

POLA 302 01: Methods: Social Movements
Saint Louis University
Monday / Wednesday 1:10-2:25
Spring 2010

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The purpose of this class is to enable students to think more critically about how (or whether) they know the things they think they know, and to use a variety of social science techniques to put what they know on a more solid foundation. In addition, this course will provide students with the necessary skills to conceive a research project, write a research proposal, and evaluate the research of other scholars.

To explore methods used in political science, this course will focus on the study of contentious politics, including social movements and other forms of protest. Contentious politics can be studied with a variety of methods, in any area of the world, and from the perspective of a variety of political science sub-fields. We will also focus particularly on comparison as a tool to advance understanding of political phenomenon.

Course objectives

Over the course of the semester, you should achieve the following objectives, expressed in terms of the Five Dimensions of Learning at Saint Louis University:

Scholarship and knowledge

- Become familiar with major approaches to the study of contentious politics
- Appreciate the strengths and weaknesses of a variety of research methods commonly used in political science

Intellectual inquiry and communication

- Think more critically about what you know and how you know it.
- Improve your ability to conceive and conduct independent research projects.
- Understand the role of theory in political science research.
- Write in a style appropriate for the discipline of political science.

Community building

- Understand major methodological debates within the discipline of political science.
- Improve your ability to evaluate and critique constructively the research of others.

Leadership and service

- Be better able to assess evidence relating to policy proposals.

Spirituality and values

- Appreciate how personal beliefs and values influence interpretations of the world.
- Be sensitive to ethnical issues in research design, including issues relating to the treatment of humans in research.
- Appreciate the importance of honesty in research.

Writing center: I encourage you to take advantage of the Writing Center's services. The Writing Center provides feedback that benefits writers at all skill levels. The Center helps with writing projects, multimedia projects, and oral presentations. They offer one-on-one consultations that address everything from brainstorming and developing ideas to crafting strong sentences and documenting sources. For more information, call 977-2930 or visit www.slu.edu/x13305.xlm

My office hours: Monday and Wednesday 11-12, Monday 2:30-3:30, and by appointment.
Also feel free to drop by.

Students are expected to be honest in their academic work. The University reserves the right to penalize any student whose academic conduct at any time is, in its judgment, detrimental to the University. Such conduct shall include cases of plagiarism, collusion, cheating, giving or receiving or offering or soliciting information in examinations, or the use of previously prepared material in examinations or quizzes. Violations should be reported to me and will be investigated and adjudicated according to the Policy on Academic Honesty of the College of Arts & Sciences. If the charges are found to be true, the student may be liable for academic or disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion from the University. See <http://www.slu.edu/x12657.xml>.

Students with disabilities must make arrangements with the Disabilities Coordinator, 977-8885, DuBourg 36.

Required books

- John W. Creswell. 2003. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Method Approaches*. Second Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Bert Klandermans and Suzanne Staggenborg, eds. 2002. *Methods of Social Movement Research*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- David S. Meyer. 2007. *The Politics of Protest: Social Movements in America*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- W. Phillips Shively. 2009. *The Craft of Political Research*. Seventh Edition. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Kate Turabian. 2007. *A Manual for Writers*. Seventh Edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

There are also a few articles in the assigned readings. All articles are available on-line, in full-text form, from a variety of the databases available through Pius library (mostly J-Stor and Academic Premier). Students should print out all articles and bring them to class.

Course requirements

- Complete all reading assignments by the time of the class for which they are listed.
- Attendance and class participation, including a variety of short assignments, quizzes, group work, and in-class projects—35 percent
Class participation is extremely important in this class since we will be engaging in a variety of group projects and will practice some research approaches in class, especially in the second half of the semester.
- Written work
This class stresses *quality over quantity* in written assignments. You will not have that many pages to write, but you should expect to edit and re-write the ones you have.
 - Midterm essay, 4-5 pages, approximately 15 percent of your course grade
 - Research design, around 10 pages, on a topic of your own development, within guidelines set by me—30 percent

NOTE: Drafts of both of these assignments will be due prior to these dates. There is more information about the assignments at the end of the syllabus, and we will discuss them extensively in class.

- Final exam—20 percent

Missed quizzes and test must be excused by me *before* they are given. Otherwise, the student will receive a grade of 0 for the missing work. Grades of 0 will also be given for missing papers. The zeros will be averaged into the final course grade. Late essays may be subject to penalties.

Contending approaches to contentious politics

Before you can develop a good research project, you need to be familiar with work that has already been done and the main theoretical approaches used by other researchers. In this section of the class, we examine work on protest, social movements, and contentious politics. From the very beginning, you should be thinking about what you want to work on in your own research design.

January 11	<i>Introduction</i>
January 13	David Meyer, <i>The Politics of Protest: Social Movements in America</i> , chapters 1 and 2, "America and Political Protest," and "Who Protests?," pp. 7-43.
January 18	Martin Luther King Day—no class
January 20	W. Phillips Shively, <i>The Craft of Political Research</i> , "Doing Research" and "Political Theories and Research Topics," pp. 1-31. Kate Turabian, <i>A Manual for Writers</i> , ch. 1, "What is Research and How Researchers Think about it," pp. 5-11.
January 25	Herbert P. Kitschelt "Political Opportunity Structures and Political Protest: Anti-Nuclear Movements in Four Democracies," <i>British Journal of Political Science</i> 16, no. 1 (January 1986): 57-85 (full text on-line). Rabab El-Mahdi, "Enough! Egypt's Quest for Democracy," <i>Comparative Political Studies</i> 42, no. 8 (August 2009): 1011-1039 (full text on-line).
January 27	Meyer, chs. 3 and 4, "Becoming an Activist," and "Individuals, Movements, Organizations, and Coalition," pp. 44-79.
February 1	Meyer, chs. 5 and 6, "The Strategy and Tactics of Social Protest," and "Civil Disobedience," pp. 80-122.
February 3	Francesca Poletta, "It Was Like a Fever...' Narrative and Identity in Social Protest," <i>Social Problems</i> 45, no. 2 (May 1998): 137-159 (full text on-line). Robert D. Benford and David A. Snow, "Framing Processes and Social Movements: An Overview and Assessment," <i>Annual Review of Sociology</i> 26 (2000): 611-639 (full text on-line).
February 8	Meyer, parts of chs 7 and 8, "The State and Protests" and "When Everyone Protests," and all of ch. 9, "The Policy Connection," pp. 123-132, 154-180. Turabian, ch. 2, "Moving from a Topic to a Question to a Working Hypothesis," pp. 12-23.
	DUE: A COUPLE SENTENCES ON WHAT YOU ARE THINKING ABOUT FOR YOUR RESEARCH DESIGN.
February 10	Anthony Oberschall, "Social Movements and the Transition to Democracy," <i>Democratization</i> 7, no. 3 (Autumn 2000): 25-45 (full text on-line). Mark Beissinger, "Structure and Example in Modular Political Phenomena: the Diffusion of Bulldozer/Rose/ Orange/Tulip Revolutions," <i>Perspectives on Politics</i> 5, no. 2 (June 2007): 259-276 (full text on-line).

QUIZ

Research design: good questions, well-grounded

In this part of the class, we will work on moving from a “topic” for a project to a well-focused question, grounded in existing research and relevant theory. By the end of this section, you should have a hypothesis or claim that you want to defend, and you will be able to write a literature review and develop a theoretical framework for your project.

- February 15 John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Method Approaches*, “A Framework for Design” and “Review of the Literature,” pp. 1-47.
 Bert Klandermans, Suzanne Staggenborg, and Sidney Tarrow, “Conclusion: Extending Social Movement Research,” in Bert Klandermans and Suzanne Staggenborg, eds., *Methods of Social Movement Research*, pp. 334-339.

DUE: ONE PAGE SUMMARY OF RESEARCH PROJECT.
 See the description at the end of the syllabus.

- February 17 Creswell, “Research Questions and Hypotheses,” “The Use of Theory,” and “Definitions, Limitations, and Significance,” pp. 105-150.

- February 22 Kathleen Collins, “Ideas, Networks, and Islamist Movements: Evidence from Central Asia and the Caucasus,” *World Politics* 60 (October 2007): 64-96 (full text on-line).
 Turabian, chs. 3 and 4, “Finding Useful Sources,” and “Engaging Sources,” pp. 24-47.

BRING to class copies of the Collins article, as well as copies of the Oberschall and Beissinger articles. We will look carefully at literature reviews and theoretical frameworks in these articles.

DUE: Five notecards that each summarize an article or book you have used in developing your project.

- February 24 Shively, “Importance of Dimensional Thinking” and “Problems of Measurement: Accuracy,” pp. 32-56.
 Turabian, ch. 5, “Planning your argument,” pp. 48-61

- March 1 Shively, “Causal Thinking and Design of Research” and “Selection of Observations for Study,” pp. 74-110.
 Creswell, “Components of an Experimental Method Plan,” *skim* pp. 162-175.

BRING DRAFTS OF YOUR ESSAY TO CLASS TODAY

- March 3 ESSAY ONE DUE
 (Points 1-4 of the Research Design. See additional information at the end of the syllabus.)

- March 8-10 SPRING BREAK—NO CLASSES

Completing the research design

- April 14 Creswell, "Quantitative Methods: Surveys," pp. 153-162.
 Shively, "Introduction to Statistics: Measuring Relationships for Interval Data," pp. 111-131.
 Turabian, ch. 13, "Presenting Research in Alternative Forums," pp. 122-128.
- April 19 ORAL PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH PROPOSALS
- Turabian, chs. 9 and 10, "Revising your draft," and "Writing your final conclusion and introduction," pp. 98-119.
- April 21 ORAL PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH PROPOSALS
- Shively, "Problems of Measurement: Precision," pp. 57-73.
 Shively, "Introduction to Statistics: Further Topics on Measurement of Relationships," pp. 132-147.
- April 26 ORAL PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH PROPOSALS
- Shively, "Introduction to Statistics: Inference or How to Gamble on Your Research," and "Where do Theories Come From?," pp. 148-169.
- April 28 Doug McAdam and Yang Su, "The War at Home: Antiwar Protests and Congressional Voting, 1965-1973," *American Sociological Review* 76, no. 5 (October 2002): 696-721 (full text on-line).
 Be sure to print out this article. Bring it to class today and also to the final exam. Part of the final will use this article.
- May 3 RESEARCH DESIGN DUE
- May 10 FINAL EXAM, 12-1:50

THE RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design posits a question, suggests a possible answer, and describes how you will go about showing that your answer is correct.

The research you propose must be at least partly original and it must relate in some way to contentious politics. That is to say, while you may offer a new synthesis of existing knowledge, it will not be sufficient if all you offer is a summary of what is already known. On the other hand, your design must include a summary of what is known, so to show that what you are doing is new. The summary of existing knowledge on your topic—the literature review—should be well-referenced, either with citations in the text (Skocpol 1979) or with footnotes.

Your research design must contain the following elements. They do not have to be in exactly this order, but this is an order that tends to work.

You should notice that completed research also usually contains all these elements, with the addition of a presentation of the data, analysis, or interpretation that supports the hypothesis or claim. In the research articles you read (especially journal articles), pay attention to where these elements appear in the articles and how the author handles the various tasks.

1. You need to raise a question, explain why that question is interesting, and indicate how it is related to other recognizable questions in the field of political science and the study of protest. The idea is to get the reader interested even if that means explaining what is interesting about your question.
2. You need to have a hypothesis or a claim, which must be clearly states and recognizable as what you hope to show. If you have more than one hypothesis or claim, but they should be closely related to each other. Your hypothesis or claim is your answer to your question.
3. You need a literature review that summarizes other research that attempts to answer the question you have posed. In this literature review, you also need to explain why the answers already provided are inadequate.

If you cannot locate research that answers the question you pose, explain that, but be sure to give due weight to work answering similar questions or work which may appear to overlap with your own.

The function of this part of your paper is largely self-defense. You need to prove to your reader that what you are doing has not already been done. You have to show you've done your homework. A common failing of research designs is that they don't show enough work in this section. The literature review is usually the most time-consuming part of a research project.

4. You need to establish a theoretical framework. This may be clearly different from the "previous research" part of your literature review or it may not. You may take theoretical frameworks in their entirety from previous authors, combine insights of various authors, or add your own ideas. In any case, you need to be careful in explaining where ideas which are not your own come from. Even if you have independently come up with an idea that someone had before you, you must cite the previous author as a source.

By the time you finish sections 3 and 4, it should be clear where your claim came from, how your research fits in with existing research, and why your research is new, interesting, and important.

5. Explain how you will determine whether your hypothesis is correct or your claim is persuasive. What kind of information will you need to collect? How will you collect it? Where will you find it? Will you

quantify your variables? If so, how? If not, how will you define them? Be as precise as you can. It should be absolutely clear to your readers what you are doing to do, and how you are going to go about it.

In a research design, you do not have to collect and analyze the data; however, collecting some data can help you explain your project.

6. Justify your way of demonstrating that your hypothesis or claim is correct as adequate. Defend your choice of cases, approach, data, definitions, and measures.
7. Discuss the contribution your research. Who will be interested and why?
8. You need to have proper references and a bibliography. Refer to Turabian for correct form. Your bibliography should include sources you will use to complete the project, even if you haven't looked at them much yet. Your bibliography (including sources you have not read yet) should be at least three pages long.

The design should be a ten to fifteen page narrative, plus an extensive bibliography.

A variety of deadlines:

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|-------------|--|
| February 8 | Hand in a couple sentences on what you are thinking about for your research design. |
| February 15 | One page summary of research project due
This should address points one and two.

I encourage you to come see me before and/or after this is due, if you have any questions about your topic. For that matter, some see me early and often throughout this project. |
| February 22 | Hand in five 4x6 notecards that each summarize an article or book you have used in developing your project. |
| March 1 | Drafts of Essay 1 due in class |
| March 3 | Essay 1 due
This should address points one through four, although point three may be incomplete.
At this point, your bibliography should be around a page long. |
| March 15-19 | Individual meetings with me to discuss progress and plans |
| March 22-29 | Short presentations of research designs in class.
You should be developing points 5 and 6. |
| April 7 | Draft of Research Design.
If you do not want to work on your design over Easter Break, I encourage you to hand it in earlier.

Bring a copy of your draft research design to class. |
| April 19-26 | Presentations of research designs in class |
| May 3 | Research design due |