Course Description

This course is designed to provide an overview of different research methods in political science. At the successful completion of the course, students will be well-prepared to conduct their own research and to critically evaluate articles and books in the scholarly literature. To these ends, we will read pieces that introduce particular methods as well as examples of academic research that employ these methods.

We will read several chapters from the following books (abbreviation in brackets):


The reading packet which includes chapters from KW, MRWB, KKV and also the rest of the readings will be available for purchase at Gunel Copy.

Grading Policy and Requirements

Grades will be based on attendance and participation (10%), four homeworks (20%), a midterm exam (20%), a final exam (30%), and a final project (20%). The final project is a research proposal (8-10 pages) consisting of a research question, a brief literature review, a theory, hypotheses derived from the theory, the ideal data to test these hypotheses, and a discussion of causality and inferential issues involved.

The dates of the home works, the midterm and the final exam will be announced later depending on our pace during the semester.
There will be no make-up exams, unless a student cannot attend the exam on the original date due to a medical or a family emergency. A doctor's note covering the original exam period will be required to schedule a make-up exam.

**Cheating and Plagiarism**

Cheating and plagiarism during the midterm and the final exam will not be tolerated. Students should work on their exams independently. The Department of Political Science and International Relations at Bogazici University has the following rules and regulations regarding academic honesty.

1. Copying work from others or giving and receiving answers/information during exams either in written or oral form constitutes cheating.

2. Submitting take-home exams and papers of others as your own, using sentences or paragraphs from another author without the proper acknowledgement of the original author, insufficient acknowledgement of the consulted works in the bibliography, all constitute plagiarism. For further guidelines, you can consult [http://www.buowl.boun.edu.tr/students/favoidingplagiarism.htm](http://www.buowl.boun.edu.tr/students/favoidingplagiarism.htm)

3. Plagiarism and cheating are serious offenses and will result in:
   a) an automatic F for the assignment or the exam
   b) an oral explanation before the Departmental Ethics Committee
   c) losing the opportunity to request and receive any references from the entire faculty
   d) losing the opportunity to apply in exchange programs
   e) losing the prospects of becoming a student assistant or a graduate assistant in the department

The students may further be sent to the University Ethics committee or be subject to disciplinary action.

**SCHEDULE**

**Week 1a: February 6 - Introduction and Course Logistics**

**PART I: Method of Inquiry**

**Week 1b: February 7 - Scientific Study of Politics and the Research Process**

What is scientific about political science? What are the key components of research in political science?

- KW Chapter 1
- MRWB Chapter 1
- KKV. Chapter 1

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Week 2: February 13 & February 14 - Theory Building
What is a good theory? What are the strategies for constructing one?

- KW Chapter 2.
- MRWB Chapter 2.
- KKV. pp. 99-114.

Week 3: February 20 & February 21 - Game Theory
What is strategic interaction? How can we theorize about it? Preferences, payoffs, information.


Week 4: February 27 & February 28 - Hypothesis Testing, Counterfactuals and Causal Inference
What is a counterfactual? What purpose do they serve in research?

- KW Chapter 3 and 4.
- KKV. pp. 75-98.

PART II: Quantitative Methods

Week 5: March 6 & March 7 - Conceptualization, Operationalization, Measurement and Descriptive Statistics
What is the difference between a concept and a measure? When is a measure valid and reliable? Major data sources in political science

- KW Chapter 5 and 6.
- KKV. Chapter 2.
Week 6: March 13 & March 14 - Statistical Inference, Bivariate and Multiple Regression Models

How do we make inferences about relationships between variables?

- KW Chapters 7,9,10.

Week 7: March 20 & March 21 - Examples of Multiple Regression Models


Week 8: March 27 & March 28 - Experimental Political Science

How can experiments be applied to political science? Laboratory experiments, survey experiments, field experiments.

- Morton, Rebecca and Kenneth Williams. 2010. From Nature to the Lab: The Methodology of Experimental Science and the Study of Causality. Ch. 2


Week 9: April 3 & April 4 - Natural Experiments

How do natural experiments differ from other types of experiments?


PART III: Qualitative Methods

Week 10: April 10 & April 11 - Field Research

What are the key features of field research? How do they contribute to inference?


Week 11: April 17 & April 18

• Spring Break: No classes

Week 12: April 24 & April 25 - Interviews

How should you structure an interview to make it most effective?

• MRWB Ch. 21


Week 13: May 1 & May 2 - Case Study and Selection Bias

Why are case studies useful? What are their limitations?


PART IV: Putting It All Together

Week 14: May 8 & May 9 - Writing a Research Proposal

What are the main components of a research proposal? What are the strategies for writing an effective proposal?