POP88051 MSc Research Design B

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Module description
This graduate seminar introduces students to the scientific inquiry of the political world. Students will learn how to identify compelling research questions and how to structure a study that contributes to an existing body of research. Moreover, we will discuss the problems of causal inference and multiple methodological approaches (statistical analysis, process tracing, case studies) to the empirical study of politics. The emphasis of the module will be on the development of novel, falsifiable, and empirically testable explanations of political phenomena.

Learning Outcomes
At the end of the course, students are expected to gain a greater understanding of the research process, problems associated with conducting social research, become familiar with different research methods, learn how to formulate research questions, hypotheses, and selecting appropriate research design and data sources to test their hypotheses. Students will gain first-hand experience by putting together a full research proposal, thus helping them to build the skills essential to conduct high quality research in the field of international relations and comparative politics.

Key readings
The main texts for this module are:

- King, G., Keohane, R.O. and Verba, S., 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton University Press.

- Gerring, J., 2012. *Social Science Methodology: A Unified Framework*. Cambridge University Press.

For those with a limited social science methods background, it might be helpful to start by reading chapters from an introductory text, such as:

- Kellstedt, P. M. and Whitten, G. D., 2018. *The Fundamentals of Political Science Research*. 3rd edition, New York: Cambridge University Press.

- Manheim, J.B., Rich, R.C., Willnat, L., Brians, C.L. and Babb, J., 2012. *Empirical political analysis*. Pearson Higher Ed.

- Shively, W.P., 2016. *The craft of political research*. Routledge.

Assessment
10% Participation
10% Research question paper
30% Project outline
50% Final research design