

POLS 2104

Introduction to Research Methods in Political Science

(Fall 2018)

Instructor: Amr Adly

Office: HUSS 2011

Email: amradly82@aucegypt.edu

Class: Hatem 2007

Class times: Sundays and Wednesdays: 11:30 - 12:45 pm

Office Hours: Sundays: 10:30-11:30; 1:00 - 2:00 pm and;

Wednesdays: 1:00-2:00 pm

Course description

This course introduces students to the basic logic and methods of political science research. It discusses the idea behind empirical social sciences in general and political science in particular. It offers a detailed take on how to develop a research design that includes the formulation of a proper puzzle or question, the critical positioning of oneself within extant literature, the development of concepts and their operationalization and measurement and the testing of hypotheses. The course provides an extensive coverage of the diversity of research methods, qualitative and quantitative and mixes of the two.

Course objectives

The ultimate goal of this course is the students' acquisition of necessary skills and tools to write proper political science research as well as to read it and evaluate it. As introductory as it is, students should understand what political science is about, how theorization and generalization are possible and which methods are used to realize this mission. The course also aims at familiarizing students at this stage with the great variety of methods and methodological traditions that exist in political science that sometimes converge but diverge on many other occasions. It will hence be a hands-on course where students will get to practice the skills and tools they acquire and to test the concepts they learn in class through assignments, quizzes, class discussions and activities and a final proposal.

Requirements and assessment

- You are expected to attend and participate in classes. Attendance will NOT be graded. However, as per university rules, if you miss more than three weeks of classes, for whatever reason, you will receive an F in the course. It is your

responsibility to make sure that you are marked present for the day or withdraw from the course if you have too many absences.

- Make sure to be inside the class at 11:30 sharp. No late comers will be admitted to the classroom.
- All readings on the syllabus are required to complete the course.
- There will be a total of SEVEN pop-up quizzes through the course. You need to take FIVE of them. The pop-up quizzes will tackle the readings and each will be graded out of 5 per cent of the total, making a total of 25 points. The aim is to make sure that readings are being done and in order to stimulate class participation.
- You will also be required to submit a research proposal towards the end of the course. The idea behind the proposal is to apply the skills, tools and methods students will have acquired through the course. The proposal should be around 3000 words. More detailed information about the structure of the assignment will be communicated in due date.
- There will be a total of FIVE essay assignments throughout the course. The exact dates of giving and submitting assignments are as follows:

Assignment number	Date assigning essay	Date of Submission
Assignment One	Sept. 12th	Sept. 24th, no later than 7 am
Assignment Two	Sept. 23rd	Oct. 4th, no later than 7 am
Assignment Three	Oct. 3rd	Oct. 11th, no later than 7 am
Assignment Four	Nov. 11th	Nov. 21st, no later than 7 am
Assignment Five	Nov. 25th	Dec. 6th, no later than 7 am

- **Assignments submitted later than the set deadline WILL NEITHER BE ACCEPTED NOR GRADED. No excuses, including computer collapse or loss of files, so keep a backup.**
- **Assessment will be as follows:**
 - Participation: 5 per cent
 - Five quizzes (Out of seven): 25 per cent (5 each)
 - Assignments (Five) 25 per cent (5 each)
 - Class activity 20 per cent (4 each)

The grade cut-offs will be as follows: A (94 and above), A- (90-93), B+(87-89), B (84-86), B- (80-83), C+ (77-79), C (74-76), C- (70-73), D+ (61-69), D (50-60).

- **"ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PLAGIARISM**

- Students are expected to commit to the principles of academic integrity.
- Academic integrity includes a commitment to not engage in or tolerate acts of falsification, misrepresentation or deception. Such acts of dishonesty include cheating or copying, plagiarizing, submitting another persons' work as one's own, using Internet or other sources without citation, fabricating field data or citations, stealing examinations, tampering with the academic work of another student, facilitating other students' acts of academic dishonesty, etc.
- Plagiarism for assignments and/or reports may result in a zero grade for the assignment and/or the report in question. Cheating during an examination may result in a zero grade for this examination. Further action, according to university regulations, would also be implemented.
- You should be aware that all written work might be submitted to “Turnitin.com”, the detection prevention software.
- The University's statement on academic integrity, from which the above statement is drawn, is available at:
<http://www.aucegypt.edu/academics/integrity/Pages/default.aspx>

Classes

Class 1 (Wednesday, Sept. 5th) Introduction to the course

Classes 2 and 3: Basics of social research

Class 2 (Sunday, Sept. 9th)

Babbie, Earl R. (2007) “Basics of Social Research”, Chapter one

Class 3 (Wednesday, Sept. 12th)

Berg, Bruce L. (2001) “Ethical issues” in *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences*: 39-65

Classes 4 to 10: Research Design

Class 4 (Sunday, Sept. 16th)

De Vaus, David (2001) “What is research design?” The context of design” in *Research Design in Social Research*: 1-16

Class 5 (Wednesday, Sept. 19th)

Babbie, Earl R. (2007) “Paradigm, Theory and Research” in “Basics of Social Research”, Chapter Two

Class 6 (Sunday, Sept. 23rd): The comparative method

Lijphart, Arend (1971) “Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method”, *American Political Science Review* 65 (3): 682-693

Class 7 (Wednesday, Sept. 26th)

Babbie, Earl R. (2007) “Conceptualization, Operationalization and Measurement” in “Basics of Social Research”, Chapter Five

Class 8 (Sunday, Sept. 30th): Class activity on question/puzzle formation and reviewing assignment one.

Class 9 (Wednesday, October. 3th): Indexes, scales and typologies

Babbie, Earl R. (2007) “Introduction to social research”, Chapter 6

Class 10 (Sunday, Oct. 7th): Literature review

Neuman, W. Lawrence (2007) “Reviewing the Scholarly Literature and Planning a study” in *Basics of Social Research: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*: 68-107

Class 11 (Wednesday, Oct. 10th): Class activity on concept formation and reviewing assignment two.

Class 12 (Sunday, Oct. 14th): Variables and hypothesis development

Doner, R. F., Ritchie, B. K., & Slater, D. (2005). Systemic vulnerability and the origins of developmental states: Northeast and Southeast Asia in comparative perspective. *International organization*, 59(2), 327-361.

Class 13 (Wednesday, Oct. 17th): Class activity on literature review and reviewing assignment three

Class 14 (Sunday, Oct. 21st): Operationalization and measurement

Delacroix, J., & Nielsen, F. (2001). The beloved myth: Protestantism and the rise of industrial capitalism in nineteenth-century Europe. *Social Forces*, 80(2), 509-553.

Class 15 (Wednesday, Oct. 24th): Case selection

Teune, H., & Przeworski, A. (1970). The logic of comparative social inquiry (pp. 34-9). New York: Wiley-Interscience.

Class 16 (Sunday, Oct. 28th)

Berg, Bruce L. (2001) "Writing research papers: Sorting the Noodles from the Soup" in *Qualitative Research methods for the social sciences*: 268-287

Classes 17 to 20: Qualitative methods

Class 17 (Wednesday, Oct. 31st): The logic of qualitative inquiry

Kalof, Linda, Amy Dan and Thomas Dietz (2008) "Basic Logic of Qualitative Inquiry" in *Essentials of Social Research*: 78-102

Class 18 (Sunday, November 4th): field research, surveys and questionnaires

Neuman, W. Lawrence (2007) "Field research" in *Basics of Social Research: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*, chapter 11

Class 19 (Wednesday, Nov. 7th): Ethnography

Goldbart, Juliet and Husler, David (2005) "ethnography" in *Research Methods in the Social Sciences*, edited by Bridget Somekh and Cathy Lewin, Chapter one

Class 20 (Sunday, Nov. 11th): Interviews and focus groups

Bloor, Michael, and Fiona Wood (2006) "Focus Groups" in *Keywords in Qualitative Methods: A vocabulary of research concepts*, p. 88-92 and;

Leech, B. L. (2002). Interview methods in political science. *PS: political science & politics*, 35(4), 663-664.

Class 21 (Wednesday, Nov. 14th): Process tracing and content analysis

Collier, D. (2011). Understanding process tracing. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 44(4), 823-830.

Classes 22 to 25: Quantitative methods

Class 22 (Sunday, Nov. 18th): The logic of quantitative methods

Kalof, Linda, Amy Dan and Thomas Dietz (2008) “Basic Logic of Quantitative Inquiry” in *Essentials of Social Research*: 59-77

Class 23 (Wednesday, Nov. 21st): Survey research and Questionnaires

Guthrie, Gerard (2010) “Questionnaires” in *Basic Research Methods: An Entry to Social Science Research*: 129-138

Class 24 (Sunday, Nov. 25th): Sampling and probability

Burdess, Neil (2010) “Introducing Sampling” in *Starting Statistics: A Short, Clear Guide*, 95-101

Babbie, Earl R. (2010) “The Logic of Sampling” in *The Practice of Social Research*, 187-227

Class 25 (Wednesday, Nov. 28th): hypothesis testing

Burdess, Neil (2010) “Introducing Hypothesis Testing” in *Starting Statistics: A Shot, Clear Guide*: 127-137

Class 26 (Sunday, December 2nd): Social experiments

Babbie, Earl R. (2007) “Social Experiments in Introduction to social research, Chapter Seven

Classes 27 and 28: Mixed methods

Class 27 (Wednesday, Dec. 5th)

Elliott, Jane (2005) “Telling Better Stories? Combining Qualitative and Quantitative Research” in *Using Narrative in Social Research: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*: 171-188

Class 28 (Sunday, Dec. 9th)

Armanios, Daniel and Adly, Amr (2016). How revolutions shape (or rather blur) markets: Initial insights from the Arab Spring.

Class 29 (Wednesday, Dec. 12th): Class activity Assignment 5 on hypothesis testing and review assignment five and a general wrap up of the course