

POLI 639: Mixed Methods Research in European Studies

POLI 639
Winter 2018
Leacock 541
F 2:35pm – 5:25pm

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Course description

This course has three main goals: 1) to introduce students to mixed methods research approaches and their philosophical foundation; 2) to help students learn how to execute these methods through analysis of examples from the European politics literature; 3) to provide an opportunity for students to generate their own mixed methods research design, which could become the basis of their thesis work.

Course requirements

This is a graduate seminar, so class time will be devoted exclusively to the discussion of the assigned readings, rather than to lecturing on my part. This means that you should read the assigned material for the week *before* class.

1) Article reviews (10%)

To facilitate the discussion and to make sure no one falls behind on the reading, each student will submit a review for *each* assigned article.

The written review should include concise answers (**one paragraph max!**) to the following five questions for *each* assigned reading:

- 1) What is the main point you learned from this reading?
- 2) What is confusing/hard to understand in this reading?
- 3) What is obviously right in this reading?
- 4) What is obviously wrong in this reading?

The reviews can be written in outline form and they are due in class each week when we will be discussing articles. Their main goal is to help you structure your thoughts about the readings *before* you come to class, so I will not accept late reviews under any circumstances. The reviews will not be graded, but you need to submit all reviews to get full credit for this component of the course evaluation.

2) Participation (15%)

You should participate actively and regularly in class discussions. Just showing up for class will certainly not be enough to get a high attendance/participation grade. Showing up sporadically will not be sufficient either, even you offer brilliant insights. Since this is

a small seminar, its success is highly contingent on full participation and you should make every effort to attend all meetings.

3) Book review (10%)

Choose one of the assigned books and write a review of it. A book review contains an overview of the book's central arguments, a discussion of its methodology and data, an evaluation of its main contribution/s and any important shortcomings, and a brief discussion of its target audience. Check out some of the book reviews in the Critical Dialogues section in *Perspectives on Politics* to see how to structure and calibrate your review. The review should be between 1700-2200 words.

4) Exercises (10%)

Throughout the term, I will give short exercises (4 or 5), which you will have to prepare at home, submit online before class, and come to class with a printout, ready to discuss them with everyone. These are designed to allow you to apply the knowledge and tools about different methods that we discuss. You could choose to use the exercises to address different aspect of the same substantive problem. Alternatively, you can use them to explore a variety of topics.

These exercises are graded only satisfactory/unsatisfactory. You need a satisfactory grade on all of them to receive full credit for this portion of the course.

5) Research design paper (55%)

The main requirement for the course is a 15-20 page paper on a topic of your choice.

Grading scale:

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Grade Points</i>	<i>Grade Range</i>
A	4.0	>3.85
A-	3.7	3.51-3.85
B+	3.3	3.16-3.50
B	3.0	2.86-3.15
B-	2.7	2.51-2.85
C+	2.3	2.16-2.50
C	2.0	1.86-2.15
D	1.0	1.0-1.85
F	0.0	<1.0

On Academic Integrity

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the

Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see www.mcgill.ca/integrity for more information).

L'université McGill attache une haute importance à l'honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l'on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon le Code de conduite de l'étudiant et des procédures disciplinaires (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le site www.mcgill.ca/integrity).

Required readings

All assigned articles are available through McGill Library's online resources. The books are also available through the library as e-books. You should download the pdfs early.

Course outline

Jan 12 (Week 1): Introduction

Jan 19 (Week 2): Epistemology, ontology, concepts

Bevir, Mark. "Meta-Methodology: Clearing the Underbrush." In *The Oxford handbook of political methodology*. 2008.

Sartori, Giovanni. "Concept misformation in comparative politics." *American political science review* 64, no. 4 (1970): 1033-1053.

Mahoney, James, and Gary Goertz. "A tale of two cultures: Contrasting quantitative and qualitative research." *Political analysis* 14, no. 3 (2006): 227-249.

Adcock, Robert. "Measurement validity: A shared standard for qualitative and quantitative research." *American political science review* 95, no. 3 (2001): 529-546.

Gerring, John. "What makes a concept good? A criterial framework for understanding concept formation in the social sciences." *Polity* 31, no. 3 (1999): 357-393.

Jan 26 (Week 3): Regression and case studies: theory

Seawright, Jason, and John Gerring. "Case selection techniques in case study research: A menu of qualitative and quantitative options." *Political Research Quarterly* 61, no. 2 (2008): 294-308.

Lieberman, Evan S. "Nested analysis as a mixed-method strategy for comparative research." *American Political Science Review* 99, no. 3 (2005): 435-452.

Geddes, Barbara. "How the cases you choose affect the answers you get: Selection bias in comparative politics." *Political analysis* 2 (1990): 131-150.

Jick, Todd D. "Mixing qualitative and quantitative methods: Triangulation in action." *Administrative science quarterly* 24, no. 4 (1979): 602-611.

Feb 2 (Week 4): Example 1

Bonnie Meguid, *Party competition between unequals. Strategies and Electoral Fortunes in Western Europe*, Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Feb 9 (Week 5): Example 2

Judith Kelley. *Ethnic politics in Europe: the power of norms and incentives*. Princeton University Press, 2010.

Feb 16 (Week 6): Analytical narratives: theory and example 3

Bates, Robert, Avner Greif, Margaret Levi, Jean-Laurent Rosenthal, and Barry Weingast. "Analytic narratives revisited." *Social Science History* 24, no. 4 (2000): 685-696.

Monika Nalepa. *Skeletons in the closet: Transitional justice in post-communist Europe*. Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Feb 23 (Week 7): Experiments and interviews: theory

TBA; Guest lecture by Prof Erlich

Mar 2 (Week 8): Example 4

Adida, Claire L., David D. Laitin, and Marie-Anne Valfort. *Why Muslim integration fails in Christian-heritage societies*. Harvard University Press, 2016.

Mar 16 (Week 9): Archival data and quantitative analysis: theory

Lustick, Ian S. "History, historiography, and political science: Multiple historical records and the problem of selection bias." *American Political Science Review* 90, no. 3 (1996): 605-618.

Büthe, Tim. "Taking temporality seriously: Modeling history and the use of narratives as evidence." *American Political Science Review* 96, no. 3 (2002): 481-493.

Mar 23 (Week 10): Example 5

Evgeny Finkel, *Ordinary Jews: Choice and Survival during the Holocaust*. Princeton University Press, 2017.

Apr 6 (Week 11): Trade-offs of mixed methods research

Ahmed, Amel, and Rudra Sil. "When multi-method research subverts methodological pluralism—or, why we still need single-method research." *Perspectives on Politics* 10, no. 4 (2012): 935-953.

Coppedge, Michael. "Thickening thin concepts and theories: combining large N and small in comparative politics." *Comparative Politics* (1999): 465-476.

**Apr 13 (Week 12): Research design workshop:
student presentations**