

CARLETON UNIVERSITY
Institute of Political Economy

PECO 5001: Methodology in Political Economy

SYLLABUS Winter 2019 (Tentative)

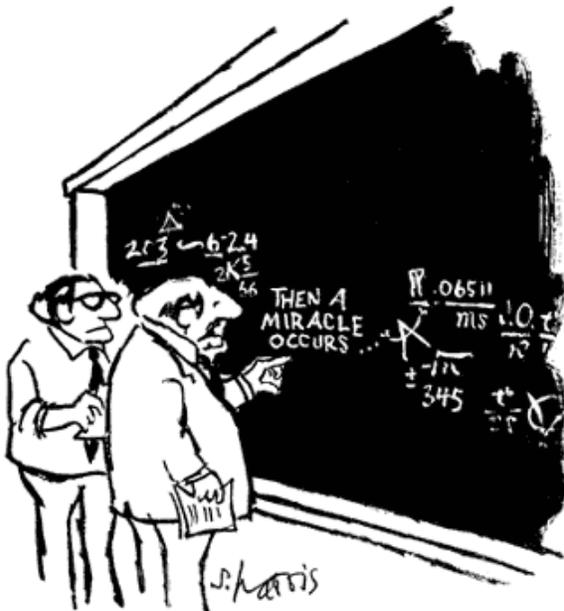
Instructor:	Marc-André Gagnon	Class:	DT 1524
Office:	Ritchcraft Hall-5201	Time:	Monday 11:35-14:25
Telephone:	(613) 520-2600 ext. 1690	Office Hours:	Tuesday: 13:45-14:45
E-Mail:	ma_gagnon@carleton.ca		

(write PECO 5001 in the topic)

PECO 5001 [0.5 credit]

The Methodology of Political Economy

An examination of the methods, procedures, and rules for developing theory and guiding inquiry in political economy research, including topics such as logic of inquiry, conceptualization, research design, dialectics, level of analysis, comparison, evidence and statistics.



"I think you should be more explicit here in step two."

"The outcome of any serious research can only be to make two questions grow where only one grew before."

— Thorstein Veblen

"The conventional view serves to protect us from the painful job of thinking."

— John Kenneth Galbraith

"The curious task of economics is to demonstrate to men how little they really know about what they imagine they can design."

— Friedrich August von Hayek

Core Objectives

The purpose of this course is to better understand the research process in the production of knowledge in social science as well as to sharpen critical skills to conduct rigorous, ethical research in political economy.

The course is designed to help students select or develop an appropriate methodological approach for their own research, while making sure to understand the merits and constraints of their approach. In particular, the course emphasizes the societal structures and power relations in which social research is done, and how it can play a role in promoting inequality and disabling some people.

In addition to surveying the ways in which “scientific knowledge” evolves, the course will explore quantitative and qualitative methods, as well as critical insights from the post-structural, post-colonial, indigenous and feminist methods.

Finally, the course will allow students to develop a draft thesis proposal in conjunction with a tentative supervisor. The course will also allow each student to receive feedback from their peers on their proposal and will also allow them to deepen their critical feedback skills by peer-reviewing research proposals.

Good sense is, of all things among men, the most equally distributed; for every one thinks himself so abundantly provided with it, that those even who are the most difficult to satisfy in everything else, do not usually desire a larger measure of this quality than they already possess. And in this it is not likely that all are mistaken; the conviction is rather to be held as testifying that the power of judging aright and of distinguishing truth from error, which is properly what is called good sense or reason, is by nature equal in all men; and that the diversity of our opinions, consequently, does not arise from some being endowed with a larger share of reason than others, but solely from this, that we conduct our thoughts along different ways, and do not fix our attention on the same objects. For to be possessed of a vigorous mind is not enough; the prime requisite is rightly to apply it. The greatest minds, as they are capable of the highest excellences, are open likewise to the greatest aberrations; and those who travel very slowly may yet make far greater progress, provided they keep always to the straight road, than those who, while they run, forsake it.

- René Descartes 1635

**Discourse on the Method of Rightly Conducting
the Reason, and seeking Truth in the Sciences**

SEMINAR SCHEDULE**Class 1 (January 7): Introduction and Overview.**

What is research? Why do we need methods? What is the difference between research in political economy and discussion in a bar? The role of evidence in the policy process.
Overview of Methods in social science: Positivism and after.
Defining Political Economy. Disciplines and the political economy of knowledge production.

Reading Material:

Colleen Reid, Lorraine Greaves and Sandra Kirby. *Experience Research Social Change* (Chapter 1: pp.3-18). Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017.
Immanuel Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis; An introduction*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2004. Read Chapter 1: pp. 1-22.

Class 2 (January 14): Epistemology, or how does scientific knowledge evolves? Hardcore methodological debates.

Bachelard, Popper, Kuhn, Lakatos, Feyerabend, Friedman.
Positive vs normative; Formal vs substantive; Individualism versus holism; Nomothetic vs historical sciences. Methodenstreit (Schmoller versus Menger).

Reading Material:

Mark Blaug "Paradigms versus research programmes in the history of economics". In D.M. Hausman *The Philosophy of Economics; An Anthology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1994: pp. 348-375.
Milton Friedman. "The Methodology of Positive Economics" in Steven Medema and Warren Samuels (eds) *The History of Economic Thought; A Reader*. London: Routledge, 2013: pp. 693-710.
Paul Feyerabend. *Against Methods*. London: Verso, 1993: pp. 9-24.
Richard Swedberg. "The New Battle of Methods", *Challenge*, Vol. 33, No. 1 (Jan/Feb 1990): pp. 33-38.
(Optional): Mary Hawkesworth. *Feminist Inquiry – From Political Conviction to Methodological Innovation* Rutgers, 2006: Chapter 1.

Class 3 (January 21): The Neoclassical Fortress; Understanding the dominant approach in economics, and its limits.

Rationality and Equilibrium.
From Adam Smith to General Equilibrium General. Partial Equilibrium (Ceteris Paribus).
Blackboard economics: Assumption, models, data, outcomes... repeat.

Reading Material:

- Jonathan Schlefer. *Assumptions Economists Make*. Chapter 1: "The Metaphor of the Invisible Hand". Cambridge: Belknap Press. 2012: 1-23.
- Deirdre N. McCloskey. *The Vices of Economists; The Virtues of the Bourgeoisie*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1996 (Chapter 1 & Chapter 3): pp. 13-19; 63-96.
- Jamie Morgan. "Critical Realism as a Social Ontology for Economics". In Fred Lee and Bruce Cronin (eds) *Handbook of Research Methods and Applications in Heterodox Economics*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2018: pp. 15-34.
- Mark Blaug. "General Equilibrium Analysis", in *The Methodology of Economics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993: pp. 161-169.

Class 4 (January 28): Quantitative Approaches (do not throw out the baby with the bathwater...)

Statistics and Econometrics

Experimental Research

Debates over Statistical Significance and other dangers with numbers.

Reading material:

- Christensen L, Burke Johnson R, Turner L. *Research Methods, Design, and Analysis* (Chapter 2: pp.28-52). Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2011.
- Banerjee, Abhijit, Rukmini Banerji, James Berry, Esther Duflo, Harini Kannan, Shobhini Mukerji, Marc Shotland, and Michael Walton. 2017. "From Proof of Concept to Scalable Policies: Challenges and Solutions, with an Application." *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 31(4): 73-102.
- Mattei Dogan. "The quantitative method in comparative research" in Patricia Kennett (ed.) *A Handbook of Comparative Social Policy*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2006: pp.324-338.
- P.J. Devereaux et al. "A systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of studies comparing mortality rates of private for-profit and private not-for-profit hospitals". *CMAJ*, 166 (11), May 28 2002: 1399-1406.
- Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett. *The Spirit Level; Why more equal societies almost always do better*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2011: Preface and Chapter 2.

Class 5 (February 4): How to write a proposal: Research Question/Central proposition/Concepts.

Ethics and Reflexivity.

Research Design Spine. Mind map.

The role of Ethics Research Boards.

Reading Material:

- Janet Siltanen. "The Design Spine – An Introduction" (for PECO 5001 Jan 2018).
- Colleen Reid, Lorraine Greaves and Sandra Kirby. *Experience Research Social Change* (Chapter 3-5: pp. 47-131). Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017.

Carleton University Thesis Handbook; A Guide to Completing your MSW Thesis. School of Social Work, Carleton University. 2010.

Class 6 (February 11): **Qualitative Methods: Interviews; Ethnographic approach.**

How, Why, What?

Data collection approaches for qualitative research.

Getting a richer and deeper insight into the phenomenon under study.

Reading Material:

Christensen L, Burke Johnson R, Turner L. *Research Methods, Design, and Analysis* (Chapter 13: pp.360-387). Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2011.

Carter S, Little M. "Justifying Knowledge, Justifying Method, Taking Action: Epistemologies, Methodologies, and Methods in Qualitative Research". *Qualitative Health Research* Vol.17 (10), December 2007: 1316-1328.

Odell JS, "Case Study Methods in International Political Economy". *International Studies Perspective* Vol 2, 2001: pp.161-176.

Zuberi D. *Differences that Matter; Social Policy and the Working Poor in the United States and Canada*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006: pp. 24-47; 176-191.

Class 7 (February 25): **Data, Data Everywhere.**

Be careful: Garbage in, Garbage out.

Working with databases.

Intro to the main databases

Access to Information and Privacy

Reading Material:

Wheelan C. *Naked Statistics; Stripping the dread from the data*. New York W.W. Norton and Cie, 2013: pp. 110-126

Lightman E, Lightman N. *Social Policy in Canada*. Don Mills, Oxford University Press, 2017. (Introduction to CANSIM: pp. 333-341).

Class 8 (March 4): **Feminist approaches**

Overcoming biases in research and Understanding Power imbalances.

Displaying human diversity. Understanding Intersectionality.

Acknowledging the position of the researcher and bringing about social change.

Reading Material:

Mary Hawkesworth. *Feminist Inquiry – From Political Conviction to Methodological Innovation* Rutgers, 2006: Chapter 2 pp. 54-75.

- Rose G. "Situating knowledges: Positionality, Reflexivities and Other Tactics." *Progress in Human Geography* Vol. 21 (3), 1997: pp.305-320.
- Shields S. "Gender: An Intersectionality Perspective". *Sex Roles* Vol. 59, 2008: pp. 301-311.
- Happonen T. "Making the Political Personal: How Psychology Undermines Feminist Activism" *Feminist Current* December 21 2017.
- (Optional) Ferlatte et al. "Suicide related ideation and behavior among Canadian gay and bisexual men: a syndemic analysis." *BMC Public Health* Vol. 15: 597, 2015.
- (Optional) Lorraine Code "Feminist Epistemology and the Politics of Knowledge: Questions of Marginality" in M. Evans et al (eds) *The SAGE Handbook of Feminist Theory* (Sage, 2014), pp. 9-25.

Class 9 (March 11): **Indigenous and Post-Colonial approaches; Anti-Oppressive research**

Overview of Colonial Education

Honouring the Past, Present and Future

Acknowledging the position of the researcher and bringing about social change.

Methodological nationalism.

Reading Material:

- Tuck, E. (2009). "Suspending damage: A letter to communities". *Harvard Educational Review*, 79 (3). pp. 409–427.
- Karen Martin & Booran Mirraboopa (2003): Ways of knowing, being and doing: A theoretical framework and methods for indigenous and indigenist research, *Journal of Australian Studies*, 27:76, 203-214
- Kovach M. "Emerging from the Margins: Indigenous Methodologies" in *Research as Resistance* by Strega S and Brown L (eds), Toronto: Women's Press, 2015: pp.43-64.
- Faranak Miraftab (2004) Can You Belly Dance? Methodological questions in the era of transnational feminist research, *Gender, Place & Culture*, 11:4, 595-604.

Class 10 (March 18): **Post-Structuralist Approaches**

WPR approach

Making and unmaking problems, subjects and objects.

Archives and genealogy of knowledge.

Reading Material:

- Flax, Jane (1992) 'The End of Innocence' in J. Butler and J.W. Scott (eds.) *Feminists Theorize the Political*. New York: Routledge, pp. 445-463.
- Carol Bacchi and Susan Goodwin. *Postructural Policy Analysis; A Guide to Practice*. New York: Palgrave/MacMillan, 2016: pp.13-68.
- Dawn Moore and Angus MacLean Rennie. "Hated Identities: Queers and Canadian Anti-hate Legislation" *Canadian Journal of Criminology and Criminal Justice*; Sep 2006; 48, 5.

Class 11 (March 25): **Discussing Proposals**

Peer-reviewing proposals.

Reading Material: Peer-Review

Class 12 (April 1): **Political economy of knowledge production in the era of corporate capitalism.**

Science-Mart. The case of medical research. The limits of evidence-based policy.

What's your communication plan?

Reading Material:

Marc-André Gagnon. "Shaping the Social Determinants of Value through Economic Ghostmanagement; An Institutionalist Approach to Capital Accumulation". Published in *Marx, Veblen, and the Foundations of Heterodox Economics: Essays in Honor of John F. Henry*. Edited by Tae-Hee Jo and Frederic S. Lee, 2015.

Luigi Zingales. "Preventing Economists' Capture" in *Preventing Regulatory Capture: Special Interest Influence and How to Limit it*. Edited by Daniel Carpenter and David Moss. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014.

Class 13 (April 8): TBD

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

The only required textbook is Colleen Reid, Lorraine Greaves and Sandra Kirby. *Experience Research Social Change*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017. Available through Octopus Bookstore (116 Third Avenue)

While not required, a useful writing guide is Babington, Doug and Don LePan *The Broadview Guide to Writing*, Revised 4th Canadian Edition (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2016).

Also, a good example of a representative orthodox positivist (and somewhat helpful) textbook on methods in social sciences is Christensen L, Burke Johnson R, Turner L. *Research Methods, Design, and Analysis*. Pearson, 2013.

REQUIREMENTS

Participation	10%
Research Design poster and presentation (February 25)	15%
First draft of proposal (March 18)	20%
Peer-review of proposals (March 25)	15%
Final Proposal (April 12)	40%

Participation (10%)

Students are expected to do all the reading and come prepared to all classes. Participation will be based on attendance and contribution to class discussion during seminars.

Research Design Poster and Presentation (15%)

As a first step in the process of thinking about your proposed research, the student must prepare a poster introducing his/her research topic, including a research question and a central proposition, and the tentative methodological strategies and tools that will be used for the analysis.

Models of posters will be presented (Research Design Spine, Mind map)

Students will present their poster in speed-dating format and then the hard copies will be collected by the prof for evaluation. The mark encompasses both the presentation and the poster.

First draft of proposal (20%)

The student must write a first draft of their proposal. The draft is **TO BE SUBMITTED IN 3 PAPER COPIES** on March 18. The draft will introduce the issue, identify the research question, present the main idea that will be defended, present the method used for the research and outline the main elements that will normally be used in defending the main idea. Include a bibliography of relevant sources.

Peer-review of proposals (15%)

On March 18, each student will receive two proposals submitted by peers. They will have to peer-review the proposals (around one page for each proposal). To be submitted on March 25. **SUBMIT TWO WRITTEN COPIES OF YOUR PEER-REVIEW.**

Final proposal (40%)

Students are expected to use the written and verbal feedback received by their peers & instructor to address the comments and revise their proposal. The students will submit a clean version of the proposal, a version indicating modifications of the old version, and a Revision Note, indicating how you responded precisely to the reviewers' comments. The final proposal is due April 12.

You can hand in your proposal at SPPA Main Office or by email (RB-5224, make sure they stamp your paper with the date). If the paper is late without prior agreement with the professor, a penalty of 5%/day will be applied.

GRADING

In graduate school, expectations about analytical abilities and performance are higher than in undergraduate work, and what is an acceptable grade is also different. Whereas a C+ is a passing grade in undergraduate studies, it is not in graduate school.

Carleton University uses a 12 point grading scale from A+ (12) to D- (1). Your overall Grade Point Average (GPA) will be calculated on the basis of this 12 point scale and the final evaluation you receive in courses will be submitted as letter grades corresponding to this scale. Here is how to interpret grades in terms of our expectations of performance:

Letter Grade	Carleton Numerical System	% Ranges	Explanation
A+	12 Outstanding	90-100	For written work, virtually publishable. Demonstrates exceptional evaluative judgement, outstanding critical thinking, and mastery of technical as well as literary aspects of writing.
A	11 Excellent	85-89	Demonstrates superior grasp of material, very strong critical thinking, and capacity to understand and extend underlying patterns.
A-	10 Very Good	80-84	Demonstrates strong grasp of material, its component parts, and capacity to analyze their relationships to each other.
B+	9 Good	77-79	Demonstrates clear understanding of material and ability to apply concepts. Written work is competent.
B	8 Satisfactory	73-76	Satisfactory, but below average. Demonstrates comprehension of material, reasonable but not strong analytical capacity, with limitations in the ability to apply concepts.
B-	7 Barely Adequate	70-72	Clearly below average. Demonstrates comprehension and understanding, with limited capacity for application. Communication skills problematic.
C+	6 Less Than Adequate	67-69	Did not demonstrate an adequate understanding of the material or the ability to apply the concepts. Writing and/or presentations show serious problems.
C to D-		50-66	Grades in this range indicate work that is passable in some respects but does not meet the standards of graduate work.
F	Failure		Did not meet minimal requirements.

Grades of A- or B+ should be considered as good, solid performances that hover around the average for graduate work. In any given class, most of the grades are likely to be A- or B+. There are usually fewer grades of A, and an A means you have done very well; grades of A+ are

quite rare (but we do give them). A grade of B- is a strong signal that things did not go well in the course, and you were considerably below average. Normally, graduate students do not get credit for courses with a grade less than B-.

In the case of this course, grades will be awarded as letter grades, but I will calculate your final grades as the weighted mean of the grade point equivalencies. Example: A- on an exam worth 30%; B+ on a paper worth 45%; and B for participation worth 25%:

$$\begin{array}{r} \text{A- } 10 \times .30 = 3.00 \\ \text{B+ } 9 \times .45 = 4.05 \\ \text{B } 8 \times .25 = 2.00 \\ \hline \text{Final} \qquad 9.05 \text{ or B+} \end{array}$$

Please note in the example above that normally your letter grade will correspond to the interval in which your numerical grade falls (e.g., anything between 9.0 and 9.9 is a B+).

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request (parental leave, religious obligations, disabilities), visit the Equity Services website <https://carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/>

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Instructional offences, such as plagiarism and cheating, are serious and may incur severe penalties. Please see the note on plagiarism below. Students should also consult the section of the Undergraduate Calendar on Academic Standing and Conduct to familiarize themselves with the regulations regarding instructional offences. For Carleton's regulations on academic integrity, please see <http://www.carleton.ca/calendars/ugrad/0910/regulations/acadregsuniv14.html>

PLAGIARISM

The definition below is from Carleton University's Academic Regulations, at <http://www.carleton.ca/calendars/ugrad/0910/regulations/acadregsuniv14.html>

Plagiarism is presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one's own. Plagiarism includes 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. Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of ideas or works of others may be drawn from include but are not limited to: books, articles, papers, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, art works, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, and material on the Internet.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- 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, paraphrased material, algorithms, formulae, scientific or mathematical concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another's data or research findings;
- submitting a computer program developed in whole or in part by someone else, with or without modifications, as one's own;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's works and/or failing to use quotation marks.

The purpose of the written work is to develop **your** writing and analytical skills. A work which contains material “borrowed” from other sources without proper acknowledgement cannot be marked as your own work.

Plagiarism is an instructional offence that occurs when a student uses or passes off as one’s own idea or product the work of another person, without giving credit to the source. The punishments for plagiarism at Carleton are significant. You could fail the course, or, under certain circumstances, be expelled from the university.

If you are using someone else’s words – in a quotation – refer to the source in a footnote or in-text citation. If you are referring to someone else’s text (that is, not quoting directly, but closely following the line of argument), refer to the source just as you would for a quotation, except that quotation marks are not used. If you are using someone else’s ideas, acknowledge this in a footnote, or by a clear reference in the text of your essay.

Material copied from the Internet must be treated like material from a book or any other source. If you are quoting a source you found on the Internet, use quotation marks and refer to the location of the item (name of website; identify the electronic journal and issue, etc) just as you would for a quotation from printed material. If you are borrowing ideas from an Internet source, the source must be identified in a footnote or in-text citation, just as a quotation would be. Excellent software is available for locating materials that might have been plagiarized from the Internet, and will be used.

To avoid plagiarism:

- (i) Acknowledge every source from which you have drawn information or ideas for your paper. That is, even if you are not quoting directly from a source, you should still acknowledge where the idea, argument, or information came from.
- (ii) Place *every direct quote* from a source in quotation marks (or indent it), and give a citation for the source. Nevertheless, try not to use quotes too frequently. Quotes should be used when they so beautifully or aptly sum something up that you cannot say it any better. An essay is not a collection of quotes.
- (iii) Express other authors’ ideas in your own words. If you are outlining someone else’s argument, for example, outline it in your own words, and acknowledge the author at the end of your summation of his or her argument or idea/s. *Any words not in quotation marks must be your own words.* This advice has an intellectual as well as a legal purpose: being able to express an author’s ideas in your own words is part of your learning process.

CLASSROOM USE OF LAPTOPS, ELECTRONIC DEVICES, ETC

While you are welcome to use laptops and/or other electronic devices to take notes and look up information, you may not use these devices to update your Facebook status, email friends, check your twitter feed, or for any other purpose unrelated to the class discussion. While I will be lecturing for part of the time, the focus of the class is on discussion of the readings – you, and your classmates, cannot actively participate in the discussion if you are otherwise engaged. If this rule is violated, laptops and other devices will not be permitted in the classroom.