Qualitative and Mixed Methods Research

[El seminario será impartido en español]

Course Design: This short graduate seminar offers an introduction to the design and implementation of social science research that deploys qualitative data and analysis in conjunction with other methods of inquiry. Starting from the premise that each research method has its strengths and weaknesses, we consider how qualitative methods can be combined productively with other methods of inquiry, including “large-N” quantitative analysis, experiments, spatial/geographic analysis, and multilevel analysis spanning different scales. The course should prove useful to students planning to utilize a variety of different kinds of research tools. Readings encompass theory, how-to, and examples drawn from political science and cognate social science disciplines.

Learning Goals and Objectives: By engaging the social science literature on qualitative and mixed methods research, and also some exemplary empirical studies that deploy these methods, students will gain a stronger understanding of strategies for data collection and analysis. They will also develop new criteria for evaluating qualitative and mixed methods studies. Moreover, students will learn how qualitative methods can be combined with other methods in mutually supportive ways that contribute to more powerful research designs, improved causal inference, and greater confidence in findings and results.

Requirements
I. Participation: This course is a seminar. Its success depends on students reading all the assigned work for each session and contributing actively to seminar discussion. This means you should come to class having thought enough about the readings to comment intelligently both on where you think they say something useful and where you think they are wrong or unhelpful. II. Short Paper: Each student will write a short paper (3-5 pages) on mixed methods. Guidelines and instructions for the paper will be handed out during the first class.

Readings
The course readings will be available electronically on-line.

1. Introduction (July 22)
David Collier and Colin Elman, “Qualitative and Multimethod Research.” In: The Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology, edited by Box-Steffensmeier et al. (2008), pp.796-813.
James Mahoney, “After KKV: The New Methodology of Qualitative Research,” World Politics
62:1 (January 2010), pp. 120-147.

2. Description: Concepts, Indicators, Measures (July 23)

Recommended:

3. Explanation and Causal Inference (July 24)

Recommended:

4. Unit Selection, Issues of Scale and Multilevel Research (July 25)
Hillel Soifer, “Units of Analysis in Subnational Research,” In Agustina Giraudy, Eduardo Moncada and


5. Mixing Methods (July 26)


**Recommended:**
- Gary Goertz and James Mahoney, “A Tale of Two Cultures: Contrasting Quantitative and Qualitative Research,” *Political Analysis* (2006) 14:227–249
Recommended Further Readings on Specific Tools and Methods

**Case Studies and Case Selection**

**Recommended:**

**The Comparative Method: Small-N Research**

**Set-Theoretic Methods and Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA)**


**Process Tracing**


David Collier, “Teaching Process Tracing: Examples and Exercises.”


**Recommended:**


**Bayesian and Set-Theoretic Approaches to Process Tracing**


**Sequential Analysis and Path Dependence**


**Recommended:**

**Quasi-Experiments, Field and Natural Experiments**

**Interviews**

Introduction (Mosley), Chapters 1 (Lynch), 2 (Bleich and Pekkanen), and 11 (Leech et al).


**Recommended:**
- Robert Emerson, Rachel Fretz, and Linda Shaw. *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press (1995), Chapter 6. [This is about moving from ethnographic field notes to writing, but the sample techniques apply to grounded theorizing based on interview transcripts or notes.]

**Ethnography and Participant Observation**


**Recommended:**