

Term Information

Effective Term Autumn 2015

General Information

Course Bulletin Listing/Subject Area Political Science
Fiscal Unit/Academic Org Political Science - D0755
College/Academic Group Arts and Sciences
Level/Career Graduate
Course Number/Catalog 7888
Course Title Field Research Methods
Transcript Abbreviation Field Rsch Methods
Course Description This seminar introduces students to various field methods for developing and testing theories in political science.
Semester Credit Hours/Units Fixed: 3

Offering Information

Length Of Course 14 Week, 7 Week, 4 Week (May Session), 12 Week (May + Summer)
Flexibly Scheduled Course Never
Does any section of this course have a distance education component? No
Grading Basis Letter Grade
Repeatable No
Course Components Seminar
Grade Roster Component Seminar
Credit Available by Exam No
Admission Condition Course No
Off Campus Never
Campus of Offering Columbus

Prerequisites and Exclusions

Prerequisites/Corequisites
Exclusions

Cross-Listings

Cross-Listings

Subject/CIP Code

Subject/CIP Code 45.1001
Subsidy Level Doctoral Course
Intended Rank Doctoral

Requirement/Elective Designation

The course is an elective (for this or other units) or is a service course for other units

Course Details

Course goals or learning objectives/outcomes

- Development of a realistic field research plan.
- Introduce students to various field methods for the development and testing of various theories in Political Science.
- Assist students in preparation of dissertation prospectus and applications for research grants.
- Prepare students for dissertation field research.

Content Topic List

- Theory and field research
- Case selection
- Ethnography and participant observation
- Interviews and focus groups
- Designing and fielding surveys
- Sub-national data collection
- Survey experiments
- Field experiments
- Lab-in-the-field experiments
- Professional ethics

Attachments

- POLITSC7888Syllabus.pdf: Syllabus

(Syllabus. Owner: Smith, Charles William)

Comments

Workflow Information

Status	User(s)	Date/Time	Step
Submitted	Smith, Charles William	01/08/2015 04:09 PM	Submitted for Approval
Approved	Herrmann, Richard Karl	01/08/2015 04:17 PM	Unit Approval
Approved	Haddad, Deborah Moore	01/08/2015 04:36 PM	College Approval
Pending Approval	Nolen, Dawn Vankeerbergen, Bernadette Chantal Hanlin, Deborah Kay Jenkins, Mary Ellen Bigler Hogle, Danielle Nicole	01/08/2015 04:36 PM	ASCCAO Approval

Field Research Methods
POLITSC 7888, Fall 2013
Wed. 9am-11:45am
Derby Hall 2174

Professor: Amanda Lea Robinson
Email: robinson.1012@osu.edu
Office: Derby Hall 2080
Office hours: Thurs. 10am-12pm
Or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This seminar introduces students to various field methods for developing and testing theories in political science. The course is best suited for PhD students who are currently developing a dissertation prospectus, applying for research grants, or preparing for dissertation field research. Course requirements will consist of readings and discussions on different types of field research methods, as well as the development of a field research strategy over the course of the semester, with regular presentations to the group.

REQUIREMENTS

Active participation in the seminar is essential, and students are expected to read all of the assigned articles and chapters before the start of class each week. You are also expected to actively engage in the research projects of your classmates. Thus, in addition to the assigned readings each week, students are expected to have read the circulated memos of all other students. The course will be very hands-on, with students presenting components of their research plan at regular intervals in order to elicit feedback from each other.

A major goal of this course is for students to leave with a realistic field research plan. Towards that end, there will be eight assignments over the course of the semester. For each assignment, circulate your written work by 12 noon on Tuesday, and be prepared to present your work to the group in class. With the exception of Assignment 8 (the presentation of your final field research plan), these presentations should be given without the use of overhead slides. These regular presentations will help develop your ability to speak to colleagues in a formal, yet conversational, manner about your work.

The final paper for this course will be an NSF DDIG grant application to fund field research. The final paper is due by 5pm on Wednesday, December 4.

ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATIONS

1. **Participation – 20%**

Regular attendance and active participation in class discussion will constitute 20% of your final grade. You must be able to discuss assigned readings, as well as the memos of your fellow classmates.

2. **Memos – 30%**

The memos resulting from assignments 1-7 will constitute 30% of your final grade. These memos must be circulated on time to receive full credit.

3. Field Research Plan Presentation – 15%

Assignment 8 asks you to present your field research plan during the final class meeting. Your presentation will constitute 25% of your grade, and will be evaluated on the basis of the quality of your presentation, how well you have incorporated feedback from your previous memos, and your ability to respond to questions from the audience.

4. Field Research Grant Proposal – 35%

Your final field research proposal, written as an NSF DDRO grant proposal, is due December 4th by 5pm. The research proposal will count for 35% of your final grade.

Letter grades correspond to the following percentages:

A: 93-100	B: 83-86	C: 73-76	D: 60-66
A-: 90-92	B-: 80-82	C-: 70-72	E: <60
B+: 87-89	C+: 77-79	D+: 67-69	

COURSE POLICIES

Academic and Personal Integrity:

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct: <http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/csc>.

Students with Disabilities:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring accommodation, please contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. For additional information, visit <http://ods.osu.edu>.

COURSE MATERIALS

We will read large portions of the following books, so you may want to purchase a copy. Both books have been placed on reserve in Thompson Library.

Laitin, David. 1998. *Identity in Formation: The Russian-Speaking Populations in the Near Abroad*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Wood, Elisabeth. 2003. *Insurgent Collective Action and Civil War in El Salvador*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Additional readings include book chapters, published articles, and working papers. The latter two types of readings will be readily available online, and book chapters will be provided at least 2 weeks in advance.

COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK 1: COURSE INTRODUCTION, 8/21

- Lieberman, Evan S., Marc Morje Howard, and Julia Lynch. 2004. "Symposium: Field Research," *Qualitative Methods* 2(1): 2-15.
- Loaeza, Soledad, Randy Stevenson, and Devra C. Moehler. 2005. "Symposium: Should Everyone Do Fieldwork?" *APSA-CP* 16(2): 8-18.
- Wood, Elizabeth. 2007. "Field Methods" in Carles Boix and Susan Stokes (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*. Oxford; Oxford University Press. pp. 123-146.
- Hertel, Shareen, Matthew M. Singer, and Donna Lee Van Cott. 2009. "Field Research in Developing Countries: Hitting the Road Running." *PS: Political Science and Politics* 42(2): 305-309.

WEEK 2: THEORY AND FIELD RESEARCH, 8/28

- Bates, Robert H., Chalmers Johnson, and Ian S. Lustick. 1997. "Controversy in the Discipline: Area Studies and Comparative Politics." *PS: Political Science and Politics* 30(2):166- 179.
- Snyder, Richard. 2001. "Scaling Down: The Subnational Comparative Method." *Studies in Comparative International Development* 36(1): 93-110.
- Shapiro, Ian. 2002. "Problems, Methods, and Theories in the Study of Politics, or What's Wrong with Political Science and What to Do About It." *Political Theory* 30(4): 596-619.
- Geddes, Barbara. 2003. "Research Design and the Accumulation of Knowledge," in *Paradigms and Sand Castles: Theory Building and Research Design in Comparative Politics*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan. pp. 1-26.
- O'Brien, Kevin J. 2006. "Discovery, Research (Re)design, and Theory Building." In *Doing Fieldwork in China*, eds. Maria Heimer and Stig Thøgersen. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press. pp. 27-41.

Assignment 1

Choose a puzzle or problem that you believe is: (a) important; (b) poorly explained by existing theories; and (c) amenable to empirical analysis using data gathered in the field. Identify at least one hypothesis/observable implication that you think might resolve this puzzle/problem/question, and state the proposition in a clear, testable, and falsifiable form. Describe the 'ideal data' that would allow you to most convincingly test your hypothesis (at this point, you do not have to be realistic – think big!).

A one page memo outlining the puzzle or problem that motivates your thinking, the theory you wish to test, its observable implication(s), and your 'ideal data' should be distributed to the rest of the group by noon on Tuesday to allow all members of the group to prepare comments and suggestions.

WEEK 3: CASE SELECTION, 9/4

- Geddes, Barbara. 1990. "How the Cases You Choose Affect the Answers You Get: Selection Bias in Comparative Politics." *Political Analysis* 2:131-150.

King, Gary, Robert Keohane, and Sidney Verba. 2004. "Determining What to Observe" in *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. pp. 115-149.

Collier, David and James Mahoney. 1996. "Insights and Pitfalls: Selection Bias in Qualitative Research." *World Politics* 49(1):56-91.

Laitin, David. 1998. *Identity in Formation: The Russian-Speaking Populations in the Near Abroad*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. pp. 1-35, 365-372.

Gerring, John. 2007. "Techniques for Choosing Cases," in *Case Study Research: Principles and Practices*. New York: Cambridge University Press. pp. 86-150.

Fearon, James D. and David D. Laitin. 2008. "Integrating Qualitative and Quantitative Methods," in Janet M. Box-Steffensmeier, Henry E. Brady, and David Collier, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Assignment 2

Identify the cases that you will use to test the observable implications of your theory. Write a three-page memo describing your rationale for selecting the cases and provide a brief narrative about how you believe your theory applies (or does not apply) to the cases you have selected. The final section of your memo should describe the data you will need specific to these cases, and the potential sources of information you have been able to identify. Circulate by noon on Tuesday.

WEEK 4: ETHNOGRAPHY AND PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION, 9/11

Aunger, Robert. 1995. "On Ethnography: Storytelling or Science?" *Current Anthropology* 36, 1: 97-130.

Emerson, Robert M., Rachel I. Fretz, and Linda L. Shaw. 1995. "Fieldnotes in Ethnographic Research," in *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. pp 1-38.

Bernard, H. Russell. 2006. "Participant Observation." in *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*, 4th edition. New York: AltaMira Press. pp. 342-386.

Read, Ben. 2006. "Site-Intensive Methods: Fenno and Scott in Search of a Coalition" *Qualitative Methods* 4(2):10-13.

Boo, Katherine. 2012. "Prologue" and "Author's Notes," in *Beyond the Beautiful Forevers*. New York: Random House. pp. ix-xxii, 247-254.

WEEK 5: INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUPS, 9/18

Whyte, William Foot. 1982. "Interviewing in Field Research," in Robert G. Burgess (ed.), *Field Research: A Sourcebook and Field Manual*. London: George Allen and Unwin. pp. 111-122.

Pinderhughes, Howard. 1993. "The Anatomy of Racially Motivated Violence in New York City: A Case Study of Youth in Southern Brooklyn". *Social Problems* 40(4): 478-492.

Laitin, David. 1998. *Identity in Formation: The Russian-Speaking Populations in the Near Abroad*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. pp. 83-198, 394-397.

Leech, Beth L, et al. 2002. "Symposium: Interview Methods in Political Science." *PS: Political Science and Politics* 35(4): 663-688.

Wood, Elisabeth. 2003. *Insurgent Collective Action and Civil War in El Salvador*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. pp. 1-87, 193-256.

Assignment 3

Choose one of the case or cases identified in Assignment 2. For that case, develop a three-page research strategy employing participant observation, interviews, or focus group discussions to gather data to test the implications of your theory. This written research strategy should include three components: (1) a list of the "types" of respondents (and if possible, the specific respondents) you will need to observe or speak with; (2) a list of questions that you will need to have answered, either from behavioral observation or to be gathered through face-to-face interviews and; (3) a discussion of how this data will help you to accept or reject competing theories. Circulate by noon on Tuesday.

WEEK 6: DESIGNING AND FIELDING SURVEYS, 9/25

Laitin, David D. 1998. *Identity in Formation: The Russian-Speaking Populations in the Near Abroad*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. pp. 201-216, 372-394.

Posner, Daniel. 2004. "The Political Salience of Cultural Difference: Why Chewas and Tumbukas are Allies in Zambia and Adversaries in Malawi." *American Political Science Review* 98(4): 529-545.

Keeter, Scott. 2005. "Survey Research." In Daniel Druckman (ed.) *Doing Research: Methods of Inquiry for Conflict Analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc. pp. 123-162.

Krosnick, Jon A. and Stanley Presser. 2010. "Question and Questionnaire Design" in Peter V. Marsden and James D. Wright (eds.), *Handbook of Survey Research*. Bingley, UK: Emerald. pp. 263-314.

Berinsky, Adam, Kai Quek, and Michael Sances. 2012. "Conducting Online Experiments on Mechanical Turk." *Newsletter of the APSA Experimental Section* 3 (1): 2-6.

WEEK 7: SUB-NATIONAL DATA COLLECTION, 10/2

Laitin, David D. 1998. *Identity in Formation: The Russian-Speaking Populations in the Near Abroad*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. pp. 263-299, 397-399.

Lee, Alexander. 2011. "Who Becomes a Terrorist? Poverty, Education, and the Origins of Political Violence." *World Politics* 63(2): 203-245.

Weitz-Shapiro, Rebecca. 2012. "What Wins Votes: Why Some Politicians Opt Out of Clientelism." *American Journal of Political Science* 56(3): 568-583.

Ichino, Nahomi and Noah Nathan. 2013. "Crossing the Line: Local Ethnic Geography and Voting in Ghana." *American Political Science Review* 107(2): 344-361.

Assignment 4

In a three page memo, outline a ‘large-n’ dataset that would produce some statistical test of your theory and develop a research strategy for building this dataset. Describe the hypotheses amenable to quantitative tests and how the data gathered would allow you to assess those hypotheses. Outline a strategy to collect those data in the field, or how you would access these data if you are not collecting them. Circulate by noon on Tuesday.

WEEK 8: SURVEY EXPERIMENTS, 10/9

Laitin, David D. 1998. *Identity in Formation: The Russian-Speaking Populations in the Near Abroad*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. pp. 217-242.

Gaines, Brian J. and James H. Kuklinski. 2007. “The Logic of the Survey Experiment Reexamined.” *Political Analysis* 15(1): 1-20.

Hainmueller, Jens and Michael J. Hiscox. 2010. “Attitudes Toward Highly Skilled and Low-Skilled Immigration: Evidence from a Survey Experiment.” *American Political Science Review* 104(1): 1-24.

Blair, Graeme, Kosuke Imai and Jason Lyall. 2012. “Comparing and Combining List and Endorsement Experiments: Evidence from Afghanistan.” Unpublished manuscript.

Glynn, Adam N. 2013. “What Can We Learn with Statistical Truth Serum? Design and Analysis of the List Experiment.” *Public Opinion Quarterly* 77:159-172.

Blaydes, Lisa and Rachel M. Gillum. Forthcoming. “Religiosity-of-Interviewer Effects: Assessing the Impact of Veiled Enumerators on Survey Response in Egypt.” *Politics and Religion*.

WEEK 9: FIELD EXPERIMENTS, 10/16

Wantchekon, Leonard. 2003. “Clientelism and Voting Behavior: Evidence from a Field Experiment in Benin.” *World Politics* 55, 3: 399-422.

Harrison, Glenn W. and John A. List. 2004. “Field Experiments.” *Journal of Economic Literature* 42:1009-1055.

Ferraz, Claudio and Federico Finan. 2008. “Exposing Corrupt Politicians: The Effects of Brazil’s Publicly Released Audits on Electoral Outcomes.” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 123(2): 703-745.

Loewen, Peter John, Daniel Rubenson, and Leonard Wantchekon. 2010. “Help Me Help You: Conducting Field Experiments with Political Elites.” *ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 628(1):165-175.

Palluck, Elizabeth Levy. 2010. “The Promising Integration of Qualitative Methods and Field Experiments.” *ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 628(1): 59-71.

McClendon, Gwyneth. Forthcoming. “Social Esteem and Participation in Contentious Politics: A Field Experiment at an LGBT Rights Rally.” *American Journal of Political Science*.

WEEK 10: LAB-IN-THE-FIELD EXPERIMENTS, 10/23

Henrich, Joseph, et. al. 2005. “‘Economic Man’ in Cross-Cultural Perspective: Behavioral Experiments in 15 Small-Scale Societies.” *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 28: 795-855.

Habyarimana, James, Macartan Humphreys, Daniel N. Posner, and Jeremy M. Weinstein. 2007. "Why Does Ethnic Diversity Undermine Public Goods Provision?" *American Political Science Review* 101(4): 709-725.

Levitt, Steven D. and John A. List. 2007. "What Do Laboratory Experiments Measuring Social Preferences Reveal about the Real World?" *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 21(2): pp. 153-174.

Fearon, James D., Macartan Humphreys and Jeremy M. Weinstein. 2009. "Can Development Aid Contribute to Social Cohesion after Civil War? Evidence from a Field Experiment in Post-conflict Liberia." *American Economic Review* 99(2): 287-291.

Grossman, Guy. 2011. "Lab-in-the-field Experiments." *Newsletter of the APSA Experimental Section* 2 (2): 13-19.

Assignment 5

Write a three-page research memo describing a survey experiment, field experiment, or lab-in-the-field experiment that could be used to put some aspect of your theory or the mechanisms underlying it to an empirical test. Be sure to specify your sampling procedure, how you will randomize, what you will manipulate, and how you will address external validity. Circulate by noon on Tuesday.

WEEK 11: PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS, 10/30

Hiring Research Assistants

Roth, Julius. 1975. "Hired Hand Research." in George H. Lewis (ed.) *Fist-Fights in the Kitchen: Manners and Methods in Social Research*, ed. Pacific Palisades, CA: Goodyear Publishing Company. pp. 380-395.

Adapting Tools for the Field

Watkins, Susan C. and Anne Swindler. 2009. "Hearsay Ethnography: Conventional Journals as a Method for Studying Culture in Action." *Poetics (Amst.)* 37(2): 162-184.

Kramon, Eric and Keith R. Weghorst. 2012. "Measuring Sensitive Attitudes in Developing Countries: Lessons from Implementing the List Experiment." *Newsletter of the APSA Experimental Section* 3 (2): 14-22.

Chauchard, Simon. Forthcoming. "Using MP3 Players in Surveys: The Impact of a Low-tech Self-Administration Mode on Misreporting and Bystanders' Influence." *Public Opinion Quarterly*.

McCauley, John B. Forthcoming. "Measuring and Reducing Religious Bias in Post-Conflict Zones: Evidence from Côte d'Ivoire." *Political Psychology*.

Funding Field Research

Agarwala, Rina and Emmanuel Teitelbaum. 2010. "Trends in Funding for Dissertation Field Research: Why Do Political Science and Sociology Students Win So Few Awards?" *PS: Political Science and Politics* 43(2): 283-293.

Assignment 6

Prepare a short research grant proposal with a comprehensive budget (1,000 words or less, excluding budget and references). Proposals should outline briefly the basic rationale of the research, the question under study, and the methods and analytic approach to be employed. In addition, list five sources of field research funding for which you qualify. Circulate by noon on Tuesday.

WEEK 12: PROFESSIONAL ETHICS, 11/6

Casey, Katherine, Rachel Glennerster, and Edward Miguel. 2012. "Reshaping Institutions: Evidence on Aid Impacts Using a Pre-Analysis Plan." *Quarterly Journal of Economics*: 1755-1812.

Humphreys, Macartan. 2013. "Monkey Business" at http://cegablog.org/2013/03/20/tss_humphreys.

Humphreys, Macartan, Raul Sanchez de la Sierra, and Peter van der Windt. 2013. "Fishing, Commitment, and Communication: A Proposal for Comprehensive Nonbinding Research Registration." *Political Analysis* 21(1): 1-20.

Anderson, Richard G. 2013. "Registration and Replication: A Comment." *Political Analysis* 21(1): 38-39.

Laitin, David. 2013. "Fisheries Management." *Political Analysis* 21(1): 42-47.

WEEK 13: ETHICS OF FIELD RESEARCH, 11/13

MacLean, Lauren Morris. 2006. "The Power of Human Subjects and the Politics of Informed Consent" *Qualitative Methods* 4(2): 13-15.

Paluck, Elizabeth Levy. 2009. "Methods and Ethics with Research Teams and NGOs: Comparing Experiences Across the Border of Rwanda and Democratic Republic of Congo." in Chandra Lekha Sriram, John C. King, Julie A. Mertus, Olga Martin-Ortega, and Johanna Herman (eds.), *Surviving Field Research: Working in Violent and Difficult Situations*. New York: Routledge. pp. 38-56.

McClendon, Gwyneth. 2012. "Ethics of Using Public officials as field experiment subjects." *Newsletter of the APSA Experimental Section* 3 (1): 13-20.

Peyton, Kyle. 2012. "Ethics and Politics in Field Experiments." *Newsletter of the APSA Experimental Section* 3 (1): 20-37.

Desposato, Scott. 2013. "Ethics in Comparative Politics Experiments." Unpublished Manuscript presented at the 2013 APSA Conference.

Assignment 7

Pair up with another student. Reread the past five assignments of your partner and outline three ethical concerns with their proposals in a one-two page memo. Circulate by noon on Tuesday.

WEEK 14: FIELD RESEARCH PLAN PRESENTATIONS, 11/20

Assignment 8

Each student should prepare a 15-minute summary (using overhead slides or printed hand-outs) of his or her research question, theory and observable implications, and full field research strategy.

FINAL PROJECT: RESEARCH PLAN PROPOSAL

Research Proposal

Write an NSF DDIG research grant proposal to fund field research. The proposal should build on the eight assignments, but improve upon them based on feedback and integrate them into a coherent research proposal. Follow the guidelines outlined by NSF (format, length, etc.) as they pertain to the Project Description and Project Budget (<http://www.nsf.gov/sbe/ses/polisci/ddrip1.jsp>). Be sure to include a statement of your research question, a brief review of the literature, preliminary findings (if any), field research plan, and an itemized budget up to \$14,000.

Due 12/04/13 by 5pm