

PCSI 2701 A
Introduction to Research Methods in Political Science
Tuesday & Thursday 2:35 – 5:25
Please confirm location on Carleton Central

Instructor: Dr. S.Y. Ibrahimi
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I. Course Description

This course engages with qualitative approaches to research in political science. It introduces students to concepts, methods, and processes of qualitative research preparing them with a general knowledge on reading and writing methodologically. The course contains both theoretical and empirical issues of qualitative research including the philosophy of social science, the nature and structure of argument, theory-building, research design, case selection, and different types of data collection and analysis. At the end of the course, students are expected to express a general understanding of qualitative research methods in political science and be able to use those methods in their writings.

II. Course Textbooks

1. Loleen Berdahl and Keith Archer (2015). *Explorations: Conducting Empirical Research in Canadian Political Science*, 3rd Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
2. Marc Menard (2015). *Political Argument: A Guide to Research, Writing, and Debating*. Oxford University Press

The required readings are available for purchase at the Carleton University Book Store. The required readings will be also available in Library Reserve & Ares.

III. Course Evaluation

Course evaluation include three assignments and the final exam grades and will be calculated on the following basis:

A. Assignment 1, Analyzing Argument (10%)

Due May 21.

The purpose of this assignment is to test students' ability in analyzing an argument, selected from a list of news articles. A detailed instruction and the list of articles will be posted on CULearn in due course. This assignment should not exceed 2-3 pages (double-spaced in 12-point font).

B. Assignment 2, Measurement (20%)

Due May 30.

This assignment tests students' ability in operationalizing a political science concept. Students will select a political science concept, conduct a review of three relevant scholarly sources, and explain how the concept is defined and operationalized in each source. A list of concepts and a detailed instruction will be posted on CULearn one week prior to the due date. This assignment should not exceed 5-6 pages (double-spaced in 12-point font).

C. Assignment 3, Research Paper (30%)

Due June 18.

This assignment is an opportunity for students to write a research paper using the methods and technics learned from the course. This assignment should not exceed 8-10 pages (double-spaced in 12-point font). A detailed instruction will be posted on CULearn in due course.

D. Final Exam (40%)

TBA.

E. Late Submission Policy

Assignments are due as hardcopy in class. E-mailed assignments will not be accepted. Late submissions will be penalized on a daily basis (i.e. 5% of the overall grade for the assignment per day) for a maximum of 7 days. Assignments that are submitted after the 7 day will receive a zero. Extensions will be granted on medical basis.

IV. Course Program

Date	Topic	Assignments
May 7	Course Introduction	
May 9	Scientific Approach in Political Science	
May 14	Argument, Causation & Theory Development	
May 16	Research Question & Hypothesis	
May 21	Concept & Measurement	Assignment 1 Due
May 23	Ethics in Political Science Research	
May 28	Case Study & Comparative Research	
May 30	Textual Analysis	Assignment 2 Due
June 4	Interview & Focus Group	
June 6	Survey Research	
June 11	Observation, Field Research & Experimental Research	
June 13	Writing the Report/Research Paper	
June 18	Pre-exam Review	Assignment 3 Due

V. Course Schedule

Lecture 1 (May 7): Course Introduction

Instructor reviews the syllabus, discuss the course content, requirements and evaluations, and answer questions.

Lecture 2 (May 9): Scientific Approach in Political Science

Required Reading:

Berdahl and Archer, Chapters 1 & 2.

Lecture 3 (May 14): Argument, Causation & Theory Development

Required Reading:

Marc Menard, Chapters 4

Berdahl and Archer, Chapter 3

Optional:

Baxter-Moore, N., Carroll, T. and Church R. *Studying Politics: An Introduction to Argument and Analysis* (Toronto: Copp Clark Longman, 1994), Chapters 2 & 3 ((available in library reserve & Ares)

Lecture 4 (May 16): Research Question and Hypothesis

Required Reading:

Sandra Halperin and Oliver Heath (2012). *Political Research: Methods and Practical Skills*. Oxford University Press. Chapters 5 & 6 (available in library reserve & Ares)

Lecture 5 (May 21): Concept and Measurement

Required Reading:

Berdahl and Archer, Chapters 4-5.

Lecture 6 (May 23): Ethics in Political Science Research

Required Reading:

Berdahl and Archer, Chapter 6.

Optional:

Esikot F. Idorenyin, Social science and research ethics in developing countries: The perspective from Nigeria, *African Journal of Science, Technology, Innovation and Development*, 6(4), 2014: 231-241.

Lecture 7(May 28): Case Study & Comparative Research

Required Reading:

Berdahl and Archer, Chapters, 7, 8.

Optional:

John Gerring, What Is a Case Study and What Is It Good For? *American Political Science Review* 98 (2), 2004: 341-354.

Lecture 8 (May 30): Textual Analysis

Required Reading:

Berdahl and Archer, Chapters, 12, 13.

Lecture 9 (June 4): Interview and Focus Group

Required Reading:

Berdahl and Archer, Chapters 9.

Lecture 10 (June 6): Survey Research

Required Reading:

Berdahl and Archer, Chapter 10.

Optional:

Harvard University Program on Survey Research (2007). *Tip Sheet on Question Wording*,

Access online at: <http://psr.iq.harvard.edu/book/questionnaire-design-tip-sheet>

Lecture 11 (June 11): Observation, Field Research & Experimental Research

Required Reading:

Berdahl and Archer, Chapter 9 (pp. 181-186)

Berdahl and Archer, Chapter 11

N. Cohen, & T. Arieli, 'Field research in conflict environments: Methodological challenges and snowball sampling,' *Journal of Peace Research*, 48(4), 2011: 423-435.

Lecture 12 (June 13): Writing a Research Paper

Required Reading:

Berdahl and Archer, Chapter 18

Marc Menard, Chapter 3

Lecture 13 (June 18): Pre-Exam Review

Academic Accommodations

The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your **Letter of Accommodation** at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (*if applicable*). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (*if applicable*).

For Religious Observance: Students requesting accommodation for religious observances should apply in writing to their instructor for alternate dates and/or means of satisfying academic requirements. Such requests should be made during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist, but no later than two weeks before the compulsory academic event. Accommodation is to be worked out directly and on an individual basis between the student and the instructor(s) involved. Instructors will make accommodations in a way that avoids academic disadvantage to the student. Instructors and students may contact an Equity Services Advisor for assistance (www.carleton.ca/equity).

For Pregnancy: Pregnant students requiring academic accommodations are encouraged to contact an Equity Advisor in Equity Services to complete a *letter of accommodation*. Then, make an appointment to discuss your needs with the instructor at least two weeks prior to the first academic event in which it is anticipated the accommodation will be required.

Plagiarism: The University Senate defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.” This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in "substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs.

Plagiarism is a serious offence which cannot be resolved directly with the course’s instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They may include a mark of zero for the plagiarized work or a final grade of "F" for the course.

Submission and Return of Term Work: Papers must be submitted directly to the instructor according to the instructions in the course outline and will not be date-stamped in the departmental office. Late assignments may be submitted to the drop box in the corridor outside B640 Loeb. Assignments will be retrieved every business day at **4 p.m.**, stamped with that day's date, and then distributed to the instructor. For essays not returned in class please attach a **stamped, self-addressed envelope** if you wish to have your assignment returned by mail. Final exams are intended solely for the purpose of evaluation and will not be returned.

Grading: Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor, subject to the approval of the faculty Dean. Final standing in courses will be shown by alphabetical grades. The system of grades used, with corresponding grade points is:

Percentage	Letter grade	12-point scale	Percentage	Letter grade	12-point scale
90-100	A+	12	67-69	C+	6
85-89	A	11	63-66	C	5
80-84	A-	10	60-62	C-	4
77-79	B+	9	57-59	D+	3
73-76	B	8	53-56	D	2
70-72	B-	7	50-52	D-	1

Approval of final grades: Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by an instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

Carleton E-mail Accounts: All email communication to students from the Department of Political Science will be via official Carleton university e-mail accounts and/or cuLearn. As important course and University information is distributed this way, it is the student's responsibility to monitor their Carleton and cuLearn accounts.

Carleton Political Science Society: The Carleton Political Science Society (CPSS) has made its mission to provide a social environment for politically inclined students and faculty. Holding social events, debates, and panel discussions, CPSS aims to involve all political science students at Carleton University. Our mandate is to arrange social and academic activities in order to instill a sense of belonging within the Department and the larger University community. Members can benefit through numerous opportunities which will complement both academic and social life at Carleton University. To find out more, visit <https://www.facebook.com/groups/politicalsciencesociety/> or come to our office in Loeb D688.

Official Course Outline: The course outline posted to the Political Science website is the official course outline.