

Research techniques
Master in Political Science
Course 2012-13
10 ECTS
Second semester, Tuesdays 15.00 to 20.00

Coordinator

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Teachers

Eva Østergaard-Nielsen, Jordi Muñoz and Míriam Acebillo Baqué

Guest lecturers: Luis de la Calle Robles (Institute Juan March), IVÀLUA (Jaume Blasco, Federico Todeschini and David Casado)

Aim of course

The aim of this course is for the students to be familiar with and know how to apply a series of the main social science research techniques of collecting and analysing data. In order to meet these objectives we include both quantitative and qualitative techniques. We cannot cover all the research techniques of the social sciences, but centre on those that can be found in the main social science journals. We prioritize issues of practical training and interpretation over very mathematical questions.

The sessions on quantitative and qualitative research techniques will be taught in parallel over the 12 weeks of the course. The classes combine theoretical lectures with seminars and sessions of practicing different techniques. An important part of the course takes place outside of the classroom in order to consolidate the use of a selection of the research techniques.

IMPORTANT: The quantitative part of the module requires a basic knowledge of statistical analysis software such as the SPSS. For those students who have no prior training in such software it is necessary to follow a 'pre-course' which will be offered immediately before the beginning of the second semester.

Acquired skills

Specific skills

- To identify and know how to affront the main methodological difficulties that occur in a political science analysis
- To work with a complex and diverse set of data and sources of information
- To design a research project that satisfies criteria of excellence and rigorous analysis.
- To apply those qualitative and quantitative research techniques which are necessary for a systematic and rigorous analysis of political reality.

Transversal skills

- To be able to evaluate applied or academic research with relevant criteria.
- To be able to design academic and applied research projects in an independent manner and using the relevant terminology, argumentation and analytical framework.
- Demonstrate the ability to read and understand specialized texts in English.

Content and readings (* compulsory readings for the class)

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH TECHNIQUES: 5 CREDITS, TUESDAYS 15.00—17.30, (ØSTERGAARD-NIELSEN, ACEBILLO BAQUÉ, DE LA CALLE ROBLES)

Introduction

Session 1. (Østergaard-Nielsen) Introduction to qualitative research techniques:

What are the main characteristics of qualitative research? How to assess validity and reliability in qualitative research. What kind of research questions can we ask using qualitative research techniques? Which types of qualitative techniques can best be combined and how may they be triangulated?

- Flyvbjerg, Bent (2004). 5 misunderstandings about case-study research, in Clive Seale et al. *Qualitative Research Practice*, London: Sage*
- Steinke, I. (2004). Quality criteria in qualitative research. *A companion to qualitative research*. U. Flick, E. v. Kardorff and I. Steinke. London, Sage: 184-190.*
- Flick, U. (2004). Triangulation in Qualitative Research. *A companion to qualitative research*. U. Flick, E. v. Kardorff and I. Steinke. London, Sage: 178--183.*

Data Collection

Session 2, (Østergaard-Nielsen) Fieldwork *How to enter and exit the field? How to use fieldwork in political science research? The ethics of qualitative research methods.*

- Wood, E. J. (2007). Field research. *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*. C. Boix and S.C. Stokes, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 123—146.*
- Wolf, S. (2004). Ways into the field and their variants. *A companion to qualitative research*. U. Flick, E. v. Kardorff and I. Steinke. London, Sage: 195—202.*

- Bray, Zoe *Ethnographic Approaches*, in Della Porta, D. and Keating, M: *Approaches and methodologies in the social sciences: a pluralist perspective*, Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- Lichterman, Paul (2002). *Seeing Structure happen: theory-driven participant observation*, in Bert Klandermans and Suzanne Staggenborg (eds) *Methods of social movement research*, Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, pp. 118—45.

For more readings on political ethnography, see this syllabus from Yale University: http://pantheon.yale.edu/~ejw33/field_research_syllabus_jan_18_2008.pdf

Session 3. (Østergaard-Nielsen) Interviews *What are the characteristics and differences between structured, semi-structured and open-ended/narrative interviews? How may the researcher sample the interviewees in a qualitative research project?*

- Rathbun, B. C. (2008). *Interviewing and qualitative field methods: pragmatism and practicalities* in Janet M. Box-Steffensmeier, Henry E. Brady and David Collier (eds) *Oxford handbook of political methodology*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 685—701. *
- Tansey, Oisín (2007) *Process Tracing and Elite Interviewing: A Case for Non-Probability Sampling*, *PS: Political Science and Politics*, Vol. 40, No. 4 (Oct., 2007), pp. 765-7*

Session 4. Group Interviews (focus groups) (Østergaard-Nielsen)

Introduction to how to plan, conduct and analyse group interviews/focus groups

- Frey, J.H. and Andrea Fontana (1991). *The Group Interview in Social Research*, *The Social Science Journal*, Volume 28, Number 2, pages 175-187.*
- Discussion of a recent project using group interviews (to be posted in the Campus Virtual): *Political participation and the Internet in Aragón*, Polnet, IGOP.

Session 5. Working with documents and process tracing, (Østergaard-Nielsen)

- Bennett, Andrew (2008), *Process tracing a Bayesian Perspective*, Janet M. Box-Steffensmeier, Henry E. Brady and David Collier (eds) *Oxford handbook of political methodology*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Data analysis : Introduction to different methods of qualitative data-analysis

Sessions 6 and, Analysis of Interviews: Introduction to CAQDAS and ATLAS.ti

(Acebillo Baqué) *Presentation of key features of grounded theory.*

- Andréu Abela, Jaime; García-Nieto, Antonio; Pérez Corbacho, Ana M^a (2007). *Evolución de la teoría fundamentada como técnica de análisis cualitativo*, en *Cuadernos Metodológicos n^o40*, Centro de Investigaciones Científicas (CIS): pp. 53-79.
- Trinidad, Antonio; Carrero, Virginia; Soriano, M^aRosa (2006) “El soporte informático en la gestión de la información”, *Teoría fundamentada “Grounded Theory”*, en *Cuadernos Metodológicos n^o37*, Centro de Investigaciones Científicas (CIS): pp. 101-123

This volume (n.37) is difficult to find. Thus, Abela *et al.* and Trinidad *et al.* are complementary readings.

- Lewins, A. & Silver, C. (2007) *Using software in qualitative research: a step-by-step guide*. London, Sage: cap. 2 (Only from page 16 to 25) & cap. 5
- Friese, S. (2011). "Using ATLAS.ti for Analyzing the Financial Crisis Data", Volume 12, No. 1, Art. 39 of *FQS. Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*:
<http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1632/3150>

Sessions 8 and 9: Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) (Luis de la Calle Robles)

- Schneider, Carsten and Claudius Wagemann. 2012. *Set-Theoretic Methods: A User's Guide for Qualitative Comparative Analysis and Fuzzy Sets in Social Science*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ragin, Charles. 2008. *Redesigning Social Inquiry: Fuzzy Sets and Beyond*. University of Chicago Press. Chicago.

Session 10. collective tutoring of practices/exercises and the research techniques used for the dissertation (Østergaard-Nielsen)

TÉCNICAS CUANTITATIVAS, 5 CRÉDITOS, MARTES 17.30 -- 20.00, (MUÑOZ)

Session 1: Introduction

Data sources for quantitative analysis in the social sciences. Individual and aggregate data. Importing data to Stata. Exporting and presenting results. Replicability and research protocols.

- Bernardi, Fabrizio ; Escobar Mercado, Modesto ; Fernández Macías, Enrique. (2010) *Análisis de datos con Stata*. Madrid: Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas

Session 2: Introduction to statistical inference

Introduction to statistical inference. Hypothesis testing. Confidence Intervals Bivariate statistics: an overview.

- Bernardi, Fabrizio ; Escobar Mercado, Modesto ; Fernández Macías, Enrique. (2010) *Análisis de datos con Stata*. Madrid: Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas
- Agresti, Allan (2009) *Statistical Methods for the Social Sciences* (4th edition, Pearson Prentice Hall, 2009)

Session 3: Comparing means across groups

T-test Oneway ANOVA

- Philip H. Pollock 2005. *The Essentials of Political Analysis*, 3rd Edition Congressional Quarterly, Inc., Chaps 3 and 4

- Agresti, Allan (2009) *Statistical Methods for the Social Sciences* (4th edition, Pearson Prentice Hall, 2009)

Session 4: Correlations

- Philip H. Pollock 2005. *The Essentials of Political Analysis*, 3rd Edition Congressional Quarterly, Inc., Chapter 7
- Agresti, Allan (2009) *Statistical Methods for the Social Sciences* (4th edition, Pearson Prentice Hall, 2009)

Session 5: Linear regression.

Fitting a line: the OLS estimation. Constant and slope. Model fit

- Lewis-Beck, M. (1980). *Applied regression: An introduction*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications
- Agresti, Allan (2009) *Statistical Methods for the Social Sciences* (4th edition, Pearson Prentice Hall, 2009)

Session 6: Introduction to multivariate regression.

The logic of statistical control. Causality and association. Multiple regression: Interpretation of coefficients. Model fit and inference. Standardized coefficients.

- Lewis-Beck, M. (1980). *Applied regression: An introduction*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications
- Agresti, Allan (2009) *Statistical Methods for the Social Sciences* (4th edition, Pearson Prentice Hall, 2009)

Session 7: Multiple regression (II)

Regression assumptions. Linearity and other functional forms. Heteroscedasticity Multicollinearity. Dichotomous variables in a multiple regression

- Lewis-Beck, M. (1980). *Applied regression: An introduction*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications
- Agresti, Allan (2009) *Statistical Methods for the Social Sciences* (4th edition, Pearson Prentice Hall, 2009)

Session 8: Multiple regression (III)

Categorical variables. Interactions

- Lewis-Beck, M. (1980). *Applied regression: An introduction*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications
- Agresti, Allan (2009) *Statistical Methods for the Social Sciences* (4th edition, Pearson Prentice Hall, 2009)

Session 9: Multiple regression by example

Basic model interpretation. Model building. Categorical variables. Interactions

Session 10: Logistic regression

Dichotomous and nominal dependent variables. The logistic model.

Interpretation of coefficients and odd-ratios. Model fit and predictive efficacy.

Implementation in Stata

- Philip H. Pollock 2005. *The Essentials of Political Analysis*, 3rd Edition Congressional Quarterly, Inc., Cap. 8
- Long, J. S., and J. Freese. 2006. *Regression Models for Categorical Dependent Variables Using Stata*. 2nd ed. College Station, TX: Stata Press.

Session 11: Logistic regression (II)

Postestimation and predicted probabilities. Marginal effects. Odds-ratios

- Long, J. S., and J. Freese. 2006. *Regression Models for Categorical Dependent Variables Using Stata*. 2nd ed. College Station, TX: Stata Press.
- Bernardi, Fabrizio ; Escobar Mercado, Modesto ; Fernández Macías, Enrique. (2010) *Análisis de datos con Stata*. Madrid: Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas

Session 12: Ordinal and multinomial logistic regression

Beyond dichotomous dependent variables. Ordinal logit: a model for ordinal dependent variables. Multinomial logit: a model for nominal dependent variables

- Long, J. S., and J. Freese. 2006. *Regression Models for Categorical Dependent Variables Using Stata*. 2nd ed. College Station, TX: Stata Press.

Sessions 13 and 14 (15.00—17.30 during the last weeks of the module):

Quantitative methods for public policy evaluation

(IVALUA, Jaime Blasco, Federico Todeschini and David Casado)

- Causality and limits of multiple regression. The experimental method.
- Quasi-experimental methods: Propensity score matching and difference-in-differences

Core readings

Brady, Henry, E. and David Collier (eds) (2008) *Oxford handbook of political methodology*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bert Klandermans and Suzanne Staggenborg (eds) *Methods of social movement research*, Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press

Denzin, N.K. y Lincoln, Y (2000): *Handbook of qualitative research*, 2nd ed, London: Sage.

Manheim, J.B. i Rich, R.C. (1986) *Análisis Político Empírico. Métodos de Investigación en Ciencia Política*. Colección Alianza Universidad Textos, nº 123. Madrid: Alianza.

Philip H. Pollock 2005. *The Essentials of Political Analysis*, 3rd Edition Congressional Quarterly, Inc.,

Lewis-Beck, M. (1980). *Applied regression: An introduction*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Andrew Gelman and Jennifer Hill 2007. *Data Analysis Using Regression and Multilevel/Hierarchical Models*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press Chapters 3 to 5

Evaluation

The major part of the evaluation of this module is through continuous practice and feedback on the understanding and use of various research techniques. The evaluation consists of

- Participation in class (it is obligatory to assist at least at 80% of the sessions in order pass this module)
- 6 exercises related to the different qualitative and quantitative research techniques.
- A take home exam related to the sessions in STATA

The evaluation on qualitative techniques represents 40% of the final grade: The students will hand in 3 exercises during the course:

- Exercise 1: Practice of interview and/or participant observation (30%)
- Exercise 2: Practice on the main Atlas.ti functions of support for analysis of qualitative interviews (20%)
- Exercise 3: Triangulation of qualitative research techniques in research project (50%)

The evaluation on quantitative techniques represents 60% of the final grade: The students will submit 3 assignments during the course. At the end of the semester, they will also complete a take-home exam. The grade will be based on the exam (50%) and the exercises (50%)

- Exercise 1: Exercise on bivariate statistics (10%)
- Exercise 3: Multiple regression (20%)
- Exercise 4: Logistic regression (20%)