

Research and Research Methods
POLI 5P81

Brock University - Winter 2012

Professor: Matthew Hennigar Office: Plaza 343
Phone: (905) 688-5550 ext. 4474 Office Hours: **M noon-1pm; F 10-11am**
E-mail: matthew.hennigar@brocku.ca or by appointment

Course Description and Objectives

This course examines core debates in Political Science related to the nature and acquisition of knowledge (ontology and epistemology) and to the contributions of the major research traditions, including rational choice, cognitive/cultural and institutional approaches. Through seminar discussions and assignments, you will be able to assess where your own research interests are situated in terms of the wider debates and approaches.

A second major objective of the course is to introduce you to research design strategies and their related strengths and weaknesses. Through seminar readings and student presentations, you will acquire the tools to develop your own research projects for your major research paper or thesis. By the end of this course, you should have developed the key elements that normally constitute the introduction to your MRP/thesis, and by working in collaboration with your supervisor, have largely completed the proposal for your independent research project.

Required Texts (available in Brock bookstore)

Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge/London: MIT Press, 2004).

David Marsh and Gerry Stoker (eds.) *Theory and Methods in Political Science*, 3rd ed. (Houndmills, Basingstoke; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

Course Requirements

Seminar Participation	25%
Memos	10%
Methodology Review Essay	20% (due February 13, 2012)
Research Design Presentation	20%
Research Design Essay	25% (due 2 weeks after your research design presentation)

Please note:

- The last day to withdraw without academic penalty is **Friday, March 7, 2012**.
- Requests for extra or substitute work will not be granted.
- If you have any special needs regarding the seminar, please contact me and the Services for Students with disABILITIES (Schmon Tower 400) as soon as possible.

Seminar Participation

As a seminar, this course is based on the active involvement of all participants. Accordingly, attendance at weekly seminars is mandatory (that is, absences without legitimate reasons mean a mark of 0 for that day), and you should complete assigned readings before class and be prepared to contribute meaningfully to in-class discussion. You will be graded on your ability to make original points, to engage other students' comments, and to incorporate the readings in your comments. In order to prepare for the discussion, you should be able to identify the central questions raised in the readings, the methodological and/or design issues that are pertinent to the article, and the author's arguments.

As facilitator, my role is to ensure that these questions are addressed during the course of seminar discussion, and to foster an atmosphere of respect and tolerance for the diverse views of others. All students are expected to be respectful while others are talking.

Memos

You will write **seven** short memos (about 2 pages each, or 300-400 words), beginning in the second week and every week up to and including week 8 (Mar. 5), which analyse the readings for a particular seminar. The purpose of the memos is not so much to summarize the readings (although you can briefly summarize the topic), but to encourage you to relate the readings to your own research interests. Each memo should consider how the readings connect to other readings in the course, seminar discussions, your own research interests, and the research you are reading outside the course. Doing these memos also helps ensure that class participants are prepared to enter into good and productive discussions.

Memos must be submitted via the **Isaak Messages** tool for this course by the **Sunday** before the respective seminar.

Methodology Review Essay

Write a critical review of **ONE** of the articles on the following page. Your essay should be 8-10 double-spaced pages in length, and must include a Bibliography and citations. **The review is due in class on February 13th.** Your review should include the following considerations:

What is the purpose of the research and what is the central thesis or argument?

What conceptual approach does the article's author(s) employ?

What methodological techniques are employed to address the central question? (For example, is it a case study or comparative work? Does it use qualitative or quantitative methods, or both?)

Would this project require Ethics Certification if undertaken in Canada?

What concepts or theories are employed in the study?

What evidence is used to support the arguments and are the arguments logically consistent?

What inferences are made from the evidence, and are there any problems with the interpretation of evidence?

Does the article make normative arguments, and if so, are they supported by the evidence?

Overall, how appropriate is the methodological approach for the research question?

- Anderson, Cameron and Elizabeth Goodyear-Grant (2008) 'Youth Turnout: Adolescents' Attitudes in Ontario,' *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 41(3): 697-718.
- Blaydes, Lisa and Mark Andreas Kayser (2011) 'Counting Calories: Democracy and Distribution in the Developing World,' *International Studies Quarterly* 55(4): 887-908.
- Epp, Charles (1996) 'Do Bills of Rights Matter? The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms,' *American Political Science Review* 90: 765-779.
- Radmilovic, Vuk (2010) 'Strategic Legitimacy Cultivation at the Supreme Court of Canada: Quebec Secession Reference and Beyond,' *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 43(4): 843-869.
- Rauchhaus, Robert (2009) 'Evaluating the Nuclear Peace Hypothesis: A Quantitative Approach,' *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 53(2): 258-277.

Late Penalty

A **FIVE (5) PER CENT PER DAY** penalty will be assigned for late papers. Extensions are granted only in circumstances that are beyond the student's control, such as health problems that are supported by a medical certificate, or other clearly equivalent situations. Time management problems are not grounds for extensions. Start early!

Research Design Presentation

The last four sessions of the term are dedicated to Student Research Workshops. The Workshop provides an opportunity to share your project with your fellow students, and to receive feedback on your research from your peers. The objective is to share in the research design process, engage with the work of your peers, and situate your own research relative to the research of others. Based on enrolment of 15 students, each student will be allotted **15** minutes to present his/her research topic, followed by 15 minutes of discussion. Students who are not presenting are expected to offer constructive commentary on the presentations. These efforts will be reflected in the seminar participation grade.

Your presentation should include the following information:

1. What is your research topic?
2. What is the question, problem or issue you plan to explore?
3. Where is your topic situated in terms of the relevant theoretical literature?
4. What methodological approach is your research most closely aligned with?
5. What is your research design, and what challenges have you encountered in developing it?
6. What evidence do you expect to draw on to develop your arguments, and how certain are you that you can obtain the evidence you need?

To facilitate discussion, you should prepare a 1-2 page handout that highlights the elements above that you will be addressing. You are expected to receive input from your MRP/thesis supervisor in the preparation of your presentation. This presentation should form the basis of your research proposal that you submit to your supervisor.

Research Design Essay:

Read chapter 5 of Palys and Atchison, 'Constructing a Research Proposal,' which is on reserve.

In a 12 page essay, describe the strategy you have developed for exploring your research topic. The essay should reflect your efforts to address the comments raised during the Workshop, the instructor's evaluation of your presentation, **and your supervisor's on-going input**. This essay should form the basis of the introduction to your MRP/thesis. Your essay should include the elements listed above under research design presentation, as well as the following additional information:

1. A lengthier literature review that details the central concepts, theories and methodologies which are directly applicable to your research.
2. A discussion of why your research design (including methods for data collection and analysis) provide the best strategy for addressing your research question.
3. An appraisal of the assumptions you bring to your research and how this influences the conclusions at which you may arrive.
4. An explanation of the inferences you expect to draw from the evidence.
5. Your (brief) reflections on how your research topic and design have evolved, based on what you have learned in the course.

Your research design essay will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

1. How clearly you explain your topic, thesis and research design.
2. How well you support your claims with reference to the literature on methodology, research design and your chosen topic.
3. How well your research design fits with the arguments you expect to advance and the evidence you put forth.
4. The overall coherence of your research design.

This essay is due **two weeks after your research design presentation. No essays will be accepted after this date, which means an automatic grade of zero.**

Tentative Outline and Required Readings

Although not technically required for this course, I would strongly recommend adding the following books to your personal library, particularly if you are considering further post-graduate studies:

Northey, Margo, Lorne Tepperman and Patrizia Albanese (2009) *Making Sense: A Student's Guide to Research and Writing - Social Sciences*, 4th edition. Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press.

Palys, Ted and Chris Atchison (2008) *Research Decisions: Quantitative and Qualitative Perspectives*, 4th edition. Toronto: Thomson Nelson.

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

January 9 **Course Objectives and Organization; Ontology and Epistemology in Political Science**

Readings:

An introduction to ontological and epistemological positions - what constitutes knowledge and how knowledge can be advanced - as well as the qualitative and quantitative research traditions.

Stoker, Gerry and David Marsh (2010) 'Introduction,' in Marsh and Stoker: 1-12.

Marsh, David and Paul Furlong (2010) 'A Skin, not a Sweater: Ontology and Epistemology in Political Science,' in Marsh and Stoker: 184-210.

Palys, Ted and Chris Atchison (2008) 'Perspectives on Research,' *Research Decisions: Quantitative and Qualitative Perspectives*, 4th ed. (Toronto: Thomson Nelson): chpt. 1 (1-30). [reserve]

Related Readings:

George and Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*, Chapter 7.

Goodin, Robert and Hans Dieter Klingemann (1996) *A New Handbook of Political Science*. Oxford: Oxford U P.

Grofman, Bernard (2007) 'Toward a Science of Politics?,' *European Political Science* 6(2): 143-155.

Katznelson, Ira and Helen V. Milner (2002) *Political Science: State of the Discipline, centennial edition*. New York: Norton.

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

Sigelman, Lee (2006) 'The Coevolution of American Political Science and the American Political Science Review,' *American Political Science Review* 100(4): 463-478.

Taylor, Charles (1985) *Philosophical Papers 2: Philosophy and the Human Sciences*. Cambridge: Cambridge U P.

January 16 **The Discipline of Political Science and Positioning Your Research**

We examine the sources of research ideas and the factors that affect research design. We will also assess some of the major research schools in Political Science.

Readings:

Palys, Ted and Chris Atchison (2008) 'Getting Started,' *Research Decisions: Quantitative and Qualitative Perspectives*, 4th edition: chapter 2 (31-54). [reserve]

Hall, Peter and Rosemary C.R. Taylor (1996) 'Political Science and the Three New Institutionalisms,' *Political Studies* 44: 936-957. [reserve]

Ward, Hugh (2002) 'Rational Choice,' in David Marsh and Gerry Stoker (eds) *Theory and Methods in Political Science* 2nd ed.: 65-89. [reserve]

Lowndes, Vivien (2010) 'Institutionalism,' in Marsh and Stoker: 60-79.

Parsons, Craig (2010) 'Constructivism and Interpretive Theory,' in Marsh and Stoker: 80-98.

Hollis, Martin and Steve Smith (1990) 'The Growth of a Discipline,' *Explaining and Understanding International Relations*. New York: Oxford University Press: 16-44. [reserve]

Trent, John E. (2008) 'Issues in Political Science CIRCA Century 21: Empirical Evidence from the World of Political Science Book Series,' *Participation: Bulletin of the International Political Science Association* 32(2): 6-8. [Isaak]

Related Readings:

Allison, Graham (1971) *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company.

Finnemore, Martha and Kathryn Sikkink (2001) 'Taking Stock: The Constructivist Research Program in International Relations and Comparative Politics', *Annual Review of Political Science* 4: 391-416.

Green, Donald P. and Ian Shapiro (1994) *Pathologies of Rational Choice Theory: A Critique of Applications in Political Science*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Lichbach, Mark I. and Alan Zuckerman, eds. (1997) *Comparative Politics: Rationality, Culture and Structure*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lovenduski, Joni (1998) 'Gendering Research in Political Science,' *Annual Review of Political Science* 1:333-56.

Polsby, Nelson (1998) 'Social Science and Scientific Change: a Note on Thomas S. Kuhn's Contribution,' *Annual Review of Political Science* 1: 199-210.

Waltz, Kenneth (1959) *Man, the State and War*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Wiarda, Howard, ed. (2002) *New Directions in Comparative Politics*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

January 23 Research Ethics and Controversial Research

Palys, Ted and Chris Atchison (2008) 'Ethics in Social Research,' and 'Epilogue: Making Research Decisions in "Interesting Times,"' *Research Decisions: Quantitative and Qualitative Perspective* 4th edition: chapters 3 (69-106) and 14 (392-397). [reserve]

Widdowson, Frances and Albert Howard (2008) *Disrobing the Aboriginal Industry: The Deception behind Indigenous Cultural Preservation*: 1-48; 67-68; 106-128. [reserve]

Draft 2nd Edition of the Tri-Council Policy Statement (TCPS): Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (Revised December 2009) [pdf on Isaak, or click here: http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/pdf/eng/Revised%20Draft%202nd%20Ed%20PDFs/Revised%20Draft%202nd%20Edition%20TCPS_EN.pdf]: chapters 1, 2, 9, and 10 (you should also read the short introductions of chapters 3-8).

[CPSA Response to December 2009 Draft of the 2nd Edition of the TCPS - 26 February 2010: http://www.cpsa-acsp.ca/pdfs/2010_CPSA_Response_to_TCPSII.pdf](http://www.cpsa-acsp.ca/pdfs/2010_CPSA_Response_to_TCPSII.pdf)

CPSA, Research Ethics - Survey Research: Some Specific Concerns: <http://www.cpsa-acsp.ca/researchethics-survey.shtml>

-Presentation by Lori Walker, Senior Research Ethics Officer, Office of Research Services

January 30 Normative Theory

Professors Bradshaw and Mathie consider the question of what is political philosophy.

Buckler, Steve (2010) 'Normative Theory,' in Marsh and Stoker: 156-176.

Arendt, Hannah (1968) 'Truth and Politics,' *Between Past and Future: Eight Exercises in Political Thought*. New York: Viking Press: 227-264. [reserve]

Strauss, Leo (1959) 'What is Political Philosophy?,' *What is Political Philosophy? And Other Studies*. Glencoe, Illinois: Free Press: 9-53. [reserve]

February 6 The Case Study Method: Design and Theoretical Implications

Chapters 1,2,4,5,6 in *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*

Steinberg, Paul F. (2007) 'Causal Assessment in Small-N Policy Studies,' *The Policy Studies Journal* 35(2): 181-204.[reserve]

Yin, Robert (2009) *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, 4th edition. London: Sage: 25-64 [chapter 2; book on reserve]

Recommended Readings:

Dogan, Mattei and Dominique Pelassy (1990) *How to Compare Nations: strategies in comparative politics*, 2nd ed. Chatham, New Jersey: Chatham House Publishers Inc.

Evans, Peter B., D. Rueschemeyer and Theda Skocpol (eds) (1995) *Bringing the State Back In*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Geddes, Barbara (1995) 'Uses and Limitations of Rational Choice,' in Peter H. Smith (ed.) *Latin America in Comparative Perspective: New Approaches to Methods and Analysis*. Boulder: Westview Press: 81-108.

Huntington, Samuel. P. (1984) 'Will More Countries Become Democratic?'" *Political Science Quarterly* 99(2): 193-218.

Inglehart, Ronald (1997) *Modernization and Postmodernization: Cultural, Economic and Political Change in 43 Societies*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Lijphart, Arend (1975) 'The Comparable Cases Strategy in Comparative Research,' *Comparative Political Studies* 8(2): 158-177.

Przeworski, Adam and Henry Teune (1970) *The Logic of Comparative Social Inquiry*. New York: Wiley.

February 13 The Comparative Method and Alternatives: Strategies, Design and Issues

Sartori, Giovanni (1991) 'Comparing and Miscomparing,' *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 3: 243-257. [reserve]

Ragin, Charles (1987) *The Comparative Method: Moving Beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies*. Berkley: University of California Press: vii-68. [book on reserve]

Hopkins, Jonathan (2010) 'The Comparative Method,' in Marsh and Stoker: 285-307.

TBA

-Research Presentation by Professor Conteh

February 20 Reading Week – no seminar

February 27 Generating Data: Interactive Methods

Techniques that fall into the domain of interactive methods involving a person-to-person exchange of information include interviews and questionnaires.

Palys, Ted and Chris Atchison (2008) 'Interactive Methods: Surveys, Interviews, and Oral History Techniques,' *Research Decisions: Qualitative and Quantitative Perspectives*: chpt. 6 (153-167). [reserve]

Hausegger, Lori, Troy Riddell, Matthew Hennigar and Emma Richez (2010) 'Exploring the Links Between Party and Appointment: Canadian Federal Judicial Appointments from 1989 to 2003,' *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 43(3): 633-659 . [reserve]

Hammer, Dean & Aaron Wildavsky (1989) 'The Open-ended, Semi-structured Interview: an (almost) Operational Guide,' in Aaron Wildavsky (ed) *Craftways: On the Organization of Scholarly Work*. New Brunswick, USA and London, UK: Transaction Publishers: 57-101. [see Professor Hennigar]

Recommended Readings:

Blais, André, Elisabeth Gidengil, Richard Nadeau and Neil Nevitte (2002) *Anatomy of a Liberal Victory: Making Sense of the Vote in the 2000 Canadian Election*. Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press.

Clarke, Harold, Jane Jenson, Lawrence LeDuc and Jon Pammett (1996) *Absent Mandate: Canadian Electoral Politics in an Era of Restructuring*. Toronto: Gage.

Gidengil, E., André Blais, Neil Nevitte and Richard Nadeau. 2004. *Citizens*. Vancouver: UBC Press.

Inglehart, Ronald (1997) *Modernization and Postmodernization: Cultural, Economic and Political Change in 43 Societies*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Mishler, William and Richard Rose (1997) 'Trust, Mistrust and Skepticism: Popular Evaluations of Civil and Political Institutions in Post-Communist Societies', *Journal of Politics* 59: 419-451.

March 5 Analyzing Data: Archival Materials, Secondary Analysis, Aggregate Statistics

Archival measures comprise information contained in records or documents. They may include records of speeches, newspapers, books or private materials, or the running records and statistical compendia produced by all levels of government and public agencies.

Palys, Ted and Chris Atchison (2008) 'Unobtrusive and Archival Methods,' *Research Decisions: Quantitative and Qualitative Perspectives*: chpt. 8 (236-251). [reserve]

TBA

-Research Presentation by Professor Tossutti

Recommended Readings:

Baum, Matthew (2002) 'Sex, Lies and War: How Soft News Brings Foreign Policy to the Public,' *American Political Science Review* 96: 91-109.

Boyd, Monica (2003) 'Educational Attainments of Immigrant Offspring: Success or Segmented Assimilation?', in Jeffrey G. Reitz (ed) *Host Societies and the Reception of Immigrants*: 91-117. San Diego: Centre for Comparative Immigration Studies, University of California.

As you think about constructing your proposal, and then turning it into your independent research project, you might find it helpful to first read chapter 13, 'Writing Your Research Report,' in Ted Palys and Chris Atchison (2008) *Research Decisions: Quantitative and Qualitative Perspectives* (4th ed.). I've put the book on reserve at the library.

March 12: Workshop 1 (Student Research Presentations)

March 19: Workshop 2 (Student Research Presentations)

March 26: Workshop 3 (Student Research Presentations)

April 2: Workshop 4 (Student Research Presentations)

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Because academic integrity is vital to the well-being of the university community, Brock University takes academic misconduct very seriously. Academic misconduct includes plagiarism, which involves presenting the words and ideas of another person as if they were your own, and other forms of cheating, such as using crib notes during a test or fabricating data for a lab assignment. The penalties for academic misconduct can be very severe. A grade of zero may be given for the assignment or even for the course, and a second offense may result in suspension from the University. Students are urged to read the section of the Brock University Undergraduate Calendar that pertains to academic misconduct. Students are also reminded that the Student Development Centre (Schmon Tower, Room 400) offers free workshops on writing and study skills and on avoiding plagiarism.

POLICY ON LATE ESSAYS

The policy of the Department is that essays received by the instructor or deposited in the Political Science department Essay box after 4:00 p.m. or at a time designated by the instructor, of the date on which they were due will be penalized two per cent for each day late from Monday through Friday and five per cent for the period from Friday 4:00 p.m. to Monday 8:30 a.m., and that no paper will be accepted two weeks after the due date.

An essay is considered received when the original hard copy (printed-not disk) of the paper is in the hands of the instructor or in the box outside the Political Science Department's office. (ALL ESSAYS MUST INCLUDE A TITLE PAGE WITH THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION CLEARLY MARKED: STUDENT NUMBER, TA and INSTRUCTOR'S NAME, COURSE NAME and NUMBER).

Having an essay date-stamped by security, or the library, or anyone else does not constitute receipt of the essay by the Political Science Department. Instructors may require that essays be submitted electronically through turnitin.com. In this case, students must consult with the Instructor on what constitutes a late essay.

Instructors may establish more restrictive deadlines or more severe penalties in particular courses – check the course outline. Extensions of due dates are granted only in circumstances that are beyond the student's control, such as health problems that are supported by a medical certificate, or other, clearly equivalent situations.

Time management problems are not grounds for extensions. You are strongly urged to avoid these penalties by beginning to work on essays early in the term; by setting your own target dates for completion that are several days before the due date; and by carefully budgeting your time.

POLICY ON RETURNING MARKED ESSAYS

Marked essays will normally be returned during class meetings or at the final examination. Students who are not in class to receive their essays or do not receive them at the final examination can obtain them in two ways:

- directly from the instructor during his/her office hours (unless the instructor specifies in the course outline or by notice on his/her office door that this option is not available), and/or
- directly from the instructor on specific days and at specific times announced in class or posted on his/her office door.

Note: Essays that are not picked up within six months after the end of term will be shredded.