

PSCI 600: Theories and Methods of Political Analysis

Fall, 2017

HH344, 11:30am-2:20pm Wednesdays

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Office Hours: 11:30am-12:30pm Tuesdays and Thursdays

Contact Policy or Header Notes: Please contact the instructor directly by email.

Teaching Assistants: None

Course Description: This is an introduction to the theoretical scopes and methods of political science at the graduate level. As such, there are two primary purposes in this course, one substantive and one methodological. In the former case, we will discuss some of the key theoretical perspectives, concepts, and frameworks widely utilized today in major fields within political science, such as the state, society, culture, rational choice, institutions, identity/ideology/public opinion. In the latter case, we will look at some of the key methodological issues related to the studies of political science, such as establishing causality, data gathering, measurement problems, research design, hypothesis testing, and some well-known questions associated with selecting qualitative versus quantitative strategies.

Pre-Requisites: None

Course Objectives:

By the end of this course, students should:

- Be able to understand the basic concepts and theories introduced in this course
- Be able to apply these theories in the appropriate empirical context

University Regulations:

Cross-listed course:

Please note that a cross-listed course will count in all respective averages no matter under which rubric it has been taken. For example, a PHIL/PSCI cross-list will count in a Philosophy major average, even if the course was taken under the Political Science rubric.

Academic Integrity:

Academic Integrity: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline, [Student Discipline http://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-71](http://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-71).

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4, [Student Petitions and Grievances http://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-70](http://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-70). In addition, consult [Grievance Processes http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/student-grievances-faculty-arts-processes](http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/student-grievances-faculty-arts-processes) for the Faculty of Arts’ grievance processes.

Appeals: A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline if a ground for an appeal can be established. Read Policy 72 - Student Appeals, [Student Appeals http://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-72](http://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-72).

Academic Integrity website (Arts): [Academic Integrity http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html](http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html)

Academic Integrity Office (uWaterloo): [Academic Integrity Office http://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/](http://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/)

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:

Note for students with disabilities: The AccessAbility Services (AS) Office, located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AS Office at the beginning of each academic term.

If you are using Turnitin in your course:

Turnitin.com: Plagiarism detection software (Turnitin) will be used to screen assignments in this course. This is being done to verify that use of all material and sources in assignments is documented. In the first week of the term, details will be provided about the arrangements for the use of Turnitin in this course.

Note: students must be given a reasonable option if they do not want to have their assignment screened by Turnitin. See [Turnitin http://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/integrity-waterloo-faculty/turnitin-waterloo](http://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/integrity-waterloo-faculty/turnitin-waterloo) for more information.

Texts:

You should purchase the following textbook (available from the university's bookstore).

Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy. Putnam, Robert. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993.

All other readings will be made available online.

Course Requirements, Expectations, and Standards:

Assignments:

Participation in Discussion (35%)

This is a seminar, and therefore active participation in class discussion is **required**. For each session, you need to **take the initiative** in actively contributing to the discussions in order to receive the 35% grades for participation

Review of Readings (15%)

In total, we have six weeks of core readings on research methodologies. At the end of the semester, you should submit an article reviewing readings for one of these six weeks. After we finish these six sessions, I will assign you two specific readings from a specific week, for your review article. As you will see, for these six weeks we make distinctions between two categories of readings: (1) abstract "methodological

arguments” and (2) “research examples”. You will be assigned to one reading from category (1) and one reading from category (2). The two readings should be covered in a single article. The article should be 3 pages (single space) in length.

Guidelines on How to Review Methodological Arguments

You should develop your opinions and responses to the reading. What are questions left unanswered? Are the author’s arguments plausible? Are these methodological suggestions/recommendations empirically feasible? Can the arguments be extended? These are just some examples of questions you might want to think about when reviewing the reading.

Guidelines on How to Review Research Examples

Essentially you are serving as referees for the reading. Focus on the research methodology of the reading. For example, was there a meaningful and significant research question? Was data measurement appropriate? Did the research design adequately test and confirm the theoretical proposition? If you are the editor of a journal, will you accept these publications based on their methodology, and why?

Term Paper (50%)

At the end of term, you should submit a term paper of 10 pages (single space), critically evaluating the book *Making Democracy Work* by Robert Putnam. In the term paper, you should discuss and evaluate in detail the various methodological strategies adopted by the author. Your discussion must draw extensively on the methodological arguments we learnt throughout the semester. In other words, to make your term paper a success, it is absolutely essential that you follow the seminar discussion closely and participate actively every week. I will specify more details on requirements for this term paper after we finish more than half of the course materials.

Tests & Examinations: None

Schedule:

Part One-----Research Methods

September 13 Introduction

September 20 Causality (1)

Methodological Arguments

Fearon, James. 1991. “Counterfactuals and Hypothesis Testing in Political Science.” *World Politics* 43: 169-195.

Hedstrom, Peter and Richard Swedberg. 1996. “Social Mechanisms.” *Acta Sociologica* 39: 281-308.

Research Examples

Brownlee, Jason. 2007. "Hereditary Succession in Modern Autocracies." *World Politics* 59: 595-628.

Swank, Duane. 1998. "Funding the Welfare State: Globalization and the Taxation of Business in Advanced Market Economies." *Political Studies* 46: 671-692.

September 27 Causality (2)

Methodological Arguments

Bates, Robert, et al. 1998. "The Politics of Interpretation: Rationality, Culture, and Transition." *Politics and Society* 26: 603-42.

Collier, David, James Mahoney, and Jason Seawright. 2004. "Claiming Too Much: Warnings about Selection Bias" in *Rethinking Social Inquiry*. Rowman and Littlefield.

Research Examples

Rudolph, Lloyd and Susanne Rudolph. 2003. "Engaging Subjective Knowledge: How Amar Singh's Diary Narratives of and by the Self Explain Identity Formation," *Perspectives on Politics* 1: 681-694.

October 4 Data and Measurement (1)

Methodological Arguments

Satori, Giovanni. 1970. "Concept Misformation in Comparative Politics." *American Political Science Review* 64: 1033-1053.

Adcock, Robert and Collier, David. 2001. "Measurement Validity: A Shared Standard for Qualitative and Quantitative Research." *American Political Science Review* 95: 529-546.

Research Examples

Elkins, Zachary. 2000. "Gradations of Democracy? Empirical Tests of Alternative Conceptualizations." *American Journal of Political Science* 44:293-300.

October 13 No class (I am at a conference)

October 18 Data and Measurement (2)

Methodological Arguments

Jacoby, William G. 1999. "Levels of Measurement and Political Research: An Optimistic View." *American Journal of Political Science* 43: 271-301.

Liebersohn, Stanley. 1985. "Variation, Levels of Analysis, and the Research Question" in *Making It Count: The Improvement of Social Research and Theory*. University of California Press.

Research Examples

Conover, Pamela, Ivor Crewe and Donald Searing. 1991. "The Nature of Citizenship in the United States and Great Britain: Empirical Comments on Theoretical Themes." *Journal of Politics* 53: 800-832.

October 25 Testing Theory with Data (1)

Methodological Arguments

McKeown, Timothy. 1999. "Case Studies and the Statistical Worldview." *International Organization* 53, 161-190

Mahoney, James and Goertz, Gary. 2006. "A Tale of Two Cultures: Contrasting Qualitative and Quantitative Research." *Political Analysis* 14: 227-249.

Mahoney, James. 1999. "Nominal, Ordinal and Narrative Appraisal in Macrocausal Analysis." *American Journal of Sociology* 104: 1154-1196.

Research Examples

Immergut, Ellen. 1992. "The Rules of the Game: The Logic of Health Policy Making in France, Switzerland and Sweden" in *Structuring Politics: Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Analysis*. Cambridge University Press.

November 1 Testing Theory with Data (2)

Methodological Arguments

Dion, Douglas. 1998. "Evidence and Inference in the Comparative Case Study." *Comparative Politics* 30: 127-146.

Capoccia, Giovanni and Daniel Keleman. 2007. "The Study of Critical Junctures: Theory, Narrative and Counterfactuals in Historical Institutionalism." *World Politics* 59: 341-69.

Bennett, Andrew and Colin Elman. 2006. "Complex Causal Relations and Case Study Methods: The Example of Path Dependence." *Political Analysis* 14: 250-67.

Research Examples

Rueda, David. 2005. "Insider-Outsider Politics in Industrialized Democracies: The Challenge to Social Democratic Parties." *American Political Science Review* 99: 61-74.

November 8 Review of Methodologies and Term Paper Strategies

Part Two—Key Examples of Causal Mechanisms

November 15 Elections and Democratization

Rabinowitz, George and Stuart MacDonald. 1987. "A Directional Theory of Issue Voting." *American Political Science Review* 83: 93-121.

Downs, Anthony. 1957. *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. New York: Harper and Brothers. Chapter 2.

November 22 Political Economy

Hall, Peter and David Soskice. 2010. "An Introduction to Varieties of Capitalism" (pp. 1-54, stop by subsection "1.8: Dynamics of Adjustment"), in Peter Hall and David Soskice, eds. *Varieties of Capitalism: The Institutional Foundation of Comparative Advantage*. New York: Oxford University Press.