

**Department of Political Science Dalhousie University
POLI 3493 POLITICAL INQUIRY II: QUALITATIVE
RESEARCH
Fall 2017**

**Class time and location
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:05-2:25 pm
Studley, Sir James Dunn 135.**

**Instructor
Dr. Anupam Pandey**

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Course Overview

The aim of this course is to introduce students to the philosophical underpinnings, theories, methods and the tools and techniques of conducting qualitative research in Political Science, in particular, and Social Sciences, in general. The overall aim of the course is to teach the students, just *how* to conduct research, whether in the field or in the library and what theory and its accompanying method best informs their particular research question.

In this course, we combine learning the theory and practice of research methods. Thus, the course is divided into 2 parts: The first part will introduce you to the various theories that require different methods of research and the second part will deal with the practical aspect of actually implementing those research methods with their specific tools to collect data as part of the research.

In more immediate and practical terms, the chief aim of the course is to help you to be able to conceptualize and construct a research proposal by the end of the term.

Course Format

The course will be based on a combination of lectures and assignments. Lectures will follow the readings, but they will not overlap completely. Since the course will have *no tutorials*, lectures will presuppose familiarity with the readings. It is *essential* for students to complete the reading assignments before the lecture, in order to fully benefit from class discussions. Coming to lectures is mandatory, and **attendance will be taken. 10% of your grade is based on attendance. Those are easy marks, don't miss out on them!**

Course readings

There is one textbook required for the course: *Foundations of Social Research* by Michael Crotty. The book will be available at the bookstore; there is also a Kindle version available on Amazon. Any edition of the book is suitable. This book will be a valuable resource for any students hoping to do Honours or graduate research in Political Science or other social sciences.

Other readings mentioned in the course outline will be either available for photocopying at the Killam Library Short Loan, available for downloading from the Killam Library website, or posted online on the course website. Most readings are excerpts from the following books:

- Lawrence Neuman and Karen Robson, *Basics of Social Research: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*, Second Canadian Edition, Pearson 2011.
- Alan Bryman, Edare Bell and James J. Teevan, *Social Research Methods*, Third Canadian Edition, Oxford University Press 2011
- Alan Bryman, *Social Research Methods*, Third Edition, Oxford University Press 2010
- Janet Buttolph, H. T. Reynolds, Jason D. Mycof, *Political Science Research Methods*, Sixth Edition, CQ Press 2010
- W. Lawrence Neuman, *Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*, Toronto, On, Pearson, 6th Ed, 2006
- David, Silverman, *Doing Qualitative Research*, Sage, LA, 2013, 4th ed.
- Craig Brians, et. al, *Empirical Political Analysis*, NY: Pearson, 2011.
- Lyn Richards and Janice Morse, *Read Me First for a User's Guide to Qualitative Methods*, Thousand Oaks, Calif, 2007
- Cynthia Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches and Bases*, UC Press, 2014.
- Scott, G. and Garner, R, *Doing Qualitative Research: Design, Methods and Technique*, Boston, Pearson, 2013.
- Perecman, S, and Curran, E., *A Handbook for Social Science Field (Available online through Dal libraries) Research : Essays & Bibliographic Sources on Research Design and Methods*, Thousands Oaks, Calif, Sage Pubs, 2006.

Course on Brightspace

Lecture power points, readings, syllabus, assignment instructions and other relevant material for this course will be available on Brightspace.

Brightspace will also function as the main means of communication between the instructor and students. Students will also be able to view their grades and read announcements.

Email Policy

Please feel free to contact me by email if you have any questions related to the course. I will reply to legitimate email inquiries within 2 days. If you do not receive a reply within this period, please resubmit your question(s).

Course Evaluation

You will be evaluated on the basis of:

- **Mid-term exam (worth 35 points of your grade)**

- **an end of term research proposal (35 points)**
- **class attendance (10 points)**
- **Presentation based on a group assignment of a Data Collection exercise (20 points)**

Midterm (35 points)

A midterm exam, covering the theoretical overview of the first six week of class, will take place **in class** on **October 19**.

Presentation of Data Collection Exercise: Last week of classes (20 points)

Due: 28 and 30 Nov

In groups of 5, you will make a presentation on an imaginary, hypothetical research exercise entailing the use of either interviews, participant observation or unobtrusive methods (i.e. case-study or archival study) to collect qualitative data and then present your method, technique and tools in front of the class. You need to present your research question (which may or not be related to Political Science), your research method and technique and justify why you chose it and finally, show how you went about it.

A collective grade shall be accorded for the group. Each group will have roughly 12 minutes for its presentation.

Research Proposal (35 points)

The assignment consists in the drafting of a research proposal. Research proposals should be maximum 10 pages long (12pt font, double spaced, 1 inch margins). The topic and research question(s) for the research proposal should be related to the theme of politics, broadly understood; If you have doubts about the appropriateness of the topic and research questions selected, please contact the instructor. More details on the research proposal, including some concrete examples, will be made available on Brightspace. **The completed assignment is due on December 12, in hard copy, in my office, during my office hours.**

Class attendance (10 points)

Class attendance means being physically present (and awake!) for all lectures; attendance will be taken, and unexcused absences will reduce your mark in this category.

Late penalty policy

Late submissions will be penalized *three points per day* (including weekends but excluding religious holidays). Extensions will be granted only for documented reasons of illness, or bereavement. The length of the extension will be based on the information in the documentation. In case of illness, students must ask the physician to indicate *explicitly* the length of time during which they were unable to attend to their coursework obligations.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means and can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript that reads Grade 'F' for academic dishonesty or even suspension or expulsion from the university. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to: <http://plagiarism.dal.ca/student/index.html>.

COURSE OUTLINE AND READINGS

PART I: QUALITATIVE POLITICAL INQUIRY AND ITS FOUNDATIONS

Week 1: Sep 5 and 7

Introduction and Discussion of Course Syllabus (No readings for Sep 5)

Qualitative research and political inquiry (Sep 7)

Readings:

- Buttolph et al. Chapter 2
- Brians et al. Chapter 1

Week 2: Sept 12 and 14

Ontologies, Epistemologies and Theories

Readings:

- Crotty, Introduction;
- Brians et al. Chapter 1

Objectivism and Positivism

Readings:

- Crotty, Chapter 2;
- Buttolph et al. Chapter 2

Week 3: Sep 19 and 21

Constructivism

Readings:

- Crotty, Chapter 3;
- Srdjan Vucetic, "Why did Canada sit it out in the Iraq war: One Constructivist analysis", *Canadian Foreign Policy* 13(1) (2006): 133;

Week 4: Sep 26 and 28

Interpretivism and Hermeneutics

Readings:

- Crotty, Chapter 4 and 5;
- Passy, Florence, and Marco Giugni. "Life-Spheres, Networks, and Sustained Participation in Social Movements: A Phenomenological Approach to Political Commitment." *Sociological Forum* 15, no. 1 (2000): 117-44.

Week 5: Oct 3 and Oct 5

Critical approaches

Marxism & Critical theory

Readings:

- Crotty, Chapters 6 and 7;
- Cox, Robert W. 1983. "Gramsci, Hegemony, and International Relations: An Essay in Method," *Millennium* 12: 162-175

Week 6: Oct 10 and 12

Feminist theory and methods

- Crotty, Chapter 8;
- Cynthia Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches and Bases*, Chapter 7

Indigenous methodology

- Chapters 1 and 2, Kovach, M. *Indigenous Methodologies: Characteristics, Conversations, and Context*, 2009. **(Book available online through Killam library.)**

Week 7: Oct 17

PART 2: DESIGNING QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Readings:

Qualitative Research: preliminary steps

- Readings: Silverman Chapter 6 and 7
- Neuman and Robson Chapter 4

Oct 19:

Midterm (worth 35% of your grade)

Week 8: Oct 24 and 26

Research Design 1 – Operationalization and Sampling

Readings:

- Richards and Morse Chapter 4
- Neuman, Chapter 8

Week 9: Oct 31

Research design 2 - Sampling (Continued)

- Neuman , Chapter 8 (Contd).

Nov 2

Writing a Research Proposal

(Readings to be decided) A 'Must Attend' Class

Readings:

READING WEEK BREAK: Nov 6 – Nov 12

PART 3: CONDUCTING QUALITATIVE RESEARCH – TOOLS and TECHNIQUES

Week 10: Nov 14 and Nov 16

Qualitative Data Collection Methods:

Interviewing and Focus Group Interviews

Readings:

- Scott and Garner, Chapter 18 and 19,

Field Research: Participant Observation

Readings:

- Scott and Garner, Chapter 17

Week 11: Nov 21 and Nov 23

Case-Studies and Archival Study

Readings:

- Perecman and Curran, Ch 1
- Perecman and Curran, Ch.2, “Case Study” pp. 21-46,
- Perecman and Curran, Ch. 9, “Case Study”, pp. 169-174.
- Harvey, Frank P. "President Al Gore and the 2003 Iraq War: A Counterfactual Test of Conventional 'W'isdom, *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 45, no. 1 (2012): 1-32.

Available Online through Dal Killam library.

Week 12: Nov 28 and Nov 30

Presentations of Group Assignment