

**Preliminary Syllabus
PLSC 523/PLSC 352
Mixed Methods Research
Spring 2023**

Instructor: Salma Mousa
Seminars: Wednesdays 1:30 – 3:20pm
Office hours: Tuesdays 1:30 – 3pm ([Calendly](#))
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Course description

This course trains students to design and critique a range of quantitative, qualitative, and experimental research methods. The course begins with a discussion of concept formation, defining quantities of interest, and the advantages and disadvantages of bringing descriptive vs. causal evidence to bear. We then analyze the strengths and weaknesses of quantitative tests, experimental designs, case-based approaches, and interpretive methods such as process tracing. Next, the course discusses the research design choices of top-tier mixed methods research. Finally, we do a deep dive on the ethics, design, and implementation of field experiments. The final assignment builds on the course material to produce a mixed method research design proposal.

Evaluation

The final grade consists of four components:

- 20 points of your grade will be determined by **attendance and participation**. The class will be taught as a seminar and revolves around class discussion. The quality of a seminar hinges on the quality of class discussion. Regular attendance and participation are important for understanding the material and for getting the most out of this course. Students are expected to come to class having completed all assigned readings and prepared to talk about them in depth. This may require you to prepare notes to remember important aspects of the readings.
- 20 points of your grade will be determined by **an in-class facilitation** during weeks 2 – 13. You will be expected to provide a brief introduction to the topic covered for that day, introduce questions to guide our conversation, and lead discussion for the first half of class. If multiple students sign up to facilitate the same session, divide the papers among yourselves.
- 50 points of your grade will be determined by a final paper outlining an **original mixed methods research design**. This class is designed to be helpful for your research. As such, the course builds towards a final paper at least 25 pages in length, in which students create an original mixed methods research design. The paper should propose a research project using a mixed methods approach, with the goal of producing something that will help you in preparing a dissertation or similarly ambitious research project. 10 points of this component of your grade will be determined by a peer review exercise. The final paper is due to Canvas by **May 8, 2023** by 5 pm EST. Please see section below with additional guidelines.

- For undergraduate students, the paper must be at least 15 pages. The paper can serve as a research design for a senior thesis or an independent research project.
- For graduate students, the paper must be at least 25 pages. The paper can serve as a research design for a dissertation project (in which case, the design may require more than 25 pages) or an independent research project.

*Research question and literature review: **Due February 15 – 10 points***

- Undergraduates: 5 pages
- Graduates: 10 pages

*Research design: **Due March 5 – 10 points***

- Undergraduates: 5 pages
- Graduates: 10 pages

*Justification of methodological approach: **Due March 29 – 10 points***

- Undergraduates: 5 pages
- Graduates: 5 pages

*Final paper: **Due May 8 - 20 points***

- Undergraduates: 15 pages (or more)
- Graduates: 25 pages (or more)

- 10 points of your grade will be determined by signing up for office hours once to discuss your final paper during the semester.

Additional Final Paper Guidance

Research Question and Literature Review

A good literature review synthesizes and critiques existing work on a topic, both in substantive and in method. This review goes beyond summary by critically engaging existing studies, identifies gaps in how a question has been investigated, and situates the current study in that gap. You can find exemplary literature reviews by searching your topic in the Annual Review of Political Science, which exclusively publishes review essays written by top scholars. Alternatively, shorter literature reviews appear at the beginning of (nearly) all published articles. For this class, the research question and literature review section should end with a proposal of your original theory and how it addresses lacunae in the literature.

Resources:

- General guidelines for writing the literature review of a paper:
<http://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide/literaturereview> and
<http://advice.writing.utoronto.ca/types-of-writing/literature-review/>
- How to guide: <http://levente.littvay.hu/litreview/>
- Yale resources for political science reviews:
<https://guides.library.yale.edu/politicalscience/litreviews>

Research Design and Justification

The research design section of the paper describes the data collection and analyses you conduct to investigate a research problem. This should include how you will measure your dependent and independent variables, and how you will support your causal or descriptive argument, and with what data. For this class, this section will be prospective – i.e., what research you will undertake to test your theory. In published research pieces, this section is titled “data” and/or “research design,” is written in the past tense, and details how data was collected and analyzed. For the purposes of this class, this section must describe a combination of qualitative and quantitative data collection and analyses.

Resources:

- General guidelines for writing the methods section of a paper:
<http://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide/methodology>
 - Quantitative: <http://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide/quantitative>
 - Qualitative: <http://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide/quantitative>
- Qualitative methods section of a paper:
https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/writing_up_your_phd_qualitative_research.pdf (starting page 29)
- Mixed methods research design:
<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1558689815594687> (Note: search the Journal of Mixed Methods Research for additional examples of how to read and write a mixed methods research design section)

This section should also answer the question of why your proposed research design and methodological approach best answers your proposed research question. A good justification will reference both the strengths and limitations of a given approach. Justifications for mixed methods often discuss how a combination of approaches complement each other. You might cite the material we cover from weeks 2 through 5 on the syllabus for a mixed method design.

Resources:

- <http://methods.sagepub.com/reference/sage-encyc-qualitative-research-methods/n392.xml>
- <https://www.oxbridgeessays.com/blog/writing-dissertation-methodology/>

Required Books

All readings are available online and linked through Canvas.

Course Policies

COVID-19

Living through a pandemic has been incredibly challenging for all of us. Please communicate any challenges you are facing, or any comments you have on how the course structure can be improved, as soon as possible. If you test positive or have been exposed to someone who has, please follow the latest health guidance here: <https://covid19.yale.edu/health-guidelines>

Attendance

Attending all seminars is required. Please communicate absences ahead of class when possible. Keep in mind that participation is worth 20% of your final grade. If you miss a seminar for an approved reason, you will need to write a 500 word reflection paper on the weeks' readings.

E-mail

If you have a quick (i.e. non-substantive) question, email is the best way to contact me. While I typically respond to emails quickly, please allow 48 hours for a response. If you do not receive a response within 48 hours, follow up with a reminder.

Late Assignments

For every day a written assignment is late, you will lose a fraction of a letter grade for that assignment (e.g. B to B-).

Academic Integrity

It is your responsibility to be aware of Yale University's policy on academic integrity. In short, don't turn in the same paper for two classes, don't collaborate on assignments without explicitly indicating that you have collaborated, and don't plagiarize someone else's work. When in doubt, check the guidelines here or ask me.

Students with Disabilities

If you have already established accommodations with the Resource Office on Disabilities, let me and your TA know. If you have not yet established services through ROD, but have a temporary health condition or permanent disability that requires accommodations, please contact ROD.

Commitment to an Inclusive Learning Environment

Yale University adheres to the philosophy that all community members should enjoy an environment free of any harassment, sexual misconduct, discrimination, or violence. If you encounter sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, sexual assault, or discrimination based on race, color, religion, age, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability please contact the Title IX Coordinator, Stephanie Spangler, or any of the University Title IX Coordinators. You may also report an incident to me. I am required to notify the Title IX coordinator about the basic facts of the incident, though you may choose to request confidentiality from the University.

Preliminary Course Outline and Readings

Week 1: Course Introduction

January 18

Week 2: Logics of Causal Inference

January 25

- Charles Ragin, *The Comparative Method: Moving Beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies*. University of California Press (1984): 1-84 (chapters 1 and 2).
- James Mahoney and Gary Goertz, “A Tale of Two Cultures: Contrasting Quantitative and Qualitative Research.” *Political Analysis* 14 (2006): 227-249.
- Gerber, Alan S., and Donald P. Green. 2012. *Field Experiments: Design, Analysis, and Interpretation*. New York: W.W. Norton. Chapters 1.
- Henry E. Brady, “Doing Good and Doing Better: How Far Does the Quantitative Template Get Us?” in *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards* eds. Henry E. Brady and David Collier. Rowman & Littlefield, 2010.

Week 3: Definitions, Strengths and Weaknesses of Quantitative and Qualitative Research

February 1

- Seawright, Jason Seawright, *Multi-Method Social Science: Combining Qualitative and Quantitative Tools*. Cambridge University Press, 2016. Chapter 1.
- Sidney Tarrow, “Bridging the Quantitative-Qualitative Divide” in *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards* eds. Henry E. Brady and David Collier. Rowman & Littlefield, 2010.
- David Laitin and James Fearon, “Integrating Qualitative and Quantitative Methods” in *The Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology*. Oxford University Press (2008): 756-776.
- Creswell, John W. Creswell, “Controversies in Mixed Methods Research” in *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*, eds. N. Denzin and Y. Lincoln. Sage, 2011: 269-284.

Week 4: Case Studies and Mixed Methods Research (virtual class; 1.5 hours)

February 8

- John Gerring, “What is a Case Study” and “What is a Case Study Good For?” in *Case Study Research: Principles and Practices* ed. John Gerring, Cambridge University Press, 2012, 17-64.

- Jason Seawright, *Multi-Method Social Science: Combining Qualitative and Quantitative Tools*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016, Chapter 8.
- David Collier. "Understanding Process Tracing." *PS: Political Science & Politics* (2011) 44 .4: 823-830.

Examples:

- Daniel Mattingly, "Elite Capture: How Decentralization and Information Institutions Weaken Property Rights in Rural China." *World Politics* 68.3 (2016) 383-412.
- Killian Clarke and Korhan Kocak, "Launching Revolution: Social Media and the Egyptian Uprising's First Movers." *British Journal of Political Science* 50.3 (2020): 1025-1045.

Week 5: Regression Analysis in Mixed Methods Research

February 15

- Jason Seawright, *Multi-Method Social Science: Combining Qualitative and Quantitative Tools*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016, Chapter 3.
- Michael Coppedge, "Thickening Thin Concepts and Theories: Combining Large-N and Small in Comparative Politics" *Comparative Politics* 31.4 (1999): 465-476.
- Evan Lieberman, "Nested Analysis as a Mixed-Method Strategy for Comparative Research." *American Political Science Review* 99.3 (2005):435-52.
- Christopher H. Achen, "Let's put garbage-can regressions and garbage-can probits where they belong." *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 22.4 (2005): 327-339.

Examples:

- Erica de Bruin, "Preventing Coups D'état: How Counterbalancing Works." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 62.7 (2018): 1433-1458.
- Omar Wasow, "Agenda Seeding: How 1960s Black Protests Moved Elites, Public Opinion, and Voting." *American Political Science Review* (2020), 1-22.

Week 6: Survey Experiments and Survey Design

February 22

- No readings – instead, create Yale Qualtrics account, and create a basic survey using these instructions: <https://www.qualtrics.com/support/survey-platform/survey-module/survey-module-overview/>
- Survey should aim to answer any research question you are interested in.
- Survey should have at least 3 blocks, 10 questions in total, and use at least 3 question formats.
- I will call on people to randomly share their surveys in class.

Examples:

- Marble, William, Salma Mousa, and Alexandra A. Siegel. "Can exposure to celebrities reduce prejudice? The effect of Mohamed Salah on islamophobic behaviors and attitudes." *American Political Science Review* 115, no. 4 (2021): 1111-1128.
- Bursztyjn, Leonardo, Alessandra L. González, and David Yanagizawa-Drott. "Misperceived social norms: Women working outside the home in saudi arabia." *American economic review* 110.10 (2020): 2997-3029.
- Bansak, Kirk, Jens Hainmueller, and Dominik Hangartner. "How economic, humanitarian, and religious concerns shape European attitudes toward asylum seekers." *Science* 354.6309 (2016): 217-222.

Week 7: Natural Experiments

March 1

- Thad Dunning, *Natural Experiments in the Social Sciences: A Design-Based Approach*. Cambridge University Press. Chapters 1 and 11.
- Thad Dunning, "Transparency, Replication, and Cumulative Learning: What experiments alone cannot achieve." *Annual Review of Political Science* 19 (2016): S1-S23.

Examples:

- Hainmueller, Jens, and Dominik Hangartner. "Who gets a Swiss passport? A natural experiment in immigrant discrimination." *American political science review* 107, no. 1 (2013): 159-187.
- Hangartner, Dominik, Elias Dinas, Moritz Marbach, Konstantinos Matakos, and Dimitrios Xefteris. "Does exposure to the refugee crisis make natives more hostile?." *American Political Science Review* 113, no. 2 (2019): 442-455.

Week 8: Difference-in-Differences Design

March 8

Examples:

- Fouka, Vasiliki. "Backlash: The unintended effects of language prohibition in US schools after World War I." *The Review of Economic Studies* 87, no. 1 (2020): 204-239.
- Abdelgadir, Aala, and Vasiliki Fouka. "Political Secularism and Muslim Integration in the West: Assessing the Effects of the French Headscarf Ban." *American Political Science Review* 114, no. 3 (2020): 707-723.
- Di Tella, Rafael, and Ernesto Schargrotsky. 2004. "Do Police Reduce Crime? Estimates Using the Allocation of Police Forces After a Terrorist Attack." *American Economic Review*, 94 (1): 115-133.

March 15: no class (spring break)

March 22: no class (spring break)

Week 9: Example of Mixed Methods Research

March 29

Examples:

- Mousa, Salma. "Contact, Conflict, and Social Cohesion." Doctoral dissertation, Stanford University, 2020.

Week 10: Flipped Classroom: Evaluating the U.S. Refugee Cosponsorship Program

April 5

Read up on IRIS' cosponsorship program in New Haven here:
<https://irisct.org/communitycosponsorship/>

Week 11: Design, Ethics, and Implementation of Field Experiments

April 12

- Elizabeth Levy Paluck, "The Promising Integration of Field Experimentation and Qualitative Methods." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 628: 59-71.
- Macartan Humphreys. 2015. "Reflections on the Ethics of Social Experimentation." *Journal of Globalization and Development*.

Examples:

- Yokum, D., Ravishankar, A., & Coppock, A. (2019). A randomized control trial evaluating the effects of police body-worn cameras. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 116(21), 10329-10332.
- Kalla, Joshua L., and David E. Broockman. "Durably reducing transphobia." *Science*.
- Choi, D., Poertner, M, and Sambanis, N (2021). "The Hijab Penalty: Feminist Backlash to Muslim Immigrants," *American Political Science Review*.

Week 12: Fieldwork, Interviews, Ethnography in Mixed Methods Research

April 19

- Elisabeth J. Wood, "Field Research" in *The Handbook of Comparative Politics*, edited by Carles Boix and Susan Stokes.
- Diana Kapiszewski, "Interviews, Focus Groups, and Oral Histories" in *Field Research in Political Science*, eds Kapiszewski and MacLean. Cambridge University Press, 190-233.
- Lee Ann Fujii, *Interviewing in Social Science Research: A Relational Approach*. Routledge, 2018. Chapter 1, skim 2 and 3.
- Kubik, Jan. 2009. "Ethnography of Politics," In *Political Ethnography*, Edward Schatz, ed. Chicago, University of Chicago Press: 25-52.
- John W. Creswell et al., "How interpretive qualitative research extends mixed methods research." *Research in the Schools* 13.1 (2006): 1-11.

Examples:

- Heba Gowayed, "The Unnecessary Nudge: Education and Poverty Policy in a Cairo Slum." *Sociological Forum*. Vol. 33. No. 2. 2018.
- Tariq Thachil, "Improving Surveys through Ethnography: Insights from India's urban periphery." *Studies in Comparative International Development* 53.3 (2018): 281-299.

Week 13: Analyzing and Writing Up Mixed Methods Research

April 26

- Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. 2011. *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. Ch.6-8 (171-272).
- Fujii, Lee Ann. *Interviewing in Social Science Research: A Relational Approach*. Routledge, 2018. Chapter 5.

