political Science Review* 64(4): 1033-1053.

Collier, David and Robert Adcock. 1999. "Democracy and Dichotomies: A Pragmatic Approach to Choices about Concepts." *Annual Review of Political Science* 1999. 2. 537-65.

Collier, David, Jody LaPorte, and Jason Seawright. 2012. "Putting Typologies to Work: Concept Formation, Measurement, and Analytic Rigor." *Political Research Quarterly*. 65(1): 217-32.

Paxton, Pamela. 2000. "Women's Suffrage in the Measurement of Democracy: Problems of Operationalization." *Studies in Comparative International Development*, Fall, Vol. 35, No. 3, pp. 92-111.

February 18: Presidents Day

February 25: Description

Brodkin, Evelyn Z. 2017. "The Ethnographic Turn in Political Science: Reflections on the State of the Art." *PS: Political Science and Politics*. January, pp. 131-134.

Gibbons, Michael. T. 2006. "Hermeneutics, Political Inquiry, and Practical Reason: An Evolving Challenge to Political Science." *American Political Science Review* 100: 563-71.

Mosely, Layna. 2013. "'Just Talk to People?' Interviews in Contemporary Political Science," in Layna Mosely, ed. *Interview Research in Political Science*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, pp. 1-28.

Geertz, Clifford. 1973. "Thick Description: Toward and Interpretive Theory of Culture," in Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*. Basic Books, pp. 310-323.

Schaffer, Frederic Charles. 2014. "Thin Descriptions: The Limits of Survey Research on the Meaning of Democracy." *Polity*, Vol. 46, No. 3, July, pp. 303-330.

O'Brien, Kevin. 1996. "Rightful Resistance." *World Politics* 49: 31-55.

Gailmard, Sean. 2014. *Statistical Modeling and Inference for Social Science*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Skim pp. 12-68 as necessary, read pp. 69-82.

March 4: Descriptive Inference

King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp. 34-74.

Brady, Henry E., David Collier, and Jason Seawright. 2010. "Refocusing the Discussion of Methodology." in David Collier and Henry Brady, eds., *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2nd Edition, pp. 15-31.

Bartels, Larry M. 2010. "Some Unfulfilled Promises of Quantitative Imperialism." in David Collier and Henry Brady, eds., *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2nd Edition, pp. 83-88.

Geddes, Barbara. 1990. "How the Cases You Choose Affect the Answers You Get: Selection Bias in Comparative Politics." *Political Analysis* 2(1): 131-150.

Gerring, John. 2004. "What is a Case Study and What is it Good For?" *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 98, No. 2, May, pp. 341-354.

March 11: Causal Inference

King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp. 75-114.

Brady, Henry E. 2008. "Causation and Explanation in Social Science." in Box-Steffensmeier, Janet M., Henry E. Brady, and David Collier, eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 217-270, **sections 1-5 only**.

King, Gary and Langche Zeng. 2007. "When Can History Be Our Guide? The Pitfalls of Counterfactual Inference." *International Studies Quarterly* Vol. 51, No. 1, pp. 183-210.

Dunning, Thad. 2010. "Design-Based Inference: Beyond the Pitfalls of Regression Analysis?" In David Collier and Henry Brady, eds., *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2nd edition.

Optional: Holland, Paul W. 1986. "Statistics and Causal Inference." *Journal of the American Statistical Association* Vol. 81, No. 396, Dec, pp. 945-960.

March 18: Field Experiments

Gerber, Alan S. and Donald P. Green. 2008. "Field Experiments and Natural Experiments." in Carles Boix and Susan Stokes, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*. Oxford University Press. **Introduction through section 6 only**.

McDermott, Rose. 2002. "Experimental Methods in Political Science." *Annual Review of Political Science*, Vol. 5, pp. 31-61. **Read pp. 31-40 only.**

Teele, Dawn Langan. 2014. "Reflections on the Ethics of Field Experiments." in Dawn Langan Teele, ed., *Field Experiments and Their Critics: Essays on the Uses and Abuses of Experimentation in the Social Sciences*. Yale University Press, pp. 115-140.

Olken, Benjamin A. 2010. "Direct Democracy and Local Public Goods: Evidence from a Field Experiment in Indonesia." *American Political Science Review* Vol. 104, No. 2, pp. 243-267.

Beath, Andrew, Fotini Christia, and Ruben Enikolopov. 2013. "Empowering Women Through Development Aid: Evidence from A Field Experiment in Afghanistan." *American Political Science Review* 107 (3): 540-57.

March 25: Spring Break

April 1: "Natural Experiments": As if Randomization, Regression Discontinuity, and Instrumental Variables

Dunning, Thad. 2012. *Natural Experiments in the Social Sciences: A Design-Based Approach*. Cambridge University Press, **Chapters 1-4, 7-10.**

Peisakhin, Leonid. 2015. "Culture Legacies: Persistence and Transmission." in Norman Schofield and Gonzalo Caballero, eds. *The Political Economy of Governance: Studies in Political Economy*. Basel, Switzerland: Springer International: 21-39. (As If Randomization)

Eggers, Andrew C. 2015. "Proportionality and Turnout: Evidence from French Municipalities." *Comparative Political Studies* Vol. 48(2): 135-167. (Regression Discontinuity)

Rozenas, Arturas and Yuri Zhukov. Forthcoming. "Mass Repression and Political Loyalty: Evidence from Stalin's 'Terror by Hunger'." *American Political Science Review*. (Instrumental Variables)

Optional: Sovey, Allison J. and Donald P. Green. 2011. "Instrumental Variables Estimation in Political Science: A Readers' Guide." *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 55, No. 1, January, pp. 188-200.

Optional: Sekhon, Jasjeet S. and Rocio Titiunik. 2012. "When Natural Experiments are Neither Natural Nor Experiments." *American Political Science Review* 106 (1): 35-57.

April 8: Quantitative Observational Designs: Regression, Difference in Difference, Matching

Ziblatt, Daniel. 2009. "Shaping Democratic Practice and the Causes of Electoral Fraud: The Case of Nineteenth-Century Germany." *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 103, No. 1, February, pp. 1-21. (Regression)

Scheve, Kenneth and David Stasavage. 2010. "The Conscription of Wealth: Mass Welfare and the Demand for Progressive Taxation." *International Organization* 64, fall, pp. 529-561. (Difference in Difference)

Lyall, Jason. 2010. "Are Coethnics More Effective Counterinsurgents? Evidence From the Second Chechen War." *American Political Science Review* Vol. 104, No. 1, February, pp. 1-20. (Matching)

Gerber, Alan S., Donald P. Green, and Edward H. Kaplan. 2014. "The Illusion of Learning from Observational Research." in Dawn Langan Teele, ed., *Field Experiments and Their Critics: Essays on the Uses and Abuses of Experimentation in the Social Sciences*. Yale University Press, pp. 9-32.

Stokes, Susan C. 2014 "A Defense of Observational Research." in Dawn Langan Teele, ed., *Field Experiments and Their Critics: Essays on the Uses and Abuses of Experimentation in the Social Sciences*. Yale University Press, pp. 33-57.

Schrodt, Philip A. 2014 "Seven deadly sins of contemporary quantitative political analysis." *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 51(2), pp. 287-300.

Optional: Sekhon, Jasjeet S. 2009. "Opiates for the Matches: Matching Methods for Causal Inference." *Annual Review of Political Science* 12(1): 487-508.

April 15: Qualitative Observational Designs: Process Tracing, Comparative Historical Analysis, and Mixed Methods

Bennett, Andrew and Jeffrey T. Checkel. 2015. "Process tracing: from philosophical roots to best practices." Andrew Bennett and Jeffrey T. Checkel, eds., *Process Tracing: From Metaphor to Analytic Tool*. Cambridge University Press, pp. 3-37.

Collier, David. 2011. "Understanding Process Tracing." *PS: Political Science and Politics* 44, No. 4, pp. 823-30.

Lieberman, Evan S. 2015. "Nested analysis: toward the integration of comparative historical analysis with other social science methods." in James Mahoney and Kathy Thelen, eds., *Advances in Comparative-Historical Analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 240-263.

Ahmed, Amel and Rudra Sil. 2012. "When Multi-Method Research Subverts Methodological Pluralism—or, Why We Still Need Single-Method Research." *Perspectives on Politics*, Vol. 10, No. 4, pp. 935-953.

Thelen, Kathy and James Mahoney. 2015. "Comparative-historical analysis in contemporary political science." in James Mahoney and Kathy Thelen, eds., *Advances in Comparative-Historical Analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 3-36.

April 22: TBA

April 29: Discussion of Research Proposals