International Relations 513
Social Scientific and Historical Research Methods
Spring 2007

When: Tu 5:30-8:20 pm
Where: SOS B40
Office Hours: Tu 2:00-3:30

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1. Course Description

This course offers an introduction to research methods. Emphasis is placed on the two central goals in social science analysis: the generation of descriptions and the identification of causal relationships. Various methodological options will be considered. However, an emphasis will be placed on the options that define the experimental, qualitative and quantitative traditions.

2. Requirements

i) Short papers (8 three page, double-spaced, papers; worth a total of 50% of the final grade). These papers should summarize the key issues in the assigned readings and highlight their significance and implications for research practices.

ii) Final assignment (10 page, double-spaced, paper, 30% of the final grade). As a final assignment, students will be asked to discuss the main insights they have gained about research methods.

iii) Class participation (20% of the final grade) on the basis of the required readings, each and every week.

3. Books to Purchase

Regarding the readings, articles, which make up much of the readings, will be made available for photocopying. In addition, the following required books can be purchased at the university bookstore.

Part I. Introduction

1. Doing Research (Jan. 9)


Part II. Description

3. Some Basic Ideas about Concepts and Measures (Jan. 23)
Shively, *The Craft of Political Research*, Ch. 3, on “The Importance of Dimensional Thinking.”

4. Indicators, Indices and Validation (Jan. 30)

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5. Sampling and Data Presentation (Feb. 6)


6. The HDI as an Example (Feb. 13)


UNDP, *Human Development Report 2006* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), read the technical note on the human development index (HDI) on pages 383-84 of the “Technical Note 1. Calculating the human development indices” and the section on the data sources used in the HDI on pages 276-79 of the part entitled “Table 1: about the human development index.” Finally see the data on the HDI on pages 283-86.

Part III. Causation and Causal Models

7. On Causality (Feb. 20)


8. Varieties of Causal Models (Feb. 27)


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Part IV. Causal Theorizing and Assessment

9. The Experimental Tradition (March 6)


10. The Quantitative Tradition I (March 20)


11. The Quantitative Tradition II (March 27)


12. **The Qualitative Tradition I** (April 3)


13. **The Qualitative Tradition II** (April 10)


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**Part V. Conclusion**

14. **Debating Research Methods** (April 17)


15. Further Perspectives on Research Methods (April 24)


