

Seminar in Qualitative Research Methods

POLS 5301 CRN: 18074

Fall 2019

The University of Texas at El Paso

Wednesdays 6:00-8:50
205 Benedict Hall

Dr. Charles Boehmer

Contact Information and Office Hours:

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Office Hours:

Mondays 1:30-2:30
Thursdays 1:30-2:30
and by appointment

Course Description

Seminar in Qualitative Research Methods (3-0) The study of qualitative research methods, including case studies and the comparable cases strategy. Issues and themes used to illustrate these methods will vary according to the instructor's interests:

1. Students will have working understanding of basic scientific epistemology
2. Students will comprehend challenges of comparative case studies, such as control and case selection
3. Students will learn how to apply qualitative methods in graduate level research projects
4. Students will be practice presentation skills

Student Evaluation

Student performance will be evaluated based on various assignments and class participation. The final grade will be based on the following components:

- George & Bennet Book Exam: 10%

- Journal Article Reviews: 20%
- Book Review and Analysis: 25%
- Research Project Paper: 25%
- Research Project Presentation: 10%
- Participation through attendance and Q/A: 10%

The George & Bennet Book Exam: The exam will be take-home and based on the George & Bennett book.

Journal Article Reviews: These assignments will serve to help provide practical learning of critique and review.

Book Review and Analysis: Provide a book review and analysis based on subject matter covered that includes qualitative analysis and some area of politics or policy. The book is student choice, but should be academic and approved by the instructor. Provide a summary of the book, a critique of the project/analysis, and discuss how it relates to subjects we covered in the class.

Research Paper/Report Project: This will be a research paper of the student's choosing that includes qualitative methods. This project may be related to a thesis, final project, or another course paper. Additional guidelines will be provided. The student will also present the project and then polish the paper and presentation in final paper form. Student performance and learning will be evaluated in the qualitative research project that includes either empirically based policy suggestion or comparative case studies.

Participation: This course requires attendance in keeping with the policies of the College of Graduate Studies. Moreover, students will find that attendance and question & answer sessions help guide student understanding through the leadings, which will show results in class assignments and exams.

Course Policies

Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty: The instructor follows the university policies on academic honesty concerning cheating and plagiarism. Such acts will not be tolerated. Plagiarizing is the use of other people's words, ideas (concepts, sentence or paragraph structure or phrasings), songs, or images without documentation or their consent. Anti-plagiarism software will be used in this course to evaluate papers. One can avoid plagiarism by being honest and using proper style guidelines concerning citations, footnotes, or endnotes for passages in the text that are borrowed or inspired by other person's works. See the paper guidelines for other instructions and tips.

Students with Disabilities: If you have a disability and need classroom accommodations, or otherwise seek additional information, please contact *The Center for Accommodations and Support Services* (CASS) at 747-5148, or by email to cass@utep.edu, or visit their office located in Union East, Room 106. CASS' staff are the only individuals who can authorize accommodations for students with disabilities. The

Student is responsible for presenting to the instructor any CASS accommodation letters and instructions before arrangements need to be made for exams, quizzes, or other needs.

Course Expectations, Policies, and Penalties: Graduate education requires a higher level of organization and commitment than undergraduate studies. I expect that you will attend every class session and turn in assignments on time. The penalty for late work will be twenty points a day. Students should prepare for class each week, and nonattendance without some valid excuse constitutes a large reduction in participation points. Additionally, all papers and assignments need to be professional, meaning word-processed with standard citation and writing styles (one can review the APSA or APA guidelines), including page numbers, the use of headings/subheadings, etc. Additionally, the instructor will evaluate requests for an incomplete or withdrawal (after deadline) on a case-by-case basis but will generally be unwilling to grant such without some valid reason relating to the disruption of studies by forces not readily controllable by the student. **The student must document emergencies such as deaths in the family or illness.**

Disabilities and Accommodations

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Required Readings

The following book, below, has been ordered through the UTEP bookstore and will serve as the base readings for the entire semester. We will also use journal articles available on JSTOR.org and other sources electronically through the library.

- George, Alexander L, & Andrew Bennett. 2005. *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. MIT Press. (G&B on Schedule)

Course Schedule of Readings and Assignments:

Week 1 (August 28): Introduction to class and each other

Week 2 (September 4): Political Science and Empirics

- Lecture Materials

Week 3 (September 11): Thinking about Case Studies and Theory

- G&B Chapters 1 & 2

Week 4 (September 18): Case Study Research Design

- G&B Chapters 3 & 4
- How do Natural Resources Influence Civil War? Evidence from Thirteen Cases” Michael L. Ross, 2004 *International Organization* Vol. 58 (1): 35-67.

Week 5 (September 25): Carrying-out Case Studies and Drawing Conclusions/Implications

- G&B Chapters 5 & 6
- Rational Deterrence Theory and Comparative Case Studies, Christopher H. Achen and Duncan Snidal, *World Politics*, Vol. 41, No. 2 (Jan., 1989), pp. 143-169

Week 6 (October 2): Independent Research

- No class held. Spend time this week on your research project literature review and searching for/reading the book for your book review project.

Week 7 (October 9): Philosophy of Science

- G&B Chapter 7

Week 8 (October 16): Within-Case Analysis and the Congruence Method

- G&B Chapters 8 & 9

Week 9 (October 26): Process-Tracing, Historical Explanation

- G&B Chapter 10
- 1914 Revisited: Allies, Offense, and Instability, Scott D. Sagan
Source: *International Security*, Vol. 11, No. 2 (Autumn, 1986), pp. 151-175

Week 10 (October 30): Integrating Methods and Policy Analysis

- G&B Chapters 11 & 12

Week 11 (November 6): G&B Book Exam

- Take Home exam will be due by the end of 11/6/19 calendar day

Week 12 (November 13): Reviewing Some Studies on Terrorism and Civil War

- How the Weak Win Wars: A Theory of Asymmetric Conflict, Ivan Arreguin-Toft
International Security, Vol. 26, No. 1 (Summer, 2001), pp. 93-128
- Market Civilization and Its Clash with Terror; Michael Mousseau, *International Security*, Vol. 27, No. 3 (Winter, 2002-2003), pp. 5-29
- The Strategies of Terrorism Andrew H. Kydd and Barbara F. Walter,
International Security, Vol. 31, No. 1 (Summer, 2006), pp. 49-80

Week 13 (November 20): Reviewing Policy-Relevant Studies, examples

- The Rise and Fall of the South African Bomb, Peter Liberman, *International Security*, Vol. 26, No. 2 (Autumn, 2001), pp. 45-86

- Space Weapons: Crossing the U.S. Rubicon, Bruce M. DeBlois, Richard L. Garwin, R. Scott Kemp, Jeremy C. Marwell, *International Security*, Vol. 29, No. 2 (Autumn, 2004), pp. 50-84
- National Missile Defense and the Future of U.S. Nuclear Weapons Policy, Charles L. Glaser and Steve Fetter, *International Security*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (Summer, 2001), pp. 40-92

Week 14 (November 27): Research Projects

- No class: Work on Research Projects and Presentation, consultation

Week 15 (December 4): Class Presentations

FINAL EXAM WEEK (Papers due Friday, December 13, 5:00pm)