

Conduct of Inquiry
Spring, 2016
POS 6736

Professor Anderson
Anderson 318
Office hours Tuesday and Thursday 9-10:30

Meeting time: Tues 11:45-2:45
or periods 5-7 Matherly 0004

This course is about research design and methodology. It pairs itself with the “Scope” class you took last fall. “Scope” is about different ways of thinking about political science; “Conduct” is about different ways of collecting data. The course does not have a specific substantive focus nor will you be asked to become knowledgeable about a substantive matter. Instead it is intended to introduce you to a broad range of methods for collecting data. Some of these methods can be used in circumstances where you are conducting highly exploratory research and no one or almost no one has gone before you to conduct research on that subject. Or, alternatively, others of these methods can be used where many, many people have already done research on the same subject and you are refining knowledge rather than exploring.

It is my goal that you will learn to use these methods either by collecting your own data or by listening to those who have done so. I specifically do not want you to confine yourself to reading about other people’s research or methodology. I want you to use the methods for yourself. Many of you have read my essay in *Perestroika*, and are familiar with the metaphor that knowing multiple methods is comparable to having a new tool box. Inside are some tools you have seen before and others you have never laid eyes on. In this course we will examine each tool separately, either putting it to use ourselves or reading the work of others who have used it or listening to the research stories of still others who use these tools. By the end of the class you will feel comfortable with the entire tool box and every implement in it. You will be able to carry it around wherever your research takes you and you will always be able to use all those tools to answer your questions. This is the purpose of this course.

For your dissertation you will be asked to design and complete a research project of your own. By the end of the course my hope is that you will feel sufficiently comfortable with all of these methods that you would be willing to attempt any one of them or any combination of them if the question you ask requires it. The goal will be to permit you to ask any question you dream of - and then to have in your hands the tools you will need to find the answer.

Course work: There is nothing more deadly than spending a semester reading what others have to say about “methodology.” Therefore you will spend a considerable amount of time for this course in the field actually doing different kinds of research. Your readings will be a supplement for what you are doing in the field. In Part I you will learn about four different kinds of research: participant observation, focus groups, interviews, and survey research. Please come to class on the first day having done some of the reading on each of these three methods. We will divide the class into four teams. Each team will then spend a few weeks conducting research in that genre and then report the results of that research back to the class. In Part II we will move carefully through a series of research methodologies, reading and hearing about each. In the last part of the course you will design a research project on a question that interests you in the field of your own substantive interests. You will have several weeks to prepare that design and you will

present it to your classmates during class in the final weeks of the semester. When you present it to your classmates, the class and the professor may raise questions about some of your design or make corrective suggestions. You will then have a chance to revise your design before turning it in to me on the due date. In this course work hard, do all the reading, get your assignments in on time, including the survey data collection for the class data set, never ask for an extension, always come to class and always participate in discussion. NEVER MISS CLASS UNLESS YOU ARE ILL OR ARE AT A PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCE!!!! But most of all, HAVE FUN!

Grading: Sixty percent (60%) of your grade will depend upon your research design, including your incorporation of the criticisms and questions that come during your class presentation. The rest of your grade will depend upon your work in class. This includes:

- your team work and your part of the team presentation
- your collection of additional survey data for the class data set
- your timely completion of all assignments without delay or extensions
- your attendance at all classes and participation in class on a weekly basis

Reading: There are 12 required books and three required articles. All materials should be on reserve and all books are available at local book stores or online. I recommend you purchase them all as they will be references throughout your graduate study and you will be using them in other courses.

A note on the books: Except for Monroe, *Perestroika*, and Moses/Knutsen, the books fall into two categories: either they discuss methods or they exemplify methods. Monroe, *Perestroika* discusses graduate study and doing research more generally King; Bernard; Krueger and Casey and Stewart and Shamdasni discuss specific methods. The rest of the books use one or several methods and you will need to read all or most of the book to understand the methods.

A note on the articles: Geertz exemplifies participant observation. Bischooping and Schuman exemplify how not to do survey research and my article shows why.

Required Readings

books

- 1) Kristen Renwick Monroe, ed., Perestroika: The Raucous Rebellion in Political Science
- 2) Jonathan Moses and Torjorn Knutsen, Ways of Knowing: Competing Methodologies in Social and Political Research
- 3) Gary King, Robert Keohane, Sidney Verba, Designing Social Inquiry
- 4) H. Russell Bernard, Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches, latest edition
- 5) Richard Krueger and Mary Anne Casey, Focus Groups: A Practical Guide for Applied Research
- 6) David Stewart and Prem Shamdasani: Focus Groups: Theory and Practice
- 7) Kristen Renwick Monroe, The Heart of Altruism: Perceptions of a Common Humanity
- 8) Andrea Press and Elizabeth Cole, Speaking of Abortion: Television and Authority in the Lives of Women

- 9) Robert Putnam, Making Democracy Work
 10) Leslie E. Anderson and Lawrence C Dodd, Learning Democracy: Citizen Engagement and Electoral Choice, 1990-2001.
 11) Marc Howard Ross, The Culture of Conflict: Interpretations and Interests in Comparative Perspective
 12) Charles Tilly, Popular Contention in Great Britain 1858-1834

articles

- 1) Clifford Geertz, "Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight," *Daedalus*, Winter, 1972, pp 1-37; reprinted in Geertz Clifford, ed., Myth, Symbol and Culture, New York, WW Norton, pp 138.
 2) Bischooping, Katherine and Schuman, Howard, "Pens and Polls in Nicaragua: An Analysis of the 1990 Pre-election Surveys," American Journal of Political Science, Vol 36, 1992, pp 331-50
 3) Anderson, Leslie, "Neutrality and Bias in the 1990 Nicaraguan Preelection Polls: A Comment on Bischooping and Schuman," American Journal of Political Science, Vol 38, 1994, pp 486-94. I understand that you have read this exchange in Dodd's class. If you have not read this, it is required reading for this class.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading required</u> (please complete the reading by the date given)
Getting Started: What question interests you? Construct problem-driven research. Don't let the methods drive your question.		
January 5	getting started	Divide class into 4 teams. Come to class with a first and second choice for which team you want to be on look at Perestroika chapters (see below) decide which one you want to present (I need 5 volunteers.) Geertz: Balinese Cock Fight Speaking of Abortion Monroe, Altruism King et all
January 12	no class	do research with your team
January 19	update on all team research Student summaries of <u>Perestroika</u> Chaps 5, 6, 12, 15, 37	Monroe, <u>Perestroika</u> : read chapter 31 first and then read Chaps 5, 6, 12, 15, 37 Monroe, <u>Heart of Altruism</u> , read pp ix-xv and Chapters 2-5 Bernard on participant observation Krueger and Casey, Chaps 1, 2 King, <u>Designing Social Inquiry</u> , Parts 1.2, 1.3, 4.3, 4.4, or pp 12-33 and 128-148 (about 35 pages in all)

January 26 update on all team research
Stewart and Shamdasani, Chaps 1-5
Moses and Knutson, Chaps 4, 6, 9

January 28 Moses and Knutson, Chaps 5, 7, 10

Part II: Exploring the Tool Box

February 2 Interviews: non-elites Bernard, Chap 8, 10, 11
Putnam, Appendix A and Chaps 2,3,4

February 9 Focus groups
discussion of fieldwork, any
problems teams are having
Press and Cole, entire book

February 16-23 Multiple methods class:
Survey Team presents
results and trains the rest
of the class
Start Archival Research
Moses and Knutson, Chaps 3, 12, 13
Bernard, chaps on archival research
Putnam, Chap 5 and appendix

March 1 Spring Break, no class

March 8 team presentations
Multiple methods class:
Finish Archival research
sign up for a date for class presentation
two teams present results
Anderson/Bischoping and Schuman debate
Moses and Knutson, Chap 11
Bernard Chaps 12, 8, 20

March 15 team presentations two teams present results

March 22 Multiple methods class:
content analysis
Ross, entire book
Bernard Chaps on content analysis
Tilly, entire book, beginning with
Appendix 1 (that's right, the whole book)
Anderson and Dodd, Chap 2, 3

Part III: Design your own research

March 29-April 12 class presentation

April 19 **Research Designs due**