

## Political Science 022 – Political Research: Theories and Methods

Fall Semester 2024

Instructors:

Andrew Roberts  
233595@mail.muni.cz

Peter Spáč  
spac@fss.muni.cz

### Course Objectives

The aim of this course is to acquaint students with research design and methodology in political science. The focus will be on both the basics of research design and more advanced techniques in qualitative and quantitative methods. We will emphasize practical issues as well as theoretical ones in an effort to help students with their dissertation projects.

### Course Requirements

Students are required to attend three of the five class meetings and complete three short exercises associated with those meetings. They may choose classes that are most relevant to their projects, but they should attend the first meeting. Meetings 3 and 4 will use JASP software (no previous knowledge on JASP is needed). Students should be prepared to discuss the required readings at these seminars.

### Course Meetings

Meeting 1: Research Design Basics (Roberts)

- Ethan Bueno de Mesquita and Anthony Fowler, *Thinking Clearly with Data*, chapters 1-4.
- David Collier, Jason Seawright, and Gerardo Munck, “The Quest for Standards: King, Keohane’s and Verba’s Designing Social Inquiry” in Brady and Collier, eds., *Rethinking Social Inquiry* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2010).
- Andrew Gelman and Guido Imbens, “Why Ask Why? Forward Causal Inference and Reverse Causal Questions”, working paper.

Assignment: Questions about your dissertation project.

Students are required to attend two (2) of the following four (4) classes.

Meeting 2: Advanced Qualitative Techniques (Roberts)

- James Mahoney, “After KKV: The New Methodology of Qualitative Research”, *World Politics* (2010).
- James Mahoney and Gary Goertz, “A Tale of Two Cultures: Contrasting Quantitative and Qualitative Research”, *Political Analysis* (2006).

- Andrew Bennett, “Process Tracing and Causal Inference” in Brady and Collier, eds., *Rethinking Social Inquiry* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2010).
- Jason Seawright & John Gerring, “Case Selection Techniques in Case Study Research: A Menu of Qualitative and Quantitative Options”, *Political Research Quarterly* (2008).
- David Collier, Jody Laporte, and Jason Seawright, “Putting Typologies to Work: Concept Formation, Measurement, and Analytic Rigor”, *Political Research Quarterly* (2012).

Assignment: Complete one of the exercises in David Collier, “Teaching Process Training: Examples and Exercises” which is available at Collier’s website:

<https://polisci.berkeley.edu/people/person/david-collier> or 4 questions in Goertz et al:

<http://assets.press.princeton.edu/releases/m8089.pdf>.

### Meeting 3: Experiments (Spáč)

- Druckman, J. - Green, D. - Kuklinski, J. - Lupia, A. (2011): Experiments. An Introduction to Core Concepts. In: Druckman, J. - Green, D. - Kuklinski, J. - Lupia, A. (eds.): *Cambridge Handbook of Experimental Political Science*. New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 15-26.
- McDermott, R. (2011): Internal and External Validity. In: Druckman, J. - Green, D. - Kuklinski, J. - Lupia, A. (eds.): *Cambridge Handbook of Experimental Political Science*. New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 27-40.

Assignment: Prepare a hypothetical experimental study. Select aims of a hypothetical research, set your hypotheses, provide a detailed design of your experiment and suggest possible way of analysis of its results.

### Meeting 4: Regression analysis (Spáč)

- Field, A. (2009): *Discovering Statistics Using SPSS*. London: SAGE, pp. 197-242.

Assignment: Complete tasks concerning regression analysis (obtained after attending the meeting).

### Meeting 5: New Techniques for Causal Inference (Roberts)

- Thad Dunning, *Natural Experiments in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge, 2012), chapters 1-4.
- Ethan Bueno de Mesquita and Anthony Fowler, *Thinking Clearly with Data*, chapters 12 and 13.
- Philip Schrod, “Seven Deadly Sins of Contemporary Quantitative Analysis”, *Journal of Peace Research* (2013).

Assignment: Answer the questions at the end of chapter 2 in Dunning’s *Natural Experiments in the Social Sciences*.