

國立中山大學政治學研究所
政治學方法論

Political Methodology

Spring 2010 (982)

Instructor: Prof. Frank C. S. Liu 劉正山
Time: W 13:10 - 16:00 Office Hours: T & R 4-6pm or by appointment
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Online Classroom: <http://cu2.nsysu.edu.tw/>
Course Syllabus: <http://www2.nsysu.edu.tw/politics/liu>

Course Description

Methodology is about how to gain knowledge, not simply about methods of doing research. This course is not about introducing research methods but about reasons of doing research. Titled as “Political Methodology,” this course is designed to help political science graduate students to look beyond the skill level of research. Students will be guided to think widely at the discipline level by overview the major debates or controversies in the discipline. We will also evaluate some examples that may or may not advance our knowledge regarding our political life. While its reading load is heavier than other master-level courses, this course will focus more on intellectual discussion about current research in the field than on readings itself. To be more systematically formulate the flow of our discussion, the following subjects will be introduced in class, each of which will take about two weeks of reading and discussion. Note that these topics and relevant readings are introduced only for discussion purpose. We may introduce new topics and readings or modify the reading list as the semester goes.

1. How divided are we? The outlook of the discipline
2. How useful is it to label ourselves as “qualitative” or “quantitative” researchers?
3. How could we release the tension between science and philosophy? Or, how necessary is it?
4. “Science ignorance”? The reexamination the epistemology of political science
5. Rational political animals? The reflections on rational choice assumptions
6. How empirical is empirical enough? Method- versus Problem-Driven Research
7. How could theorization be achieved? The Challenges of Theory-Driven Research
8. What can be done? The prospect of the discipline

** Note: Due to my frequent international travel this semester, I plan to hold some sessions online if it is necessary. So, students are required to get familiar with the virtual class system (and later the video conference system) provided by the university.

Course Texts and Readings

The course requires active participation in reading assigned materials. Most articles are available on university's electronic journal archives. A copy of required book chapters and some journal articles that are not

available in the library or databases (marked with ** in the end of the entry) will be put in a basket with a proper label in the institute office one week before the class. You can also make a good use of the interlibrary loan system.

Grading Policy

Requirement	% of Grade
Participation (online and off line)	20
Three short reaction papers	30
Research paper	50
Total	100

- Class participation and Online Discussion (20%): Involvement in class discussion include your attendance, questions provided for discussion, and responses to questions. You are asked to read through the given materials and bring thoughts to the class. Some online activities may be assigned during the semester. Get familiar with the university's online classroom system: <http://cu2.nsysu.edu.tw/>.
- Reaction papers (30%): You are free to pick up three topics to write reaction papers in the beginning of the semester and write papers that each has at least five pages, doubled spaced (no less than four and not longer than six pages). Reaction papers should demonstrate your (re)organization of the assigned readings and your thoughts (evaluation or critiques) about the papers. *Papers that simply summarize the assigned readings will be returned for rewriting.* Bonus points will be given to papers with extended (self-selected) readings that help develop arguments or clarify points.
- Research paper (50%): Research paper, **due on June 16 (5pm), 2010**, is your "free-style" research work. Ideally, it is a part of your dissertation, research proposal, or research of your interest. It should be a semester-long project and shows how your thoughts or ideas learned in this class are integrated into your ongoing project. You need to consult me first if you want to write something beyond the scope of this class. You can extend your reaction papers into a term paper, but there is no need to do so. Your research paper should be at least fifteen- page long (double-spaced) in English, or twenty-five-page long in Chinese. Papers are graded based on the importance and originality of the topic, the choice and organization of literature (there should be at least ten journal articles or book or book chapters), your methodology, the presentation of your findings, the interpretation of your results, and overall format (use APA style). A research paper that is qualified for a conference presentation will get 85; 95 for submitting to a journal.
- All papers are due in class. The term paper is due in the beginning of the last class. Note that *I do not give "I" for incomplete works*. Make sure you manage your time well and turn in the hard copies of the papers before the deadlines. The cover page of papers should include the following information: class name, author's full name and student id, paper type (mid-term paper or final term paper), turn-in date, and contact information.

Weekly Schedule

[Feb. 24] Class will formally start on March 3.

- Syllabus and virtual classroom are available online. You don't need to do much in this week, except:
 - (1) Simply skim the syllabus;
 - (2) Post and share a short statement about your research interest, either in Chinese or in English. There is no word limit for it. Students who finish this warm-up exercise by the class of March 3 will gain extra point for the semester. Works posted later than March 3 will be accepted but won't be credited.

[March 3] Introduction

[March 5 & 10] TOPIC 1: How Divided Are We? An Outlook of the Discipline

- Required:

- Grant, J. T. (2005). What divides us? The image and organization of political science. *Ps-Political Science & Politics*, 38 (3), 379-386.
- Garand, J. C. (2005). Integration and fragmentation in political science: Exploring patterns of scholarly communication in a divided discipline. *Journal of Politics*, 67 (4), 979-1005.
- Dickins, A. (2006). The evolution of international political economy. *International Affairs*, 82 (3), 479-.
- Dryzek, J. S. (2006). Revolutions without enemies: Key transformations in political science. *American Political Science Review*, 100 (4), 487-492.
- Box-Steffensmeier, J. M. & Sokhey, A. E. (2007). A dynamic labor market: How political science is opening up to methodologists, and how methodologists are opening up political science. *Ps-Political Science & Politics*, 40 (1), 125-127.

- Supplemental:

- Schwartz-Shea, P. (2003). Is this the curriculum we want? Doctoral requirements and offerings in methods and methodology. *Ps-Political Science & Politics*, 36 (3) , 379-386.
- Thies, C. G. & Hogan, R. E. (2005). The state of undergraduate research methods training in political science. *Ps-Political Science & Politics*, 38 (2), 293-297.
- Sigelman, L. (2006). The coevolution of American Political Science and the American Political Science Review. *American Political Science Review*, 100 (4), 463-478.

[March 17 & 24] TOPIC 2: How Useful is It to Label Ourselves as “Qualitative” or “Quantitative” Researchers?

- Required:

- Schwartz-Shea, P. & Yanow, D. (2002). “Reading” “methods” “texts”: How research methods texts construct political science. *Political Research Quarterly*, 55 (2), 457-486.
- Johnson, J. (2006). Consequences of positivism - A pragmatist assessment. *Comparative Political Studies*, 39 (2) , 224-252.
- Bond, J. R. (2007). The scientification of the study of politics: Some observations on the behavioral evolution in political science. *Journal of Politics*, 69 (4) , 897-907.
- Lezaun, J. (2007). A market of opinions: The political epistemology of focus groups. *Sociological Review*, 55 , 130-151.
- Hanson, B. (2008). Wither Qualitative/Quantitative? Grounds for methodological convergence. *Quality & Quantity*, 42 (1) , 97-111.

- Supplemental:

- Little, D. (1991). Methodological individualism. *Varieties of Social Explanation: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Social Science*. 183-201. Boulder: Westview Press.**
- Little, D. (1991). Toward methodological pluralism. *Varieties of Social Explanation: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Social Science*, 222-238. Boulder: Westview Press.**
- Lees, C. (2006). We are all comparativists now - Why and how single-country scholarship must adapt and incorporate the comparative politics approach. *Comparative Political Studies*, 39 (9) , 1084-1108.**
- Clarke, K. A. (2007). The necessity of being comparative - Theory confirmation in quantitative political science. *Comparative Political Studies*, 40 (7) , 886-908.

[March 31 & April 7] TOPIC 3: How Could We Release the Tension between Science and Philosophy? Or, How Necessary is It?

- Note: The class of March 31 is a make-up class for April 28 when I will be travelling.
- Required:
 - McCormick, J. P. (2000). Political science and political philosophy: Return to the classics - No, not those! *Ps-Political Science & Politics*, 33 (2), 195-197.
 - * Mayhew, D. R. (2000). Political science and political philosophy: Ontological not normative. *Ps-Political Science & Politics*, 33 (2), 192-193.
 - Smith, S. B. (2000). Political science and political philosophy: An uneasy relation. *Ps-Political Science & Politics*, 33 (2) , 189-191.
 - White, S. K. (2000). Taking ontology seriously in political science and political theory: A reply to Mayhew. *Ps-Political Science & Politics*, 33 (4), 743-744.
 - O'Neill, J. (2003). Unified science as political philosophy: Positivism, pluralism and liberalism. *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science*, 34A (3), 575-596.**
 - Stauffer, D. (2007). Reopening the quarrel between the ancients and the moderns: Leo Strauss's critique of Hobbes's "New political science". *American Political Science Review*, 101 (2) , 223-233.
 - Lawson, S. (2008). Political studies and the contextual turn: A methodological/normative critique. *Political Studies*, 56 (3), 584-603.
- Supplemental:
 - Little, D. (1998). *Microfoundations, Method and Causation: On the Philosophy of the Social Sciences*. New Brunswick, NJ : Transaction Publishers. [Read Part III or Chapters 9-12]**

[April 14 & May 5] TOPIC 4: "Science Ignorance"? Re-examine the Epistemology of Political Science

- No class on April 21 (the mid-term exam week) and April 28. Work on your research paper and discuss online.
- Research topics may be assigned on April 14. Studnets are expected to orally present *and defend* their choices of research topics on May 5. Discussion about this assignment in the virtual classroom during these two weeks are welcomed.
- Required:
 - Lane, R. (1996). Positivism, scientific realism and political science: Recent developments in the philosophy of science. *Journal of Theoretical Politics*, 8 (3), 361-382.**
 - Friedman, J. (2005). Popper, Weber, and Hayek: The epistemology and politics of ignorance. *Critical Review*, 17 (1-2) , I-LVIII.
 - Weems, L. (2006). Unsettling politics, locating ethics - Representations of reciprocity in post-positivist inquiry. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 12 (5), 994-1011.**
 - Friedman, J. (2007). Ignorance as a starting point: From modest epistemology to realistic political theory. *Critical Review*, 19 (1) , 1-22.
 - Wendt, A. & Duvall, R. (2008). Sovereignty and the UFO. *Political Theory*, 36 (4), 607-633.**
- Supplemental (these are classics; no copies will be provided; read on your own):
 - Popper, K. (1968). *Logic of Scientific Discovery*. London: Hutchinson.
 - Kuhn, T. S. (1970). *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Chicago : University of Chicago Press.
 - Lakatos, I. (1970). *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge*. Lakatos, I. & Musgrave, A.(Eds.) Cambridge [Eng.] : University Press.
 - Lakatos, I. (1978). *The Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes*. Worrall, J. & Currie, G.(Eds.) New York : Cambridge University Press.

[May 12 & 19] TOPIC 5: Rational Political Animals? Reflections on Rational Choice Assumptions

- Required:
 - Johnson, James. (1996). How Not To Criticize Rational Choice Theory: The Pathologies of Commonsense. *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*. 26:77-91.**
 - Somers, M. R. (1998). We're No Angels': Realism, Rational Choice, and Relationality in Social Science. *American Journal of Sociology*, 104 (3), 722-784.
 - Cox, G. W. (1999). The empirical content of rational choice theory: A reply to Green and Shapiro. *Journal of Theoretical Politics*, 11 (2) , 147-169.**
 - MacDonald, P. K. (2003). Useful fiction or miracle maker: The competing epistemological foundations of rational choice theory. *American Political Science Review*, 97 (4), 551-565.
 - Quackenbush, S. L. (2004). The rationality of rational choice theory. *International Interactions*, 30 (2), 87-107.
 - Sanchez-Cuenca, I. (2008). A preference for selfish preferences - The problem of motivations in rational choice political science. *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, 38 (3), 361-378.**
- Supplemental:
 - Simon, H. A. (1985). Human-nature in politics: The dialog of psychology with political science. *American Political Science Review*, 79 (2) , 293-304.
 - Green, Donald and Ian Shapiro. (1996). *Pathologies of Rational Choice Theory: A Critique of Applications in Political Science*. New Haven: Yale University Press. [Read Ch. 8]**
 - Dickson, E. S. (2006). Rational choice epistemology and belief formation in mass politics. *Journal of Theoretical Politics*, 18 (4) , 454-497.**
 - Lovett, F. (2006). Rational choice theory and explanation. *Rationality and Society*, 18 (2), 237-272.**
 - Lehtinen, A. & Kuorikoski, J. (2007). Unrealistic assumptions in rational choice theory. *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, 37 (2), 115-138.**

[May 26 & May 28] TOPIC 6: How Empirical is Empirical Enough? Method- versus Problem-Driven Research

- The course of June 2 is rescheduled to May 28.
- Required:
 - Shapiro, Ian. 2005. *The Flight from Reality in the Human Sciences*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp. 51-99.**
- Supplemental:
 - Morton, R. B. (1999). *Methods and Models: A Guide to The Empirical Analysis of Formal Models in Political Science*. New York : Cambridge University Press.[Read Chs. 2, 3, & 4]**

[June 9 & 16] TOPIC 7: How Could Theorization be Achieved? The Challenges of Theory-Driven Research

- Required:
 - Elster, J. (1998). A plea for causal mechanisms. Hedstrom, P. & Swedberg, R.(Eds.) *Social Mechanisms: An Analytical Approach to Social Theory*. pp. 45-73. New York : Cambridge University Press.**
 - Tilly, Charles. (2001). Mechanisms in Political Processes. *Annual Review of Political Science* 4: 21-41.

- Rueschemeyer, D. (2003). Can One or a Few Cases Yield Theoretical Gains?. Mahoney, J. & Rueschemeyer, D.(Eds.) *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 305-336. **
- Rosenberg, S. W. (2003). Theorizing political psychology: Doing integrative social science under the condition of postmodernity. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, 33 (4) , 427-.
- Johnson, James. (2003). Conceptual Problems as Obstacles to Theoretical Progress in Political Science. *Journal of Theoretical Politics*, 15, 87-115.**
- Mutz, D. C. (2008). Is deliberative democracy a falsifiable theory? *Annual Review of Political Science*, 11 , 521-538.**

- Supplemental:

- Schelling, T. C. (1978). *Micromotives and Macrobehavior*. New York: Norton. Chapter 1 & 3.**
- King, Gary, Robert Keohane, and Sidney Verba. (1994). *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp. 3-33, 75-149.**
- Jervis, Robert. (1997). *System Effects: Complexity in Political and Social Life*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp. 73-91.**
- Pearl, J. (2000). *Causality : Models, Reasoning, and Inference*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.[Read Ch5]**
- Morgan, S. L. & Winship, C. (2007). *Counterfactuals and Causal Inference: Methods and Principles for Social Research*. New York: Cambridge University Press.[Read Chs. 1, 8 & 10] **

[June 23] What Can be Done? The Prospects of the Discipline_(Online Discussion and Presentation of Student Research)

- Supplemental:

- Carmen, I. H. (2007). Genetic configurations of political phenomena: New theories, new methods. *Annals of The American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 614 , 34-55.**
- Nye, J. S. (2008). Bridging the gap between theory and policy. *Political Psychology*, 29 (4) , 593-603.
- Gunnell, J. G. (2007). Are we losing our minds? Cognitive science and the study of politics. *Political Theory*, 35 (6) , 704-731.**
- Shapiro, Ian. 2005. *The Flight from Reality in the Human Sciences*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 178-203.**
- Druckman, J. N.; Green, D. P.; Kuklinski, J. H. & Lupia, A. (2006). The growth and development of experimental research in political science. *American Political Science Review*, 100 (4) , 627-635.
- Shadish, W. R.; Cook, T. D. & Campbell, D. T. (2007). *Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs for Generalized Causal Inference*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.