



# Course program and reading list

Semester 1 Year 2020

**School:** Lauder School of Government, Diplomacy & Strategy M.A

## Qualitative Research Methods

**Lecturer:**

Dr. Ronit Berger [ronit.berger@rni.ac.il](mailto:ronit.berger@rni.ac.il)

**Teaching Assistant:**

Dr. Ronit Berger [ronit.berger@rni.ac.il](mailto:ronit.berger@rni.ac.il)

---

<b>Course No.:</b>	<b>Course Type :</b>	<b>Weekly Hours :</b>	<b>Credit:</b>
24247	Lecture	2	2

<b>Course Requirements :</b>	<b>Group Code :</b>	<b>Language:</b>
Final Paper	202242472	English



### Course Description

Email: [ronit.berger@idc.ac.il](mailto:ronit.berger@idc.ac.il)

Class: Thursday 13:45-17:15

Class location: H2



### Course Goals

Not all research, academic or other, is based on statistics and regressions. Many researchers around the world prefer the more in-depth analysis that is the result of utilizing qualitative methodologies. The goal of this course is to introduce you to several

central qualitative methodologies in order to enrich your tool-box as researchers. The core assumption of this course is that the specific research question and its aims drives the choice of one methodology over another. Before we delve into the different methods, we will first discuss the logic of inference, the need for accurate description, causal mechanisms, typologies, measurements and the difference between causation and correlation. Since we focus mainly on qualitative methods, we start with connecting types of questions to types of methodologies. We then learn what are (and how to go about using) process tracing, structured focused comparison, case-study analysis, context analysis, historiography and ethnography, among others. The amount of time we spend on each of these methodologies or any other will depend on the composition of the class and the type of questions you are interested in answering in your own work. We will devote time to discuss best practices to collecting, organizing and analyzing qualitative data, tips for planning and conducting field work and interviews, archival research, building questionnaires and more. This course is meant mainly for thesis students, but if you are in any of the other MA programs and are interested in learning more on qualitative research, you are welcome to join us.

The course this year is designed as a workshop. We will meet for three long classes each semester. Due to that fact, I expect you to come to class after having done the reading and thought about your own research. We will spend time in each class working on your own research interests and apply the methods to them.

### **Course plan:**

Part I: Research Design – the basis of qualitative analysis

Week 1: Background and cultures of inquiry, Core concepts, causation and mechanisms

Week 2: Case studies

Part II: Qualitative Research tools – how to go about qualitative analysis

Week 3: Process tracing and Structured Focused Comparison

Week 4: Ethnography, Historiography and Critical Junctures

Week 5: Discourse analysis, Archival research, Field work and Elite interviews

Part III – bringing it all together – application, limitation and implications

Week 6: Limitations of qualitative analysis and Class presentations



Grading

### **Grading**

The grades for this class will be based on a total of 100 possible points, broken down as

follows:

In class and at home assignments: 4 **short** assignments X 5 points each

Presentations: 10 points

Research Design paper: 70 points

---



## Learning Outcomes

How and when is it appropriate to conduct qualitative research.

The benefits of qualitative methods.

How to use qualitative methods for your own research.

---



## Lecturer Office Hours

Thursday @ 11:00 and by appointment via email

---



## Additional Notes

### **Attendance and Participation**

For this class to be successful, it is necessary for everybody to come to class prepared, and to be ready to engage in meaningful discussions and intellectual debates with one another. Therefore, attendance is mandatory. This includes not only discussing the readings, but also the active participation during in-class assignments. The only way to understand how these methods work is by actually trying them, which we will do in class and in your assignments. Meaningful participation requires that you treat everybody with respect, regardless of whether you agree or disagree with their views. It is never appropriate for critiques to degenerate into personal attacks, and it is crucial that debates are civil, respectful and grounded in intellectual arguments. Rude and inappropriate comments or disruptive behavior can result in students being asked to leave the classroom or in a reduced grade.

### **Readings**

All required readings for this course will be uploaded to the class website, so you do not have to purchase any textbooks. However, if you want to have your own copies, 2 books will be heavily used: Alexander George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 2005) and Audie Klotz and Deepa Prakash *Qualitative Methods in International Relations: A Pluralist Guide*, (NY: Palgrave McMillan, 2008). Additional but not required readings are marked with \*\*.

Students are expected to do all the required readings before class, and come ready to engage the material. On occasion, additional short readings or newspaper clippings might be distributed in class. I know it is a lot, but it is pertinent in order for you to understand the methods.

### **Academic Honesty:**

Please note that in this course, no form of academic dishonesty will be tolerated. Serious infractions can result in failing the course or greater university consequences. This policy also governs the integrity of work submitted in exams and assignments.

---



### Reading List

### **Course Structure and Reading assignments:**

#### **Part I: Research Design**

#### **Week 1: Background and introductions, Cultures of Inquiry, causation and mechanisms**

##### Discussion points:

- What distinguishes 'qualitative' research from quantitative? Is it inherently historical or interpretive rather than scientific? Are we limited to a specific type of inferences?
- What research questions we ask, and how we ask them, depends in part on our key concepts. The definition of these also shapes subsequent decisions about methodology. In turn, choices about methodology can shape the definition of concepts.
- What are causal mechanisms and how do they fit in the debate on causal inference?

Guidelines for assignment #1 (and the class in general) – Assignment will be completed during class.

The challenges of writing

Class handout – Stimson, J. "Professional Writing in Political Science: A Highly Opinionated Essay", *University of North Carolina*, 2010

##### Readings:

- Gary King, Robert Keohane, and Sidney Verba, "The *Science* of Social Science," *Designing Social Inquiry* (Princeton 1994), pp. 3-33
- James Mahoney, "After KKV: The New Methodology of Qualitative Research," *World Politics* 62:1 (January 2010), pp. 120-147
- John Gerring, "The Mechanismic worldview: Thinking inside the box", *British Journal of Political Science* 38:1 (2008), pp. 161-179

- Anna Leander, "Thinking Tools," in Audie Klotz and Deepa Prakash (Eds.), *Qualitative Methods in International Relations: A Pluralist Guide*, (NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008), ch. 2, pp. 11-27.
- Hall, Peter A. "Aligning Ontology and Methodology in Comparative Politics." In *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*, ed. J. Mahoney and D. Rueschemeyer. New York: Cambridge University Press (2008), pp. 373-404 \*\*

## **Week 2: Case Studies**

### Discussion points:

- Is qualitative research inherently about case study analysis? What is the difference between studying one case, two cases, three or many? What do we seek to achieve through comparing a number of cases, what do we compare about them and how do we choose how many cases to actually study?
- What are typologies? How are they useful in research? how does one builds a typology and when is it appropriate?

Guidelines for homework #2 - will be conducted in class (or at home, if needed)

### Readings:

- Alexander George & Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 2005), Ch. 1.
- Gerring, the Case study: what it is and what it does, in Charles Boix and Susan Stokes (Eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), ch. 4
- Audie Klotz, "Case Selection", in Audie Klotz and Deepa Prakash (Eds.), *Qualitative Methods in International Relations: A Pluralist Guide*, (NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008), ch. 4, pp. 43-60
- Jason Seawright and John Gerring, "Case Selection Techniques in case study research: a menu of qualitative and quantitative options", *Political Research Quarterly* 61:2 (June 2008), 294-308.
- Bennett, Andrew, and Colin Elman. "Qualitative research: Recent developments in case study methods." *Annual Review Political Science* 9 (2006): 455-476 \*\*
- Colin Elman "Explanatory typologies in qualitative studies of international politics, *International organization* 59.02 (2005): 293-326
- George & Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 2005), ch. 11
- Sidney Tarrow, "The Strategy of Paired Comparison: Toward a Theory of Practice," *Comparative Political Studies* 43 (2), February 2010: 230-59.
- James Mahoney and Gary Goertz, "The Possibility Principle: Choosing Negative Cases in Comparative Research," *American Political Science Review* 98 (4), November 2004: 653-69.
- Robert H. Bates, "From Case Studies to Social Science: A strategy for Political Research", in Charles Boix and Susan Stokes (Eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), ch. 7 \*\*

## **Part II: Qualitative Research tools**

### **Week 3: Process tracing and Structured Focused Comparison**

#### Discussion points:

- How do you study processes? what is the difference between inductive and deductive process tracing? What is the difference between intensive and extensive process tracing and what are best practices as have been developed in the last two decades?

In class assignment – silver blaze and the Fashoda crisis

#### Readings:

- James Mahoney, Process Tracing and Historical Explanation, *Security Studies* 24(2), (2015), 200–218
- George & Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 2005), ch. 3, ch. 10
- Jeffrey T. Checkel, "Process Tracing", in Audie Klotz and Deepa Prakash (Eds.), *Qualitative Methods in International Relations: A Pluralist Guide*, (NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008), ch. 8, pp. 114–130
- Kaarbo, Juliette & Beasley, Ryan. K., "A practical guide to the comparative case study method in political psychology", *Political Psychology*, 1999 20(2), 369–391.
- David Collier, "Understanding Process Tracing." *PS: Political Science and Politics* 44, No. 4 (October 2011), 823–30
- Arthur Conan Doyle, "The Adventures of Silver Blaze" – *bring a print out of the story to class.*
- Bennett, Andrew, "Process Tracing and Causal Inference", in Henry Brady and David Collier (eds), *Rethinking Social Inquiry* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed, 2010), Ch. 10.

### **Week 4: Ethnography, Historiography and Critical Junctures**

#### Discussion points:

- How does sustained attention to meaning making in the research world contribute to the study of politics? What are the promises, and perils, of social research that invites the unruly minutiae of lived experience and conceptual lifeworlds to converse with, and contest, abstract disciplinary theories and categories? What is participant observation and how is it conducted? How might we need to adapt (or correct our understandings of) ethnography in order to apply it in political settings? In what ways does it matter that participant-observation requires relationships with the people we research?
- Political scientists often take for granted that method for historians means the construction of narratives, based especially on primary sources found by digging around musty archives. Very often we receive no training before going off to "do" historical cases, leaving us woefully unprepared. So how do we go about doing

historical research? how do we know what to look for, how to examine the evidence and more importantly, when have we gathered enough materials?

Guidelines for Homework #3 - will be completed during class.

In class assignment

Readings:

- Clifford Geertz, "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture" in *The Interpretation of Cultures* (Basic Books, 1973), 3-30.
- Richard Fenno, "Observation, Context, and Sequence in the Study of Politics," *American Political Science Review* 80 (1), March 1986: 3-15.
- Hugh Gusterson, "Ethnographic Research", in Audie Klotz and Deepa Prakash (Eds.), *Qualitative Methods in International Relations: A Pluralist Guide*, (NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008), ch. 7, pp. 93-113
- Lisa Wedeen, "Reflections on ethnographic work in political science," *Annual Review of Political Science* 13: 255-272
- Elizabeth Jean Wood, "Field Research" in Charles Boix and Susan Stokes (Eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), ch. 5. \*\*
- Jerrold Post "Political Personality Profiling", in Audie Klotz and Deepa Prakash (Eds.), *Qualitative Methods in International Relations: A Pluralist Guide*, (NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008), ch. 9, pp. 131-150. \*\*
- Kevin C. Dunn, "Historical Representation", in Audie Klotz and Deepa Prakash (Eds.), *Qualitative Methods in International Relations: A Pluralist Guide*, (NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008), ch. 6, pp. 78-92
- Giovanni Capoccia and Daniel Kelemen, "The Study of Critical Junctures: Theory, Narrative, and Counterfactuals in Historical Institutionalism," *World Politics* 59 (3), April 2007: 341-69.
- James Mahoney, Erin Kimball, and Kendra Koivu, "The Logic of Historical Explanation in the Social Sciences," *Comparative Political Studies* 42:1 (January 2009), pp. 114-146.
- James Mahoney and Daniel Schensul, "Historical Context and Path Dependence", in Robert Goodin and Charles Tilly, *The Oxford Handbook of Contextual Political Analysis* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 454-471. \*\*
- Ian Lustick, "History, Historiography, and Political Science: Multiple Historical Records and the Problem of Selection Bias," *American Political Science Review* 90 (3), September 1996: 605-18. \*\*

**Week 5: Discourse analysis**

Discussion points:

Reflecting various strands of theorizing, diverse approaches to textual and non-textual analysis fall under the rubric of discourse. Analysts can use both quantitative and qualitative methods to gather data from a wide array of verbal and written sources.

Rather than defending one or the other approach, we concentrate on bridging the divide between discourse analysis and content analysis. we ask question such as: how does one go about reconstructing the questions that a given author is asking? what are illocutionary acts and why do they matter? to what extent are texts and the ideas they formulate related to specific historical contexts? and how do texts relate to practices of power and domination?

Guidelines for next week's in-class assignment

Guidelines for homework #4

Readings:

- Iver B. Newmann, "Discourse Analysis", in Audie Klotz and Deepa Prakash (Eds.), *Qualitative Methods in International Relations: A Pluralist Guide*, (NY: Palgrave McMillan, 2008), ch. 5, pp. 61-77
- Peg Hermann, "Content Analysis," in Audie Klotz and Deepa Prakash (Eds.), *Qualitative Methods in International Relations: A Pluralist Guide*, (NY: Palgrave McMillan, 2008), ch. 10, pp. 151-167
- Gavan Duffy "Pragmatic Analysis", in Audie Klotz and Deepa Prakash (Eds.), *Qualitative Methods in International Relations: A Pluralist Guide*, (NY: Palgrave McMillan, 2008), ch. 11, pp. 168-186.\*\* (good for the more quantitative oriented people)

In class assignment - discussion

**Week 10: Archival research, Field work and Elite interviews**

Discussion points:

What are some of the strategies for addressing intellectual, logistical, and social challenges that carrying out field research involves? What are some of the challenges of conducting interviews and archival work?

Readings:

- Diana Kapiszewski, Lauren M. McLean and Benjamin L. Read, *Field Research in Political Science: Practices and Principles* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), Chapter 3 – "preparing for field work", pp. 82-118; **and** chapter 6 – "interviews, oral histories and focus groups", pp. 190-233 (*The rest of the book is very useful for those of you who wish to do this kind of work*)
- Soledad Loaeza, Randy Stevenson, and Devra C. Moehler, "Symposium: Should Everyone Do Fieldwork?," *APSA-CP Newsletter* 16(2) (2005): 8-18
- Melani Cammett, "Using Proxy Interviewing to Address Sensitive Topics." In Layna Mosley, ed., *Interview Research in Political Science* (Cornell University Press, 2013), pp. 125-143.
- Elisabeth Wood, "Field Research." In Charles Boix and Susan Stokes, eds., *The Oxford handbook of Comparative Politics* (Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 123-146\*\*



- Sheila Carapico, Janine A. Clark, Amaney Jamal, David Romano, Jilian Schwedler, and Mark Tessler, "Symposium: Methodologies of Field Research in the Middle East," *PS: Political Science and Politics* 39(3) (July 2006).\*\*
- Nora Cate Schaeffer and Stanley Presser, "The Science of Asking Questions," *Annual Review of Sociology* 29(1) (December 2003): 65-88\*\*

In class assignment – interview questions

### **Week 11: Limitations of qualitative analysis**

#### **Homework #4 is due.**

Discussion points:

What are some of the limitations of qualitative analysis? When is mixed method research needed? What are some of the problems in the methods we have covered in class?

Guidelines for the Research Design papers

Readings:

- Przworski, A. & Salomon, F. "The art of writing proposals: some candid suggestions for Applicants to Social Science Research Council Competitions", *SSRC 1995 (IQMR 2013 M0)*
- George A. and Bennet, A. *Case Studies and Theory development in the Social Science*, (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press), 2005, Chapter 4: Designing Case Study Research, pp. 73-88

### **Week 12: Class presentations**

***The End***