

International Relations/Political Science

Academic Year 2019 - 2020

Doctoral Seminar in International Relations/Political Science

RI/SP002 | Autumn | 6 ECTS

Mondays from 12:15 to 14:00 (P3-506)

Course Description

This seminar is intended to introduce first year doctoral students to a broad range of theoretical approaches, contemporary debates, and research strategies relevant for developing a PhD thesis project in international relations/political science. Following sessions on philosophy of social sciences, IR theoretical debates, and research questions and design, faculty from the IRPS Department will be invited to present their own experiences with research. Required readings for these sessions will be posted on the course moodle in advance of each session. Seminar participants will also have an opportunity to present and receive critical feedback on a draft version of their PhD prospectus, a document that will be revised and presented to the entire department in October 2019. A preliminary draft of the doctoral research project for critical peer review is due on November 26th.

> PROFESSOR

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Office Hours:
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> ASSISTANT

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Syllabus

Course Requirements

1. Attendance is mandatory, and students are expected to keep up with assigned readings (accessible from the course moodle), and come to class *prepared* for discussion.
2. Each week (Sessions 4-10), one or two students will be assigned to present a short critical summary of the speaker's research paper/project.
3. In addition to attending the seminar, students are **required** to attend and participate in the department research colloquium throughout the year.
4. A preliminary literature review (details below) is due on November 12, and a first draft of your dissertation prospectus is due on November 26.

Course Evaluation

The seminar's success depends on up-to-date reading, active participation and the quality of your draft prospectus. Evaluation will be based upon:

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| 1. Participation and discussion presentations | 25% |
| 2. Preliminary literature review and problem statement | 25% |
| 3. Preliminary Dissertation Prospectus | 50% |

Readings may be modified during the semester, and the schedule may shift during the semester to deal with unavoidable commitments. Additional discussion sessions may also be scheduled around specific topics or issues that arise.

Course Schedule

Session 1: Philosophy of social sciences

Monday, 23 September

Martin Hollis and Steve Smith, Explaining and Understanding International Relations, 1-15, 45-91.

Patrick Thaddeus Jackson, The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations, 1-23.

Richard Ned Lebow, "What Can We Know? How Do We Know?," in Richard Ned Lebow and Mark Irving Lichbach, ed., Theory and Evidence in Comparative Politics and International Relations, 3-22.

Patrick Thaddeus Jackson and Daniel Nexon, "International Theory in a Post-Paradigmatic Era: From Substantive Wagers to Scientific Ontologies," European Journal of International Relations, 19:3 (2013), 543-565.

John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt, "Leaving Theory Behind: Why Simplistic Hypothesis Testing Is Bad for International Relations," European Journal of International Relations, 19:3 (2013), 427-457.

Session 2: The Sociology of the Discipline of International Relations

Monday, 30 September

Ole Waever, "The Sociology of a Not So International Discipline: American and European Developments in International Relations," International Organization, 52:4 (1998), 687-727.

Jonas Hagmann and Thomas Biersteker, "Beyond the Published Discipline: Toward a Critical Pedagogy of International Studies," European Journal of International Relations, 20:2 (2014), 291-315.

Peter Marcus Kristensen, "Revisiting the 'American Social Science'—Mapping the Geography of International Relations," International Studies Perspectives, 16:3 (2015), 246-269.

Daniel Maliniak, Ryan Powers and Barbara Walter, "The Gender Citation Gap in International Relations," International Organization, 67:4 (2013), 889-922.

Session 3: Research questions and designs

Monday, 7 October

John Gerring, "The Case Study: What it is and What it Does," in Carles Boix and Susan Stokes, ed., Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics, 99-122.

Romain Malejacq and Dipali Mukhopadhyay, "The 'Tribal Politics' of Field Research: A Reflection on Power and Partiality in 21st-Century Warzones," American Political Science Association, 14:4 (2016), 1011-1028.

Peter Hedström and Richard Swedberg, "Social Mechanisms: An Introductory Essay," in Peter Hedström and Richard Swedberg, ed., Social Mechanisms: An Analytical Approach to Social Theory, 1-31.

Andrew Bennett and Jeffrey Checkel, "Process Tracing: From Philosophical Roots to Best Practices," in Andrew Bennett and Jeffrey Checkel, ed., Process Tracing: From Metaphor to Analytic Tool, 3-37.

Lene Hansen, "Discourse Analysis, Poststructuralism and Foreign Policy," in Steve Smith, Amelia Hadfield and Tim Dunne, Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases, 94-109.

Ann Tickner, "What Is Your Research Program? Some Feminist Answers to International Relations Methodological Questions," International Studies Quarterly, 49:1 (2005), 1-21.

Session 4:

Monday 14 October **Prof.**

Session 5:

Monday, 21 October **Prof.**

Session 6:

Monday, 28 October **Prof.**
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Session 7:

Monday, 4 November **Prof.**

Session 8: Prospectus Workshop and Literature Review

Monday, 11 November

Note: the preliminary literature review and problem statement is due here.

Session 9:

Monday, 18 November **Prof.**

Session 10:

Monday, 25 November **Prof.**

Note: the dissertation prospectus is due here.

Session 11: Student presentations of first draft of dissertation prospectus

Monday, 2 December

Session 12: Student presentations of first draft of dissertation prospectus

Monday, 9 December

Session 13: Student presentations of first draft of dissertation prospectus

Monday, 16 December

Additional sessions may be scheduled if needed

Guidelines for Literature Review and Problem Statement

For the first step in developing your thesis prospectus you should write 3-4 pages, focused specifically on your research *topic* or area, a more focused research puzzle or question that emerges from it, and some idea of the literature that is related to the topic and research question.

Note that a research *topic* (usually broad) is not in itself a research question or puzzle, and you should write one page explaining the importance of the puzzle or question relative to the overall topic. You should then situate your future thesis within the discipline, in particular the relevant subfields or theoretical orientation, as well as identifying different approaches that have been (or could be) taken to your research question, and their strengths and limitations.

The initial literature review may comprise 5-8 references, including some general works (articles, books, etc.) that deal with the topic you want to study, as well as one or two that can serve as models or exemplars (similar approaches or methods, relevant case studies, key concepts). These simply serve as initial guides to what is “out there” and to identify a potential scholarly (or practical) audience for your work.

Guidelines for the Preliminary Draft of the Dissertation Prospectus

Building upon the literature review and problem statement, the preliminary draft of the dissertation prospectus should be around 10 pages (3000 words), and follow the Department’s guidelines for the Mémoire Préliminaire de Thèse (to be distributed). In particular it should:

- Introduce the topic, puzzle, research question and its relevance or importance (one page);
- expand upon the prior brief literature review, both by deepening the sources cited and by highlighting how the research questions posed in the literature fit with your proposed research (e.g.: similar question, different cases; similar topic area, different method and approach; “test” of prior conclusions; new method and approach to a prior topic, etc.) (three pages);
- include a conceptual or theoretical section that identifies core concepts and how they are linked to the research question, and the most appropriate methodological approach (in general terms) (three pages);
- Discuss possible cases and units of analysis (which can be spatial, temporal, individual, etc.), and the relevance or appropriateness of them, as well as the “universe” of cases (i.e.: “what is this a case of?”) (two pages);
- Identify what kinds of data and information would be ideally needed to answer your research question (at least in hypothetical terms);
- Sketch the preliminary plan for the research (field research, data analysis, archives, time lines, as well as potential obstacles or challenges).