Advanced Qualitative Methods

University of Central Florida
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I. Description

Advanced Qualitative Methods, a 3-credit core course of the Security Studies doctoral program, aims to help students build theoretical foundations and gain methodological skills that are essential for designing and carrying out original research projects involving non-statistical techniques. The first few weeks of the course are devoted to epistemology of social science research as well as the ongoing scholarly debate about the relationship between quantitative and qualitative methods in political science. The course then covers conceptualization and measurement, institutionalist and interpretivist approaches to social inquiry, crafting and doing case studies, and process-tracing. Towards the end of the semester, preparing for and conducting fieldwork becomes a major focus of the course that is concluded with an overview of multi-method designs combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches. In addition to covering the relevant literature on various aspects of qualitative methods, the course also has an applied side and requires students to undertake exploratory fieldwork as a part of their research projects involving multiple techniques such as archival work, in-depth interviews, and participant observation.

The course aims to make students to

- be proficient in fundamental debates about different methodological approaches in political science and security studies.
- develop an original research design and data collection plan.
- practice multiple qualitative research methods techniques in their research projects.
- identify their own intellectual priorities and methodological preferences as researchers.

II. Requirements & Assignments

Mandatory First Week Academic Activity

All UCF faculty members are required to document students' academic activity at the beginning of each course. For this purpose, I have added an ungraded question to Assignments titled "Required Academic Engagement." Please answer this question by 2 pm on Friday, August 26. Failure to do so will result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid.

Readings

The following books are required and should be purchased:

- Gary King, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton UP, 1994.
- Henry E. Brady and David Collier, eds. *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools and Shared Standards.* 2nd ed. Rowman and Littlefield, 2010.
- John Gerring, *Case Study Research: Principles and Practices*. 2nd ed. Cambridge UP, 2007.
- Diana Kapiszewski, Lauren M. Maclean, and Benjamin L. Read, *Field Research in Political Science: Practices and Principles*. Cambridge UP, 2015.
- Andrew Bennett and Jeffrey T. Checkel, eds. *Process Tracing: From Metaphor to Analytic Tool.* Cambridge UP, 2015.

All other required readings are available online at webcourses@UCF.

Assignments

The course has five different types of assignments:

A. 30% Three Short Papers (first paper due September 9)
B. 5% CITI Training Certificate (due September 30)
C. 10%: Article critique (article selection due September 28; critique due October 7)
D. 15%: Class Participation
E. 40%: Portfolio (first part due October 31; entire portfolio due December 5)

A. Three Short Papers

Students are expected to write three short review papers that are between 1,750 and 2,000 words. Papers beyond this word range will incur a penalty in grading. They must be submitted electronically as a WORD document via webcourses@UCF.

The first of these papers should focus on the debate between KKV's *Designing Social Inquiry* and Brady/Collier. This paper needs to be submitted electronically via webcourses@UCF by 5 pm on September 9. Late papers will not be graded.

In second and third papers, students are expected to engage with the required readings of the week topic as well some additional relevant works (i.e., see additional sources in each week). Ideally, they should put scholars whose work they are reviewing in a creative and critical

dialogue with each other. I will distribute a questionnaire related to each topic (starting with Week IV) a week in advance that would guide the content of the papers and class discussions.

Students must submit their papers before the class session we will discuss that particular theme. For instance, if a paper reviews the literature on Interpretative Methods, it is due 2 pm, October 26. A student may not write a paper for a week s/he acts as a discussion leader.

B. CITI Training & Certificate

The Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) Program provides online research ethics education to all members of the research community. According to federal regulations, investigators whose research involve human subjects need to complete CITI training before their Institutional Review Board (IRB) research applications can be approved. More information about IRB is available at http://www.research.ucf.edu/compliance/irb.html. All students need to complete their CITI training by 5 pm on September 30 and present their certificate as a proof of completion. For CITI training, go to http://www.research.ucf.edu/Compliance/IRB/Investigators/training.html (click on CITI Training link). Students who do not complete their training by September 30 will receive 0 points for this assignment.

C. Article Critique

Students should identify an article in security studies, broadly defined, employing qualitative methods and provide a critique of its research design (i.e., conceptualization, measurement, case selection, etc.) and datafg collection. The article needs to be published in a leading journal in the last decade and to be approved by myself by September 28. The critique must be submitted as a WORD document via webcourses@UCF by 5 pm, October 7. It should be between 1,500 and 1,750 words. Papers beyond this word range will incur a penalty in grading. Late papers will not be graded.

D. Class Participation

Class participation involves informed and active contribution to discussions on the themes/methods in each session. Obviously, the quality of one's participation matters significantly more than its frequency and intensity. Counterintuitive and creative comments offering unique insights will be especially rewarded. Such participation is possible only if students come to classroom only after reading the required readings for the week. Additionally, every student will be assigned a leadership role once a semester. The assignments will be made at the beginning of the semester. In this capacity, students are expected to lead and stimulate discussion by staging questions, offering criticisms of the arguments and methodologies, and identifying promising areas of research. Class participation grade will be based on overall participation in discussions and performance as a discussion leader.

E. Portfolio

This course adopts an applied approach to qualitative methods. Each student needs to develop a portfolio involving a data collection plan throughout the semester. Portfolios will not reflect

completed works but works-in-progress involving all basic steps of a major research undertaking. All data collection efforts should involve triangulation, the practice of collecting diverse and autonomous streams of facts using different methods. Students will present their portfolios in class in the last two weeks of the semester (Weeks XIII on November 23 and Week XIV on November 30). Each portfolio should consist of the following components:

1. Research Question (2.5 percent)

Identify a research question (RQ) related to the field of security studies that piques your intellectual curiosity. It typically but not always involves causal inference (e.g., why something occurred or not occurred?). It may involve a puzzle or an anomaly defying conventional wisdom. Alternatively, it may be more interpretivist and explore how certain individuals make sense of a political phenomenon. In any case, it should be empirically feasible to investigate your RQ (i.e., your data collection should enable you to provide some basic insights into the answers to your RQ).

2. Literature Review (5 percent)

Provide an overview of the scholarly literature related to RQ. How do scholars approach this and similar questions? What insights and plausible explanations have they provided? What remains missing? Are theoretical propositions do you identify are falsifiable (i.e., amenable to be wrong in the face of contradictory empirical evidence)? You may want to formulate explicit hypotheses based on your reading of the literature, but you are not required to do so.

3. Conceptualization and Measurement (2.5 percent)

What are the key concepts of your research project? How is it possible to measure these concepts in an empirical study? (See Week IV).

4. Explanation of selection of cases (2.5 percent)

Provide an explanation and justification of your case selection strategy (See Week VI).

5. Fieldwork involving multiple data collection methods (20 percent)

This is the core aspect of a portfolio and involves on-the-ground work. Students should utilize at least two techniques of data collection to collect empirical evidence to address their research question and engage with the theoretical perspectives. Triangulation is a must. More guidance about fieldwork will be provided throughout the semester (also see Weeks X-XIII). Here are some useful tips:

- You can consult online archives such as the National Security Archive, US Presidential Libraries, or various oral history projects providing information relevant to your RQ.
- Ideally, interviews should be conducted in person. If that is not possible, interviews over the phone or electronic platforms such as SKYPE are permitted. Recording of interviews are encouraged but not required. If recording is not chosen, meticulous note taking is an

essential skill. Your portfolio may include either the transcripts of your interviews or comprehensive notes based on the interviews.

- Participant observation, a site-intensive method, involves data collection from human subjects by the physical presence of the research within their ordinary settings. Greater Orlando area provides plenty of opportunities for participant observation especially during an election year. If you choose to conduct participant observation, your portfolio should include an extensive discussion of your impressions and experience.
- For students interested in pursuing multi-method research projects combining qualitative and quantitative methods, online data sources such as public opinion surveys (e.g., American National Election Studies, Pew Global Attitudes Project, etc.) will be valuable. A preliminary statistical analysis should be incorporated into the portfolio.
- A discussion of practical issues such as access to human subjects and documents faced in the field should be part of your portfolio.

6. A discussion of tentative findings (2.5 percent)

The expectation is that your fieldwork efforts have provided you with some valuable albeit incomplete insights about your RQ. A discussion of these insights should also explicitly acknowledge the limitations of your data collection and identify avenues for further research.

7. Presentation in front of class (5 percent)

Students will present their portfolios in class in the last two weeks of the semester (Weeks XIII on November 23 and Week XIV on November 30). By this stage, each student should have achieved enough progress in their fieldworks to share some of their insights with their colleagues. Visuals such as PowerPoint slides can accompany the oral presentation.

The first four components, RQ, literature review, conceptualization/measurement, and case selection must be submitted as a WORD document via webcourses@UCF by 5 pm on Monday, October 31. These four components should be around 3,000 words.

The entire portfolio must be submitted as a WORD document via webcourses@UCF by 5 pm on Monday, December 5. Late submissions will not be graded. There are no word limits for the entire portfolios that will vary in length depending on what data collection methods you have pursued.

Portfolios will be graded on the basis of the following criteria:

1. The articulation of a feasible and interesting research question
2. The scope and depth of literature review
3. The soundness of research design
4. The quality of fieldwork
5. The organizational cohesion
6. Language

Grade and Make-Up Policy

Due dates are absolutely non-negotiable. Students who fail to complete written assignments receive **0 point for the assignment**. Make-ups are given only if students are able to provide **proper documentation** for their unforeseen emergencies and subject to approval by instructor. The following grade scale is applicable in this class: A: 100-94, A-: 93-90, B+: 89-87, B: 86-84, B-: 83-80, C+: 79-77, C: 76-74, C-: 73-70, D+: 69-67, D: 66-60, F: 59-0. Grades are rounded to the nearest integer (e.g., 79.4=79, 79.6=80).

III. Academic Honesty

As reflected in the UCF creed, integrity and scholarship are core values that should guide our conduct and decisions as members of the UCF community. Plagiarism and cheating contradict these values, and so are very serious academic offenses. UCF's Golden Rule defines plagiarism as follows: "**whereby another's work is used or appropriated without any indication of the source, thereby attempting to convey the impression that such work is the student's own.**"

All acts of academic dishonesty including plagiarism, cheating, submitting false documents, and copying another student's work will be penalized by **an F for the course** without any exception and leniency. If you are not sure what constitutes as academic dishonesty while doing your research, you should consult me at once.

IV. Accessibility

The UCF is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. This syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. Students with disabilities who need accommodations in this course must contact the professor at the beginning of the semester to discuss needed accommodations. No accommodations will be provided until the student has met with the professor to request accommodations. Students who need accommodations must be registered with Student Disability Services, Student Resource Center Room 132, phone (407) 823-2371, TTY/TDD only phone (407) 823-2116, before **requesting accommodations from me.**

V. Course Schedule

Week I (August 24): Research in Political Science: An Introduction

<u>Required Readings</u>

Imre Lakatos, "Falsification and the Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes," in Anthony O'Hear, ed., *Karl Popper: Critical Assessments of Leading Philosophers*. New York Routledge, 2003. pp. 170-96 [original version published in 1970].

Gabriel Almond and Stephen Genco. "Clouds, Clocks, and the Study of World Politics." World Politics 29 (July 1977): 496-522.

Steven Bernstein, Richard Ned Lebow, Janice Gross Stein, and Steven Weber, "God Gave Physics the Easy Problems: Adapting Social Science to an Unpredictable World," *European Journal of International Relations* 6 (March 2000): 143-76.

Robert O. Keohane, "Political Science as a Vocation," *PS: Political Science & Politics* 42 (April 2009): 358-63.

Additional Resources

Albert O. Hirschman, "The Search for Paradigms as a Hindrance to Understanding," *World Politics* 22 (April 1970): 329-43.

Arend Lijphart, "Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method," 65 (September 1971): 682-93.

David A. Lake, "Why 'isms' are Evil: Theory, Epistemology, and Academic Sects as Impediments to Understanding and Progress." *International Studies Quarterly* 55 (June 2011): 465-80.

Week II (August 31): Regression Oriented Qualitative Research

Required Readings

Designing Social Inquiry, entire book.

Additional Resources

Charles Ragin, *The Comparative Method: Moving beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 1989.

Week III (September 7): Critique of Regression Oriented Qualitative Research

First short paper due September 9.

Required Readings

Rethinking Social Inquiry, intro, chps. 1-6, 8-9, 11-13 (skim Glossary).

Alberto Abadie, Alexis Diamond, and Jens Hainmuller, "Comparative Politics and the Synthetic Control Method," *American Journal of Political Science* 59 (April 2015): 495-510.

Additional Resources

James Mahoney and Gary Goertz, "A Tale of Two Cultures: Contrasting Quantitative and Qualitative Research," *Political Analysis* 14 (July 2006): 227-49.

James Mahoney, "After KKV: The New Methodology of Qualitative Research," *World Politics* 62 (January 2010): 120-47.

Dan Slater and Daniel Ziblatt, "The Enduring Indispensability of the Controlled Comparison," *Comparative Political Studies* 46 (October 2013): 1301-27.

Week IV (September 14): Conceptualization and Measurement

Required Readings

Frederic C. Schaffer, *Democracy in Translation: Understanding Politics in an Unfamiliar Culture*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1998, chp. 1.

Robert Adcock and David Collier, "Measurement Validity: A Shared Standard for Qualitative and Quantitative Research," *American Political Science Review* 95 (September 2001): 529-46.

Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way, "The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism," *Journal of Democracy* 13 (2002): 51–65.

Gary Goertz, *Social Science Concepts: A User's Guide*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006, chps. 2-3.

Additional Resources

Giovanni Sartori, "Concept Misinformation in Comparative Politics," *American Political Science Review* 64 (December 1970): 1033-55.

Gerardo L. Munck and Jay Verkuilen, "Conceptualizing and Measuring Democracy," *Comparative Political Studies* 35 (February 2002): 5-34.

Mark Bevir and Asaf Kedar, "Concept Formation in Political Science: An Anti-Naturalist Critique of Qualitative Methodology," *Perspectives on Politics* 6 (September 2008): 503-17.

Week V (September 21): Institutionalist Approaches

Required Readings

Peter A. Hall and Rosemary CR Taylor. "Political Science and the Three New Institutionalisms," *Political studies* 44 (1996): 936-57.

Kathleen Thelen, "Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Politics," *Annual Review of Political Science* 2 (1999): 369-404.

Paul Pierson, "Increasing Returns, Path Dependence, and the Study of Politics," *American Political Science Review* 94 (June 2000): 251-67.

Robert C. Lieberman, "Ideas, Institutions, and Political Order: Explaining Political Change," *American Political Science Review* 96 (December 2002): 697-712.

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

Additional Resources

James G. March and Johan P. Olsen. "The New Institutionalism: Organizational Factors in Political Life," *American Political Science Review* 78 (September 1984): 734-49.

James Mahoney, "Path Dependence in Historical Sociology," *Theory and Society* 29 (August 2000): 507-48.

Paul Pierson, "Big, Slow Moving, and Invisible: Macro-Social Processes in the Study of Comparative Politics," in Mahoney and Rueschemeyer, *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences.* New York: Cambridge UP, 2003.

Week VI (September 28): Conceptualizing and Crafting Case Studies

Selection of article subject of critique due September 30.

Required Readings

Gerring, *Case Study Research*, chps. 1-3.
Bent Flyvbjerg, "Five Misunderstandings about Case-Study Research," *Qualitative Inquiry* 12 (April 2006): 219-45.

Additional Resources

Douglas Dion, "Evidence and Inference in the Comparative Case Study," *Comparative Politics*. 30 (January 1998): 127-45.
Jason Seawright and John Gerring, "Case Selection Techniques in Case Study Research a Menu of Qualitative and Quantitative Options," *Political Research Quarterly* 61 (2008): 294-308.

Week VII (October 5): Doing Case Studies

Article critique due October 7.

Required Readings

Rethinking Social Inquiry, chp. 10.
Gerring, *Case Study Research,* chp. 4-7.
Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions*. New York: Cambridge UP, 1979, chp. 1.
Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson, *Why Nations Fail?* New York: Crown Business, 2012, 7-44.

Additional Resources

Robert H. Bates, "From Case Studies to Social Science: A Strategy for Political Research," in Carles Boix and Susan C. Stokes eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*. New York: Oxford UP, 2009.
Sharon Erickson Nepstad, *Nonviolent Revolutions: Civil Resistance in the Late 20th Century*. New York: Oxford UP, chps. 1 & 8.

Week VIII (October 12): Introducing Process-Tracing: Causal Mechanisms

Required Readings

Process Tracing, chps. 1, 3. 10.
Tim Büthe, "Taking Temporality Seriously: Modeling History and the Use of Narratives as Evidence," *American Political Science Review* 96 (May 2002): 481-93.
David Collier, "Understanding Process Tracing," *PS: Political Science and Politics* 44 (October 2011): 823-30.

Additional Resources

Charles Tilly, "Mechanisms in Political Processes," *Annual Review of Political Science* 4 (2001): 21-41.

Tulia G. Falleti and Julia F. Lynch, "Context and Causal Mechanisms in Political Analysis," *Comparative Political Studies* 42 (September 2009): 1143-66.

Week IX (October 19): Doing Process-Tracing

Required Readings:

Process Tracing, chps. 5-7.
Robert Vitalis, "Black Gold, White Crude: An Essay on American Exceptionalism, Hierarchy, and Hegemony in the Gulf," *Diplomatic History* 26 (2002): 185-213.
Evgeny Finkel, "The Phoenix Effect of State Repression: Jewish Resistance during the Holocaust," *American Political Science Review* 109 (May 2015): 339-53.

Additional Resources

Stathis N. Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*. New York: Cambridge UP, 2006, chps. 7, 9.

Week X (October 26): Interpretivist Approaches

Required Readings

Vincent Pouliot, "Practice Training," in *Process Tracing*, pp. 237-59.
Geertz, Clifford "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Cultur," in *The Interpretation of Cultures.* New York: Basic Books, 1973, pp.3-30.
Lisa Wedeeen, 2010, "Reflections on Ethnographic Work in Political Science," *Annual Review of Political Science* 13: 255-72.
Edward Schatz, "Ethnographic Immersion and the Study of Politics," in Edward Schatz, ed. *Political Ethnography: What Immersion Contributes to the Study of Power*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009, pp. 1-22.

Additional Resources

Charles Taylor, "Interpretation and the Science of Man," *The Review of Metaphysics* 25 (September 1971): 3-51.
Ann Chih Lin, "Bridging Positivist and Interpretivist Approaches to Qualitative Methods," *Policy Studies Journal* 26 (March 1998): 162-80.
Molly Patterson and Kristen Renwich Monroe, "Narrative in Political Science," *Annual Review of Political Science* 1 (1998): 315-31.
Edward Schatz, ed. *Political Ethnography: What Immersion Contributes to the Study of Power*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009.
Dvora Yanow and Peregrine Schwartz-Shea, eds. *Interpretation and Method: Empirical Research Methods and the Interpretative Turn*, 2nd ed. New York: Routledge, 2013.

Week XI (November 2): Fieldwork I: Goals, Preparation, and Challenges

First four components of portfolios due October 31.

Required Readings

Field Research in Political Science, chps. 1-5.

Elisabeth Jean Wood, "The Ethical Challenges of Field Research in Conflict Zones," *Qualitative Sociology* 29 (2006): 373-86.

Séverine Autesserre, "Appendix: An Ethnographic Approach," in *Peaceland: Conflict Resolution and the Everyday Politics of International Intervention*. New York: Cambridge UP, 2014.

Additional Resources

Robert M. Emerson, Rachel I. Fretz, and Linda L. Shaw, *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.

Evan S. Lieberman, Marc Morje Howard, and Julia Lynch, "Symposium: Field Research," *Qualitative Methods* 2 (Spring 2004): 3-7.

Elisabeth Jean Wood, "Field Research." In Charles Boix and Susan Stokes, eds., *Handbook of Comparative Politics*. New York: Oxford UP, 2007.

Week XII (November 9): Fieldwork II: Conducting Interviews & Participation Observation

Required Readings

Field Research in Political Science, chps. 6-7.

James Scott, *Weapons of the We*ak: *Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*. New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 1985, pp. 1-27, 314-50.

Layna Mosley, Introduction. "Just Talk to People"? Interviews in Contemporary Political Science," in Layla Mosley ed., *Interview Research in Political Science* Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2013, pp. 1-30.

Dara Kay Cohen, "Female Combatants and the Perpetration of Violence: Wartime Rape in the Sierra Leone Civil War," *World Politics* 65 (July 2013): 383-415.

Additional Resources

Karl G. Heider, "The Rashomon Effect: When Ethnographers Disagree," *American Anthropologist* 90 (March 1988): 73-81.

Jocelyn S. Viterna, "Pulled, Pushed, and Persuaded: Explaining Women's Mobilization into the Salvadoran Guerrilla Army," *American Journal of Sociology* 112 (July 2006): 1-45.

Symposium: *PS: Political Science & Politics* 42 (April 2009): 287-328.

Fujii, Lee Ann. 2010. "Shades of Truth and Lies: Interpreting Testimonies of War and Violence," *Journal of Peace Research* 47(2010): 231–41.

Katherine Cramer Walsh, "Putting Inequality in Its Place: Rural Consciousness and the Power of Perspective," *American Political Science Review* 106 (August 2012): 517-32.

Week XIII (November 16): Fieldwork III: Surveys & Experiments

Research Presentations-I

Required Readings

Field Research in Political Science, chps. 8-9.
Rethinking Social Inquiry, chp. 14.
Daniel N. Posner, "The Political Salience of Cultural Differences: Why Chewas and Tumbukas are Allies in Zambia and Adversaries in Malawi," *American Political Science Review* 98 (November 2004): 529-545.
Mark R. Beissinger, Amaney A. Jamal, amd Kevin Mazur, "Explaining Divergent Revolutionary Coalitions," *Comparative Politics* 48 (October 2015): 1-21.

Additional Resources

Brian J. Gaines, James H. Kuklinski, and Paul J. Quirk, "The Logic of the Survey Experiment Reexamined," *Political Analysis* 15 (2007): 1-20.
Thad Dunning, *Natural Experiments in the Social Sciences: A Design-Based Approach*. New York: Cambridge UP, 2012.

Week XIV (November 30): Multi-method Research

Research Presentations-II

Entire portfolios due December 5.

Required Readings

Process Tracing, chp. 8.
Evan S. Lieberman, "Nested Analysis as a Mixed-Method Strategy for Comparative Research," *American Political Science Review* 99 (August 2005): 435-52.
Gary Goertz, "Multimethod Research," *Security Studies* 25 (January 2016): 3-24.
Güneş Murat Tezcür, "Ordinary People, Extraordinary Risks: Joining an Ethnic Rebellion," *American Political Science Review* 110 (May 2016): 247-64.

Additional Resources

Ingo Rohlfing, "What You See and What You Get: Pitfalls and Principles of Nested Analysis in Comparative Research," *Comparative Political Studies* 41 (November 2008): 1492-1514.
Ahmed, Amel, and Rudra Sil. "When Multi-Method Research Subverts Methodological Pluralism—or, Why We Still Need Single-Method Research," *Perspectives on Politics* 10 (December 2012): 935–53.
Symposium, *Qualitative Methods* (Spring 2007): 9-27.
Macartan Humphreys and Alan M. Jacobs, "Mixing Methods: A Bayesian Approach," *American Political Science Review* 109 (November 2015): 653-73.