

POLI 639: Mixed Methods Research in European Studies

REVISED SYLLABUS

POLI 639
Winter 2020

Prof. Maria Popova
Office hours to be held online
by appointment

Course description

This course has three main goals: 1) to introduce students to mixed methods research approaches and their philosophical foundation; 2) to help students learn how to execute these methods through analysis of examples from the European politics literature; 3) to provide an opportunity for students to generate their own mixed methods research design, which could become the basis of their thesis work.

Course requirements

This is a graduate seminar, so class time will be devoted exclusively to the discussion of the assigned readings, rather than to lecturing on my part. This means that you should read the assigned material for the week *before* class.

1) Participation (20%)

Your grade will be based on participation up to the COVID-19 disruption.

2) Book review (20%)

Choose one of the assigned books and write a review of it. A book review contains an overview of the book's central arguments, a discussion of its methodology and data, an evaluation of its main contribution/s and any important shortcomings, and a brief discussion of its target audience. Check out some of the book reviews in the Critical Dialogues section in *Perspectives on Politics* to see how to structure and calibrate your review. The review should be between 800-1200 words.

The book review is due on myCourses on April 15th. Email me if you need an extension.

3) Research design paper (50%)

The main requirement for the course is a 4-5,000 word paper that proposes a mixed methods study. The paper should have a short literature review, a discussion of the conceptualization of the dependent variable, a section on a hypothesis and the conceptualization of the independent variable(s), a section on measurement, and a section on the data to be collected and methods to be used to analyze it. If you are planning a mixed methods thesis, you can use this assignment to write a draft of your proposal. If you are planning a one method thesis, you can still use the literature review and

theoretical discussion to draft portions of your proposal, but you will have to come up with an additional method that could be used to explore your chosen research question.

The research design paper is due on myCourses on April 30th. Email me if you need an extension.

On Academic Integrity

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see www.mcgill.ca/integrity for more information).

L'université McGill attache une haute importance à l'honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l'on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon le Code de conduite de l'étudiant et des procédures disciplinaires (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le site www.mcgill.ca/integrity).

Updated discussion schedule

Mar 31 (Week 12): Mixing experiments and interviews

Warner, Carolyn M., Ramazan Kılınc, Christopher W. Hale, and Adam B. Cohen. *Generating Generosity in Catholicism and Islam: Beliefs, Institutions, and Public Goods Provision*. Cambridge University Press, 2018.

Mares, Isabela, and Lauren E. Young. *Conditionality & Coercion: Electoral clientelism in Eastern Europe*. Oxford University Press, 2019.

Apr 7 (Week 13): Trade-offs of mixed methods research

Ahmed, Amel, and Rudra Sil. "When multi-method research subverts methodological pluralism—or, why we still need single-method research." *Perspectives on Politics* 10, no. 4 (2012): 935-953.

Coppedge, Michael. "Thickening thin concepts and theories: combining large N and small in comparative politics." *Comparative Politics* (1999): 465-476.

Sil, Rudra 2004, "Problems chasing methods or methods chasing problems? Research Communities, Constrained Pluralism, and the Role of Eclecticism", in Shapiro, I., Rogers M. Smith and Tarek E. Masoud (eds.), *Problems and Methods in the Study of Politics*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 307-321.