UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
FALL 2024

POL 352HF
INTRODUCTION TO QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS

WEDNESDAYS 11 am – 1 pm EST

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Office hours: Wednesdays 9:30 am-10:45 am; 1:15-2:00 pm EST; or by appointment
Office: Sidney Smith Hall Room 3061
Telephone: 416-978-2857
Course website: Quercus

Tutorials: Wednesdays 1-2 pm; Wednesdays 3-4 pm – see scheduled weeks under "evaluation"

COURSE OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of the course is to inspire students to learn about and conduct political science research using qualitative methods. The course introduces students to the varied way researchers pursue understanding and explanation in the field of political science from a variety of methodological traditions (qualitative and quantitative). Students examine what qualitative social science research entails and how and why qualitative research is conducted. They develop a sense of what comprises good quality qualitative research and how to evaluate it. The course then examines the range of qualitative research methods used in political science (e.g. archival methods, political ethnography, interviews), and gives students some hands-on experience using qualitative research methods. Throughout the course, we examine some core ideas related to why we do what we do in studying political science: how methodologies align (or not) with research goals, what assumptions we bring to research based on what we know about the world, how to conduct research ethically, and how we can become aware of our own position as researchers. The hope is that students will build on this foundation as they pursue other courses in political science and their own independent research.

Note: POL352H1 cannot be used as a substitute for POL 222H1 for POL major/specialist program or POL 232H1 for the POL specialist program. Please also note that ENV 223H, GGR 271H, POL 252H1, and SOC 204H are exclusions.

By the end of this course students will:
- Gain a broader and deeper understanding of the goals of qualitative research in political science
- Develop knowledge of a range of qualitative research methods commonly used in political science

- Critically analyze and evaluate a variety of qualitative research methods
- Have a stronger sense of the ethical challenges in conducting qualitative research
- Reflect on and apply some qualitative research techniques (e.g. interviews, participant observation)

This course is designed to be an introduction to the topic of qualitative research in Political Science. It cannot cover everything related to these topics – we can merely scratch the surface on these issues. I hope students are inspired to go beyond the course material and continue their learning well beyond this 12-week introductory course. I am happy to suggest books and articles if you are interested.

COMMUNICATION

Quercus will be used for sharing other important information and announcements. It is your responsibility to log on to Quercus regularly and obtain relevant information for the course. I suggest changing your Quercus settings to receive emails immediately of any announcements and updates.

I am available for weekly office hours as specified above or "as needed" by appointment – just email me at linda.white@utoronto.ca and we can set up a mutually convenient time. I check my email regularly during working hours (weekdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. EST) and I will try my best to respond within 24 hours. Response times will be longer on evenings and weekends.

Note that other email addresses (e.g. gmail) can end up in email spam. It is thus important for all students to use a valid UTOR email address for communication.

For anything other than straightforward questions which can be answered in a sentence or two via email, I encourage students to speak with me about any of the material covered in the course and the assignments. If the response requires more than one sentence, email is not the appropriate medium for discussion of course materials.

COURSE FORMAT AND DELIVERY MODE

The course will be delivered in person ONLY. Lectures and tutorials will not be recorded. In-person classes begin at 10 past the hour and end on the hour. If we experience a significant disruption in-person learning and we need to switch to some form of hybrid or remote learning, we will do so. In that instance, the course, including your participation, will be recorded on video and will be available to students in the course for viewing remotely and after each session.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

The required readings provide the foundation for the overall learning in the course and specifically for the assignments. They comprise a mix of academic journal articles and book

chapters and a few shorter pieces. All the readings and other relevant course information are available on Quercus or as otherwise indicated. Students should complete all the required readings *before* class each week and definitely before completing the assignments as they will facilitate your learning.

Course materials belong to your instructor, the University, and/or other source depending on the specific facts of each situation and are protected by copyright. In this course, you are permitted to download materials from Quercus for your own academic use, but you should not copy, share, or use them for any other purpose without the explicit permission of the instructor.

CLASS AND TUTORIAL ATTENDANCE

Students are expected to attend every lecture and scheduled tutorial.

Attendance in lectures will be taken via Quercus ("Quizzes function") so as to keep track of students' participation and learning in the course. Attendance in lectures is worth 10% of your final grade, allocated based two measures: frequency of attendance; active participation in class. That is, I encourage you to participate regularly in class, even if there are circumstances that prevent you from attending a particular class.

I work hard to learn students' names. Please let me know if the name on the official course registration list does not for any reason match the name by which you would like to be addressed. If you have pronouns by which you would like to be addressed, please let me know.

Please note that I am committed to creating and fostering a positive learning environment based on open communication, mutual respect, and inclusion. In this course, each voice in the classroom has something of value to contribute. I thus encourage in all forms of course communication, both within and outside the classroom, to respect the different experiences, beliefs and values expressed by fellow students, faculty, and the graduate teaching assistant.

I also encourage students to observe some basic rules of etiquette in the classroom, such as arriving on time, avoiding the use of electronic devices other than for note taking, and so on.

PLEASE NOTE:

The material covered in BOTH the lectures and the tutorials are designed to help you with the course assignments. As indicated in the assignment descriptions below, material will be covered in tutorials that will NOT be covered in lectures. **Tutorials are thus well worth attending.** Attendance and participation in tutorials are worth 20% of your final grade.

Students who are absent for any reason in the lectures or tutorials (e.g., COVID, cold, flu and other illness or injury, family situation) and who require consideration for missed academic work should **report their absence through the online absence declaration**. The declaration is available to students through ACORN under the Profile and Settings menu. Students may use the ACORN Absence Declaration Tool to declare an absence once per academic term (e.g., the fall

term) for a maximum period of seven (7) consecutive calendar days. The seven-day declaration period can be retroactive for up to six (6) days in the past, or proactive, up to six (6) days in the future. For more information, please see:

https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/academics/student-absences

Students should also advise their instructor and/or TA of their absence. Instructors and Tas will not be automatically alerted when a student declares an absence. It is a student's responsibility to let instructors know that they have used the Absence Declaration so that you can discuss any needed consideration, where appropriate.

Please note that these other supporting documents are also acceptable:

2. A Verification of Student Illness or Injury (VOI) form. The VOI indicates the impact and severity of the illness, while protecting your privacy about the details of the nature of the illness. If you cannot submit a VOI due to limits on terms of use, you can submit a different form (like a letter from a doctor), as long as it is an original document, and it contains the same information as the VOI (including dates, academic impact, practitioner's signature, phone and registration number). For more information on the VOI, please see http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca. For information on Absence Declaration Tool for A&S students, please see https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/absence. For more severe and extended absence requests, you should register with Accessibility Services as soon as possible.

3. A College Registrar's letter
4. Letter of academic accommodation from Accessibility Services; see also the section on university resources for more information.

EVALUATION

The final course grade reflects your level of demonstrated achievement of the course learning objectives listed above. Evaluations provide feedback on your progress towards the final course grade. **Turnitin *will be used in this course*** and can be used via Quercus. You do not need to sign in to Turnitin separately.

Your final grade will be determined by your performance in these areas:

Component	Weight/Value	Due Date
Lecture engagement – ALL STUDENTS	10%	Each lecture
Tutorial attendance and participation – ALL STUDENTS	20%	Tutorials will be held on Week 3 (Sept 18), Week 4 (Sept 25), Week 5 (Oct 2), Week 8 (Oct 23), and Week 11 (Nov 20).
WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS		**COMPLETE SEVEN of NINE of the following assignments:**

Assignment 1: Positionality/reflexivity statement	10%	24 September 11:59 pm
Assignment 2: Concept analysis assignment	10%	1 October 11:59 pm
Assignment 3: Designing qualitative research to uncover causality assignment	10%	8 October 11:59 pm
Assignment 4: Ethnography exercise and reflection	10%	15 October 11:59 pm
Assignment 5: Archive tour and reflection	10%	22 October 11:59 pm
Assignment 6: Mock ethics submission	10%	5 November 11:59 pm
Assignment 7: Interview exercise and reflection	10%	12 November 11:59 pm
Assignment 8: Building rapport and analyzing results reflection	10%	19 November 11:59 pm
Assignment 9: Content analysis assignment	10%	26 November 11:59 pm
BONUS ASSIGNMENT: Communicating your research to the world assignment		2 December 11:59 pm

There are no exams in this course. Instead, numerous **assignments** are designed to give you practice applying the tools examined in class each week.

Details regarding each exercise are provided below, including tasks, word length, and due dates.

Students are expected to complete SEVEN of the NINE assignments listed. **Note that in order to complete assignments 7 and 8, you must complete assignment 6.**

The bonus assignment is not mandatory but can be completed for credit at the end of the course to substitute for the lowest of your **graded** assignments (except, of course, the lecture and tutorial attendance and participation). In other words, it can be used to improve your grade BUT NOT make up for missed work; it cannot replace a missed assignment.

GENERAL RULES FOR ASSIGNMENTS

Submissions:
The writing assignments are designed to integrate your learning while also demonstrating your knowledge of the course material. Each assignment submission, therefore, must be supported with evidence drawn directly from ALL of the week's required course material. You must **para-**

phrase and directly quote the readings in meaningful ways that support your analysis/reflections, using a consistent and accurate citation referencing system (see more citation information below).

Grading criteria:

The following criteria will be used to assess each assignment:

• Clear definitions – Does the assignment clearly define and accurately utilize terms found in the readings and discussed in class?

• Does the assignment connect course readings to the specific assignment exercise in relevant and thoughtful ways?

• Evidence base - Is there good marshalling of evidence from the requisite number of sources including articles, chapters, and relevant data?

• Argumentation/analysis - Is the analysis reasonable, coherent, and convincing and does it engage with the literature in adequate depth and detail?

• Thesis – is there a clear statement of the goal of the assignment and summary of the argument in the first sentence/paragraph with the subsequent material built logically around that thesis?

• Organization and quality of writing – is the assignment well-organized with good flow from one idea to the next?

All assignments will be submitted directly through Quercus. All written work should be submitted in Word format (permitted extensions .doc, .docx, .rtf).

Citations:
All written work and presentations must be properly referenced with clear source citations. An assignment completely devoid of accurate and appropriate citations will be penalized. If you are quoting directly from a source, indicate as such with quotation marks; otherwise, be sure to paraphrase appropriately and **always** provide sources for your information even when paraphrasing. That is, any information that is **not common knowledge or your own argument** MUST be cited. When citing an author's overall argument, an author name and publication year are sufficient. However, any citations of specific information and specific arguments MUST include page references to where the information can be found in the book or article. Your reader should be able to easily locate the information you provide in your text.

Please use a social science in-text citation system (Author, year of publication, page number) and provide a works cited page at the end of the assignment. Please do not use footnote/endnote style for source citations.

Students are strongly advised to keep rough and draft work and hard copies of their assignments. These should be kept until the marked assignments have been returned. All graded assignments are to be kept by students until the grades have been posted on ACORN.

Late Penalties:
I expect students to turn in assignments on time and to present on the dates scheduled. No exceptions are made except in the case of an appropriately documented emergency.

If you do miss an assignment deadline, your grade for this component will be reduced by 1 **per cent per day**, including weekends. Late assignments will not be accepted after 7 days.

Students should be aware of the new divisional policy on academic consideration for non-disability related requests for accommodation. Please review that information here: https://registrar.utoronto.ca/policies-and-guidelines/absence-declaration/.

Please see above under "class and tutorial attendance" regarding non-disability related accommodation requests.

If such an accommodation request is made along with one of the four acceptable forms of supporting documentation (Absence declaration via ACORN; U of T Verification of Illness or Injury Form; College Registrar's letter; Letter of Academic Accommodation from Accessibility Services), a resolution will be determined by the instructor. This may take the form of any alternate deliverable, deadline extension, re-weighted course grade calculation, make-up exam, or another solution deemed appropriate by the instructor. If an accommodation request is not made along with an absence declaration, the missed or late deliverable will be subject to an academic penalty. The extent of the penalty is at the discretion of the instructor.

Grade Appeals:
The teaching assistant and I are happy to discuss evaluation criteria on any assignment as well as strategies for improvement. If you judge a received grade to be inaccurate (with respect to the grading guidelines outlined by the Faculty of Arts and Science and the assignment instructions given) and would like your assignment to be re-graded, you may appeal the assigned grade. The process by which to appeal the grade is to submit in writing (via email within one week of receiving the graded assignment to the person who graded the assignment) a paragraph explaining the basis of the appeal, as well as the original graded assignment. Please note decisions on appeals are ultimately at the instructor's discretion. Once an appeal is submitted, the entire assignment (and not specific questions/parts) will be examined. Please note that your grade may go down, go up or remain unchanged after this process.

Academic Integrity:
Academic integrity is essential to the pursuit of learning and scholarship in the university. The university treats cases of cheating and plagiarism very seriously. Assignments and all other deliverables must be original work, giving credit to the work of others where appropriate. This applies to individual and group deliverables. You are encouraged to consult the following websites to ensure that you follow the appropriate rules. Ignorance of these rules is not a defense in cases of violations, which can result in very serious academic sanctions. Please visit the University of Toronto Academic Integrity and the UofT Writing Centre Resources websites for further detail and help on the proper use of citations.

Plagiarism and other academic offences: "are in direct opposition to the University's mission to foster internationally significant research and excellent programs—a mission that can be realized only if members of the University appropriately acknowledge sources of information and ideas, present independent work on assignments and examinations, and complete and submit group projects in accordance with the standards of the discipline being studied."

Examples of academic offences include (but are not limited to):

- Representing someone else's work or words as your own
- Falsifying documents such as a medical note
- Purchasing an essay or other assignment
- Submitting someone else's work – in whole or in part - as your own
- Submitting the same assignment in more than one course (without permission)
- Making up sources or facts for an essay or report.

Plagiarism – presenting others' thoughts, ideas, or other material without properly acknowledging the source - is a serious academic office and will be dealt with accordingly.

If you are unclear about what constitutes plagiarism or how to properly acknowledge sources, please visit the University of Toronto Academic Integrity and the UofT Writing Centre Resources websites for further detail and help on the proper use of citations.

If you have questions on these matters, please ask me or the teaching assistant in the course. It is the responsibility of each student to be able to demonstrate the originality of their work.

Turnitin:
Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to the University's plagiarism detection tool for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the tool's reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of this tool are described on the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation web site (https://uoft.me/pdt-faq).

Students may opt out of submitting through Turnitin. If you choose to do so, you must inform me of your intention to do so. You must also provide electronic copies of all rough notes (typed and/or handwritten), library/Google searches conducted in the course of your research, and day/time stamped electronic versions of previous saved versions of your assignment with track changes enabled.

Please note that **Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools** such as ChatGPT are proliferating. There are now hundreds of these systems that are readily available that can be used for a variety of purposes including language translation, article summarization, and thematic analysis.

Students may choose to use generative artificial tools as they work through course assignments. BUT use must be documented in an appendix for each assignment. The documentation should

include what tool(s) were used, how they were used (e.g. what prompts were used to generate content), and how the results from the AI were incorporated into the submitted work. Many organizations that publish standard citation formats are now providing information on citing generative AI (e.g., MLA: https://style.mla.org/citing-generative-ai/).

Given that the written assignments in this course are designed to encourage **your own analysis and reflections**, while it may be tempting to use generative AI to assist you when completing your assignments, this will simply inhibit your learning. **If the work you submit is essentially the output of generative AI, then the work will not be accepted for credit**.

Please note as well the university's statement on policies and guidelines re: Generative AI tools: "Generative AI often produce "hallucinations" meaning that if students use these tools, their assessments may contain incorrect facts or citations. This may fall under the academic offence of *concoction*, meaning the inclusion of false data, fact, or references in an assignment" (https://q.utoronto.ca/courses/242937/pages/generative-artificial-intelligence-policies-and-resources#policies).

Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters
Please read the University's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters. It applies to all your academic activities and courses. The Code prohibits all forms of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and the use of unauthorized aids. Violating the Code may lead to penalties up to and including suspension or expulsion from the University. You are expected to know the Code and inform yourself of acceptable academic practices – ignorance of the Code or the acceptable academic practices is not a valid defense if you are accused of a violation.

UNIVERSITY RESOURCES

Occasionally students will need to apply for an academic accommodation due to disability, illness, religious observance, or personal emergency.

Academic accommodations are provided when you experience disability-related barriers that prohibit demonstration of your knowledge and skills. Accommodations are provided to level the playing field upon which you can establish your success. You are encouraged to inform yourself about options in this regard at the website for Accessibility Services. All requests for an academic accommodation are handled by the University of Toronto's Accessibility Services, not the instructor. For disability-related accommodations, Accessibility Services staff will determine suitable accommodations on a case-by-case basis based on recommendation from health providers and with student input.

Mental Health and Wellness
Feeling distressed? Are you in crisis? There's help. You can access **U of T Telus Health Student Support** (formerly U of T My SSP) 24/7 by calling **1-844-451-9700**. Outside of North America, call **001-416-380-6578**. See more information at https://mentalhealth.utoronto.ca/telus-health-student-support/.

Are you in immediate danger? For Personal Safety – Call 911, then Campus Community Police*
UTSG Police: 416-978-2222 | U of T Mississauga Police: 905-569-4333 | U of T Scarborough
Police 416-978-2222 |
Centre for International Experience Safety Abroad 416-946-3929.
*24/7/365; Campus Community Police can direct your call to the right service.
You can also contact the Community Safety Office at 416-978-1485.
WHAT YOU NEED TO READ IN ADVANCE OF EACH WEEK'S LECTURE:

Week 1 – September 4 – Introduction and Goals of Social Science Research - Asking Interesting Questions

Julia Lynch. 2024. "Choosing a Research Question." In Jennifer Cyr and Sara Wallace Goodman, eds. *Doing Good Qualitative Research.* OUP: 13-22.

Dani Rodrik. 2021. "How Economists and Non-Economists Can Get Along." *Project Syndicate* (March 9): 1-3. Online: https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/economists-other-social-scientists-and-historians-can-get-along-by-dani-rodrik-2021-03.

IN-CLASS EXERCISE: Be prepared to discuss your own research passions and interests in class. NO TUTORIAL THIS WEEK

Week 2 – September 11 – What Is Qualitative Research and How Does It Differ from Quantitative Research?

John Gerring. 2017. "Qualitative Methods." *Annual Review of Political Science* 20: 15-36.

Kacper Grass. 2024. "The Three Logics of Qualitative Research: Epistemology, Ontology, and Methodology in Political Science." *American Journal of Qualitative Research* 8, 1: 42-56.

NO TUTORIAL THIS WEEK

Week 3 – September 18 – Post-positivist, Interpretivist, and Post-colonial/Indigenous Approaches to Research

Yanow, Dvora and Peregrine Schwartz-Shea. 2014. "Wherefore Interpretive: An Introduction." In *Interpretation and Method: Empirical Research Methods and the Interpretive Turn*, 2nd Edition, edited by Dvora Yanow and Peregrine Schwartz-Shea. Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharp, pp. xiii-xxxi.

Mario Luis Small and Jessica McCrory Calarco. 2022. *Qualitative Literacy: A Guide to Evaluating Ethnographic and Interview Research*. University of California Press: introduction (1-22).

Yann Allard-Tremblay and Elaine Coburn. 2023. "The Flying Heads of Settler Colonialism; or the Ideological Erasures of Indigenous Peoples in Political Theorizing." *Political Studies* 71, 2: 359-378.

TUTORIAL 1 (Sept 18) AND ASSIGNMENT 1: Write a positionality/reflexivity statement

See below as guidance:

Sherry Hamby. 2018. "Know Thyself: How to Write a Reflexivity Statement." *Psychology Today* blog (22 May). Online: https://www.psychologytoday.com/ca/blog/the-web-violence/201805/know-thyself-how-write-reflexivity-statement

Andrew Gary Darwin Holmes. 2020. "Researcher Positionality – A Consideration of Its Influence and Place in Qualitative Research – a New Researcher Guide." *International Journal of Education* 8, 4: 1-10.

Jessica Soedirgo and Aarie Glas. 2020. "Toward Active Reflexivity: Positionality and Practice in the Production of Knowledge." *PS* (July): 527-531.

a. **Suggested length**: 500-600 words
b. **Due date**: 24 September 11:59 pm
c. **Prompts:** Over the course of these first weeks, we have discussed differing views on how easy/possible it is for researchers to separate themselves and stand apart from what they study. Write a positionality/reflexivity statement. In writing your positionality/reflexivity statement be sure to define what you mean by positionality, with reference to the literature, and reflect on the following: How do you think your position in the social world (i.e. social class, sexual orientation, religious views, and so on) affects your research, if at all? In picking a research topic or a field of study, what are your motivations? What are the communities that might benefit from your research? What potential harms might research participants experience due to researcher lack of reflexivity? Please note that your statement should not be an autobiography of your life story, but rather a reflection on how you and your experience as an individual and a researcher may influence your research and the participants who are involved in it.

Week 4 – September 25 – Examining Good Research Design: Concept Development

John Gerring. 1999. "What Makes a Concept Good? A Criterial Framework for Understanding Concept Formation in the Social Sciences." *Polity* 31, 3: 357-393.

Frederic Charles Schaffer. 2014. "Thin Descriptions: The Limits of Survey Research on the Meaning of Democracy." *Polity* 46, 3: 303-330.

TUTORIAL 2 (Sept 25) AND ASSIGNMENT 2: Examining the importance of concept development in qualitative analysis

Based on the various definitions of power and related concepts offered in the following article, be prepared to discuss in tutorial and write a reflection as per the prompts below:

Moya Lloyd. 2013. "Power, Politics, Domination, and Oppression." In *The Oxford Handbook of Gender and Politics*. Eds. Georgina Waylen et al. OUP: 111-134.

a. Suggested length: 500-700 words
b. Due date: 1 October 11:59 pm
c. Prompts:
This week examines why concepts are useful in social science research. Focusing on the concepts of "power" and "empowerment", document the variety of ways these concepts are operationalized and measured by at least two authors discussed in this reading. Sketch the concepts' parameters and dimensions and specify the ways in which the authors separate them analytically from other concepts. Are there any ambiguities in the definitions offered? Examine how/ the authors' methodological perspectives (positivist/interpretivist) affect their definition. Then, based on your learning, how would **you** define the parameters of "power" and "empowerment" to a non-academic audience?

Week 5 – October 2 – Designing Qualitative Research to Uncover Causality: Case Selection and Process Tracing

Arend Lijphart. 1971. "Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method." *American Political Science Review* 65, 3: 682-693.

David Collier. 2011. "Understanding Process Tracing." *PS* (October): 823-830.

TUTORIAL 3 (Oct 2) AND ASSIGNMENT 3: Designing qualitative research to uncover causality

Based on the following article, be prepared to discuss in tutorial and write a reflection as per the prompts below:

Maya Tudor and Dan Slater. 2021. "Nationalism, Authoritarianism, and Democracy: Historical Lessons from South and Southeast Asia." *Perspectives on Politics* 19, 3: 706-722.

a. Suggested length: 500-700 words
b. Due date: 8 October 11:59 pm
c. Prompts: This week examines how qualitative research methods, including comparative case studies and process tracing, can be used to descriptively examine the relationship between variables and, done well, to uncover causal relationships and those explanations against rival explanations. In Tudor and Slater's article, identify and describe the following: 1. the political phenomenon or outcome of study (the dependent variable(s)); 2. The explanatory/independent variable(s) and the causal theory(ies) underpinning those explanatory variables; 3. the evidence they use to link the independent and dependent variables; 4. any alternative explanations/rival

hypotheses. Then reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of their comparative research design and process tracing methods used to uncover causality in this study.

Week 6 – October 9 – Immersive Fieldwork: Political Ethnography and Other Forms of Participant Observation

Lorrain Bayard de Volo and Edward Schatz. 2004. "From the Inside Out: Ethnographic Methods in Political Research." *PS* (April): 267-271.

Lisa Wedeen. 2010. "Reflections on Ethnographic Work in Political Science." *Annual Review of Political Science* 13: 255-272.

Harvey Bernard. 2017. "Field Notes and Database Management." In *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Ed. Harvey Bernard. Rowan and Littlefield Publishers: 308-322.

ASSIGNMENT 4: Ethnographic exercise and reflection

This assignment entails a mandatory field trip during class time to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario at 111 Wellsley Street West, Toronto.

In the second part of the class on October 9, students will make their way on foot as group to the legislature to arrive promptly at 12 noon at the South entrance. There, students will participate in a tour of the legislature and related activities. As they partake in the tour, students will write down their own individual observations of **the Legislative Assembly of Ontario (both the building and the grounds around it) as a site of political power**, while trying to participate in whatever ways possible. Later, students will write a reflection on their experiences as per the prompts below.

a. Suggested length: 500-700 words
b. Due date: 15 October 11:59 pm
c. Prompt: Reflecting on your experience of participatory observation in the field, as well as the techniques you used and observed others engage in to collect data (e.g. observation, asking questions, writing field notes), how and how well did these methods/techniques yield understanding of how power manifests in the site and among the people observed? Answering these questions requires reflecting on the positivist/interpretivist methods you may have used or observed others using. For example, some students may have gone in with just the intention to observe the space and activities and thus used methods such as extensive "field" notes. Others may have had a question in mind in advance that they wanted answered such as how or why participants use the space and used observational techniques and interviews to answer that question. Others may have approached the exercise with an ethnographic "sensibility", trying to glean meaning through "soaking and poking". These different approaches/methods may produce different understandings of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as a site of political power. Which approach worked best for you and why?

NO TUTORIAL THIS WEEK

Week 7 – October 16 – Historically Grounded Political Analysis Through Archival Work

Adam Michael Auerbach. 2018. "Informal Archives: Historical Narratives and the Preservation of Paper in India's Urban Slums." *Studies in Comparative International Development* 53: 343-364.

Diana Kapiszewski, Lauren M. MacLean, and Benjamin L. Read. 2015. *Field Research in Political Science: Practices and Principles*. Cambridge UP. Chapter 5: "Thinking Outside the (Archive) Box: Discovering Data in the Field" (151-189).

ASSIGNMENT 5: Archive tour and reflection

This assignment entails a mandatory field trip during class time to the City of Toronto Archives, 255 Spadina Road

Students should make their way to the archives by 11 am. The tour and interactive activities will take approximately 1.5 hours and then we'll have a debrief on site until 1 pm.

a. Suggested length: 500-700 words
b. Due date: 22 October 11:59 pm
c. Prompt: Write a reflection on our visit to the archives, reflecting on the following questions: for which audiences are the archive materials publicly accessible? Are the subjects/topics researchable through the archive broad or narrow and in what ways? What are some of the benefits of using the collection to conduct research in political science? What are some of the gaps/noticeable exclusions in the collection? What are some challenges in researching (with) subjects who are no longer alive? What are some of the other ethical considerations to be taken into account when conducting archival research? Given our constantly changing world, what are some ways researchers can expand their use of existing sources of material (think virtual worlds, social media, etc.) to conduct their research?

NO TUTORIAL THIS WEEK

Week 8 – October 23 –- Ethical Considerations Regarding Data Collection Using Different Qualitative Research Methods

Sarah M. Brooks. 2013. "The Ethical Treatment of Human Subjects and the Institutional Review Board Process." In *Interview Research in Political Science*. Ed. Layna Mosley. Ithaca: Cornell UP (chapter 2): 45-66.

Carolyn Ellis. 2007. "Telling Secrets, Revealing Lives: Relational Ethics in Research with Intimate Others." *Qualitative Inquiry* 13, 1: 3-29.

Lee Ann Fujii. 2012. "Research Ethics 101: Dilemmas and Responsibilities." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 45 (4): 717-723.

TUTORIAL 4 (Oct 23) AND ASSIGNMENT 6: Prepare a mock ethics submission in support of your one-on-one interview (week 9)

Note that in order to complete assignments 7 and 8, you must complete assignment 6.

a. Suggested length: Fill out U of T template and include 3 appendices: a. recruitment script; b. a written/verbal consent form; c. and a preliminary list of possible questions (5-6 questions max)
b. Due date: 5 November 11:59 pm
c. Prompts: Fill out the U of T template posted on Quercus. Attach appendices (see the templates posted on Quercus). Include a script to recruit the family member (indicate whether you plan to recruit via email, telephone, or Zoom/Facetime). Include a verbal or written consent form depending on whether you will conduct the interview in person or via telephone/Zoom. Sketch out a few questions you will ask in your interview(s).

READING WEEK – October 30 – NO CLASS

Week 9 – November 6 – Interview Techniques

Lee Ann Fujii. 2018. *Interviewing in Social Science Research: A Relational Approach*. Routledge: chapters 1 (1-11) and 6 (90-92).

Beth Leech. 2002. "Asking Questions: Techniques for Semistructured Interviews." *PS: Political Science and Politics* 35, 4: 665-68.

Julia Lynch. 2013. "Aligning Sampling Strategies with Analytic Goals." In *Interview Research in Political Science*. Ed. Layna Mosley. Ithaca: Cornell UP (chapter 1): 31-44.

Mario Luis Small and Jessica McCrory Calarco. 2022. *Qualitative Literacy: A Guide to Evaluating Ethnographic and Interview Research*. University of California Press: chapter 1 (23-46).

ASSIGNMENT 7: one-on-one interview and reflection

Choose one family member with whom to conduct an interview about their recollections of their earliest experience of **political participation**. For a definition of the range of activities that fall under political participation, see for example:

Carole Jean Uhlaner. 2015. "Politics and Participation." International Encyclopedia of Social and Behavioral Sciences (2nd ed). Elsevier online: https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/social-sciences/political-participation.

Before conducting the interview, be sure to explicitly identify what epistemological and methodological approach underpins your research strategy. For example, is your goal to pilot a set of questions that you can then use to expand your population sample in support of a larger study on political participation? Or are you taking a more interpretivist approach with your participant? Develop and submit your interview guide and write a response paper that addresses the prompts below.

a. Suggested length: 500-700 words
b. Due date: 12 November 11:59 pm
c. Prompt:

Reflect on the challenges and limitations of one-on-one interviews in terms of your methodological goals, and especially given your participant is a family member (and your n is 1). What kinds of questions and interview techniques did you use to elicit information? Reflecting on your interview approach, how effective were your questions to elicit responses? Which questions elicited the most useful information? Why? Would a more/less structured interview be more effective in some cases? Did you need more guiding questions, leaving more space for the interviewee to talk, or not? How did you manage the balance of asking and listening to your interviewee? What are your thoughts on silences during interviews? Given that your interview participant was a family member, how did you manage the relationship between you and your family member in terms of their authority and yours as a researcher? How did your participant react when they were answering them? Overall, reflecting on the course materials you read, how did you use their advice and design your questions to elicit the responses you were seeking? Please submit your interview questions with your response BUT NOT THE TRANSCRIPT – STORE ACCORDING TO YOUR REB SUBMISSION!

NO TUTORIAL THIS WEEK

Week 10 – November 13 –Building Rapport with Interview/Focus Group Participants and Analyzing Findings

Jennifer Cyr. 2017. "The Unique Utility of Focus Groups for Mixed-Methods Research." *PS - Political Science and Politics* 50, 4:1038-1042.

Lee Ann Fujii. 2018. *Interviewing in Social Science Research: A Relational Approach*. Routledge: chapter 5 (73-89).

Mario Small and Jenna Cook. 2021. "Using Interviews to Understand Why: Challenges and Strategies in the Study of Motivated Action." *Sociological Methods and Research* first view: 1-41.

ASSIGNMENT 8: Reflect on the challenges of having interview participants open up to researchers and analyzing their information

a. Suggested length: 500-700 words
b. Due date: 19 November 11:59 pm
c. Prompt: The readings and the lecture this week discussed some of the challenges of having interview participants open up to researchers and sharing information that is useful to researchers. Drawing on your course readings and your own experience with interviewing, document the challenges/hurdles researchers need to be aware of. What are some research tools and techniques that are useful to adopt in order to elicit useful responses from your research participants that help answer your research questions? What cautions need to be taken in interpreting interview information? Does/how does the answer depend on your research goals and your epistemological/methodological perspective?

NO TUTORIAL THIS WEEK

Week 11 – November 20 – Different Ways to Analyze Words in Text

Steven L. Wilson and Yoshiko M. Herrera. 2019. "Teaching Computerized Content Analysis for Undergraduate Research Papers." *PS* (July): 536-542.

Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke. 2006. "Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology." *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 3, 2: 77-101.

Deserai Crow and Michael Jones. 2018. "Narratives as Tools for Influencing Policy Change." *Policy and Politics* 46, 2: 217-34.

Cynthia Hardy, Bill Harley, and Nelson Phillips. 2004. "Discourse Analysis and Content Analysis: Two Solitudes?" *Qualitative Methods Newsletter of the APSA*: 19-22.

TUTORIAL 6 (Nov 20) AND ASSIGNMENT 9: Applying the analytic techniques discussed in the readings and in class, view and critically analyze these political campaign ads for the idea of patriotism:

John Cena. 2016. "We Are America." Ad Council's Love Has No Labels campaign. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IApvU6SMq-8.

Stephen Harper. 2011 Conservative Party of Canada Ad. "Our Country." https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8rEkFG5MNTk/

Kamala Harris. 2024. "Kamala Harris Launches Her Campaign for President." https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sHky_Xopyrw.

Ronald Reagan. 1984. "Morning in America." https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pUM-qic2IcWA.

a. Suggested length: 500-700 words
b. Due date: 26 November 11:59 pm

c. Prompt: What are the advantages and disadvantages of the various analytic techniques dis-cussed in the readings and in class to analyze these ads? What themes, narratives, discourses, and other communicative techniques do you find on display in these videos? How can you best track their similarities and differences? Reflecting on both the examples and the course readings, what does attention to analysis of language and text add to a larger research project in political sci-ence?

Week 12 – November 27 – LAST CLASS – Presenting Your Findings to the World

Please note that if you plan to complete the bonus assignment in order to improve your grade, lecture attendance is highly recommended as we will discuss the **specific requirements** for the various assignments in class.

Robert Pekkanen and Erik Bleich. 2015. "Data Access, Research Transparency and Interviews." *Qualitative and Multi-Method Research Newsletter* 13: 8-13.

Components of an abstract (from University of Wisconsin-Madison's Writing Centre) https://writing.wisc.edu/handbook/assignments/writing-an-abstract-for-your-research-paper/

Salah Ben Hammou and Elizabeth Meehan. 2022. "To Twitter or Not to Twitter?" *APSA Pre-prints*. doi: 10.33774/apsa-2022-wbmqb.

How to Write an Op-Ed or Column: see sample and guidelines here and here.

Atlas of Public Management. "Writing a Briefing Note." https://www.atlas101.ca/pm/concepts/writing-a-briefing-note/

ASSIGNMENT 10 BONUS ASSIGNMENT: Ways to share your research to an audience

a. Suggested length: see below
b. Due date: 2 December 11:59 pm
c. Prompt: As researchers, we are always writing for different audiences. Think of your research participants, your mentors, your family and friends, and broader social circles within and beyond academia. Pick one of your assignments that you submitted in previous weeks. Write up how you would share it in these 4 ways:
i. A social media post (280 characters maximum)
ii. An abstract (200-300 words maximum) to an academic audience
iii. A public-facing op-ed piece (500 words maximum)
iv. A policy brief (250 words maximum)