

International Affairs

Academic year 2009 - 2010

Epistemology & Methods

E150 – Spring – Epistemology & Methods – 6 ECTS
Tuesdays 16:15-18:00 (AJF)

Course Description

The aim of this course is to introduce MIA students to the diversity of qualitative perspectives and quantitative methods relevant to the study of contemporary international issues. Prof. Balachandran will present perspectives and methods derived from human disciplines such as critical historical and cultural analyses. Prof. Elsig will present positivist methods in the social sciences. One of the aims of this course is to help students develop theoretical and practical tools for their mémoires. This will also be the aim of seminars that will take place during the semester with the teaching assistants.

> PROFESSORS

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> ASSISTANTS

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Syllabus

Course Website

<http://graduateinstitute.ch/mia/courses/interdisciplinary/epistemology-methods.html>

Requirements

In the part with Prof. Balachandran, students will critically review, in approximately 2500 words (+/(-) 10%), a "text" dealing with an issue of contemporary significance to tease out its categories of analysis and any hidden or latent historical, cultural and other assumptions or values. A 'text' need not necessarily be 'literary'. It may be aural (e.g. a piece of music), visual (including paintings, photography, film, theatre visuals, etc.), represent a sample from material culture, etc. The deadline is 12:00 noon **May 18** by e-mail to the TAs.

In the part with Prof. Elsig, students will write a paper of approximately 2500 words (+/(-)10%) that presents the design for a research project that they are likely to pursue in future personal research (such as the mémoire), including e.g., a research question (justified on the basis of a brief literature review), hypotheses and possible arguments, and data selection/collection issues. The deadline is 12:00 noon **June 13** by e-mail to the TAs.

In addition, students will participate in a seminar with the teaching assistants to help them with their mémoire. Details on the groups and schedule will follow shortly.

EVALUATION

The evaluation for the course is as follows:

- 50% of the grade for the individual paper due to Professor Balachandran (May 25).
- 50% of the grade for the individual paper due to Professor Elsig (June 13).

NOTE: The deadlines are firm. Late submissions will suffer a penalty: -.25 for 1-4 hours late; -.5 for 4-8 hours; -.75 for 8-12 hours, and -1 point for +12 hours. If you have valid medical reasons for the delay (supported by a medical certificate) please contact a TA at the earliest.

Readings

In order to be able to participate in class discussions and to prepare the required assignments, students must do a set of required readings. A reading packet (polycopié) is also available for purchase at Imprimerie Minute (7, rue Voie-Creuse, Tel: 022.734.0000).

NOTE: Please make sure you consult the website regularly, as information regarding the course will be posted there.

Course Outline

I. FEBRUARY 23 INTRODUCTORY CLASS

PART I INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH DESIGN

II. MARCH 2 FOUNDATIONS: ACCUMULATION OF KNOWLEDGE, PARADIGMS, THEORIES (ME)

1. Barbara Geddes, *Paradigms and Sand Castles: Theory Building and Research Design in Comparative Politics*, Chapter 1, University of Michigan Press, Michigan, 2003.
2. Gary King, Robert O. Keohane and Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*, Chapter 1, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1994.

III. MARCH 9 RESEARCH QUESTIONS, PUZZLES AND THE STUDY OF CAUSATION (ME)

1. Barbara Geddes, *Paradigms and Sand Castles: Theory Building and Research Design in Comparative Politics*, Chapter 2 (extract pp. 27-50), University of Michigan Press, Michigan, 2003.
2. Alexander George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*, Chapter 7, MIT Press, Cambridge, 2004.

PART II DESIGNING RESEARCH

IV. MARCH 16 MODEL BUILDING: CONCEPTS, ARGUMENTS, AND HYPOTHESES (ME)

1. Gary King, Robert O. Keohane and Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*, Chapter 3, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1994.
2. Barbara Geddes, *Paradigms and Sand Castles: Theory Building and Research Design in Comparative Politics*, Chapter 2 (extract pp. 50-88), The University of Michigan Press, Michigan, 2003.

3. Stephen van Evera, *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science*, Chapter 1, Cornell University Press, New York, 1997.

V. MARCH 23 DATA SELECTION, OPERATIONALIZATION AND MEASUREMENT (ME)

1. Gary King, Robert O. Keohane and Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*, Chapter 4, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1994.
2. Barbara Geddes, *Paradigms and Sand Castles: Theory Building and Research Design in Comparative Politics*, Chapter 3, University of Michigan Press, Michigan, 2003.

Kirk Bowman, Fabrice Lehoucq and James Mahoney, "Measuring Political Democracy. Case Expertise, Data Adequacy, and Central America", *Comparative Political Studies*, vol. 38, no. 8, 2005, pp. 939-970.

PART III EPISTEMOLOGY

VI. MARCH 30 (GB) LIMITS OF FREEDOM (GB)

1. Susan Buck-Morss, "Hegel and Haiti", *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 26, no. 4, Summer 2000, pp. 821-865.
2. Uday S. Mehta, 'Liberal Strategies of Exclusion', *Politics and Society*, vol. 18, no. 4, December 1990, pp. 427-54.

Document: French President Nicholas Sarkozy's speech at the University of Dakar in July 2007: http://www.africaresource.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&catid=36:essays-a-discussions&id=437:the-unofficial-english-translation-of-sarkozys-speech&Itemid=346

VII. APRIL 13 (GB) COLONIALISM AND SOVEREIGNTY (GB)

1. Radhika Mongia, "Historicizing State Sovereignty: Inequality and the Form of Equivalence", *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol. 49, no. 2, April 2007, pp. 384-411.
2. Document-text: Robert Cooper, *The Postmodern State and the World Order*, Demos and the Foreign Policy Centre, London, 2000.

VIII. APRIL 20 (GB) RHETORICS OF CALCULATION (GB)

1. Timothy Mitchell, *Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-politics, Modernity*, Chapter 3, University of California Press, Berkeley, 2002.
2. Nick Cullather, 'The Foreign Policy of the Calorie', *American Historical Review*, vol. 112, no. 2, April 2007, pp. 337-64.

IX. APRIL 27 (GB) POLITICS OF NARRATION (GB)

1. Document-text: Lynn Hunt, *Inventing Human Rights: A History*, pp. 200-08, W.W. Norton, New York, 2007

2. Mark Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace: The End of Empire and the Ideological Origins of the United Nations*, Chapter 1, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2009.
3. Carol Anderson, *The United Nations and the African American Struggle for Human Rights, 1944-1955*, Chapter 2, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2003.
4. Makau Mutua, *Human Rights: A Political and Cultural Critique*, Chapter 1, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 2002.

X. MAY 4 (GB) CULTURES AND CONFLICT (GB)

1. Document-text: Edward Said, *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient*, Introduction and Chapter 1.1 ("Knowing the Oriental"), Penguin Editions, 1996.
2. Document-text: Bernard Lewis, "What Went Wrong?", *Atlantic Monthly*, 2002
3. Susan Buck-Morss, "Critical Theory and Islamism", in Susan Buck-Morss, *Thinking Past Terror: Islamism and Critical Theory on the Left*, Chapter 2, Verso, London, 2003.
4. David B. Edwards, "Mad Mullahs and Englishmen: Discourse in the Colonial Encounter", *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol. 31, no.4, 1989, pp. 649-670.

XI. MAY 11 (GB) EPISTEMOLOGY AND HERMEUNETICS (GB)

1. Walter D. Mignolo, 'Colonial and Postcolonial Discourse: Cultural Critique or Academic Colonialism?', *Latin American Research Review*, vol. 28, no. 3, 1993, pp. 120-34.
2. Kwame A. Appiah, *In my Father's House: Africa in the Philosophy of Culture*, Chapter 8, Oxford University Press, New York.
3. Partha Chatterjee, *The Politics of the Governed: Reflections on Popular Politics in Most of the World*, Chapters 2 (pp. 41-51) & 3, Columbia University Press, New York, 2004. Optional reading: Chapter. 2, pp. 27-41.

PART IV METHODS

XII. MAY 18 (ME) METHODS I: SMALL-N & LARGE N-STUDIES (ME)

1. Andrew Bennett, "Case Study Methods: Design, Use, and Comparative Advantages", Chapter 2 in Detlef F. Sprinz and Yael Wolinsky-Nahmias, *Models, Numbers, and Cases: Methods for Studying International Relations*, University of Michigan Press, Michigan, 2004.
2. John Odell, "Case Study Methods in International Political Economy", *International Studies Perspectives*, vol. 2, 2001, pp. 161-176.
3. Bear Braumoeller and Anne Sartori, "The Promise and Perils of Statistics in International Relations", Chapter 6 in Detlef F. Sprinz and Yael Wolinsky-Nahmias, *Models, Numbers, and Cases: Methods for Studying International Relations*, University of Michigan Press, Michigan, 2004.

XIII. MAY 25 (ME) METHODS II: PROCESS-TRACING & CONTENT ANALYSIS (ME)

1. Alexander George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*, Chapter 10, MIT Press, Cambridge, 2004.
2. Jeffrey Checkel, "It's the Process Stupid! Process Tracing in the Study of European and International Politics", *Arena Working Paper*, no. 26, October 2005.
3. Michael Laver and John Garry, "Estimating Policy Positions from Political Texts", *American Journal of Political Science*, vol. 44, no. 3, July 2000, pp. 619-634.

XIV. JUNE 1 (ME) METHODS III: SURVEY RESEARCH AND INTERVIEW TECHNIQUES

1. Harry E. Brady, "Contributions of Survey Research to Political Science", PS: *Political Science and Politics*, vol. 33, no.1, March 2000, pp. 47-57.
2. Jarol Manheim and Richard Rich, *Empirical Political Analysis*, Chapter 7, Longman Publishers, New York, 1995.
3. Beth L. Leech, et al., "Symposium: Interview Methods in Political Science", PS: *Political Science and Politics*, vol. 35, no. 4, December 2002, pp. 665-688.

