

Graduate Program in International Studies
University of Kansas
Class time: Wednesday 5:30-8:20 p.m.

Dr. Philip A. Schrodtt
Spring, 2003
Class room: Regent's Center 123

INTL 701: Approaches to International Studies

Course Description

This course is a general introduction to graduate-level research in international studies. Topics will include basic philosophy of social science research (how do we know what we know?), the relative merits of qualitative "small-N" studies and quantitative "large-N" studies, the roles of theories, models and data, how to choose a research topic, how to design a research project, case study methods, and an introduction to formal quantitative and qualitative techniques. Course readings will illustrate how different methods have been used in practice, as well as articles on the theory and methods of research. The major written assignment will involve the writing the literature review and design of a formal research paper. In addition students will complete several shorter exercises dealing with the various methods.

While most of the readings in this course are from the academic literature, the course will emphasize these issues as a bridge between academic and applied studies. Research across cultures and historical periods is difficult, and there is no single answer or consensus on how to do this. At the same time, policies that are based on inappropriately designed studies or unwarranted interpretations of existing research can have profoundly negative consequences. The theme of "nothing is more practical than a good theory" will resonate through the course, as well the difficulties in properly evaluating theories. If the answers look easy, you are asking the wrong questions. Most of the philosophical issues that we are dealing with have been around for the better part of two centuries; we aren't going to resolve them but we can make a lot of progress on figuring out what the issues are.

Required Readings

The following books are required and contain most of the readings for the class. All of these are paperback, and I have placed an order with the KU Union Bookstore for them. They are also available from Amazon.com and presumably from other on-line sources.

Gary King, Robert O. Keohane and Sidney Verba. *Designing Social Inquiry*. Princeton University Press. 1994. ISBN 0-691-03471-9

Charles C. Ragin. *The Comparative Method*. University of California Press. 1987. ISBN 0-520-06618-9

John Gerring. *Social Science Methodology*. Cambridge University Press. 2001. ISBN 0-521-80513-9

Recommended:

Gregory M. Scott and Stephen M. Garrison. *The Political Science Student Writer's Manual*. (4th ed.) Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall. 2002. ISBN 0-13-640447-0 (you will find this book useful if you are not familiar with the process of preparing and writing a research paper. Earlier editions of the book—which may be available used—are also fine)

The textbooks will be supplemented by a few articles that are available on the web. Many can be accessed through the university library's electronic journals system (<http://ej.lib.ku.edu/>); these are marked with [KUEJ]. In most instances KU has multiple subscriptions to the journals; you can experiment to find the version that is most comfortable. Some other readings can be accessed directly through web sites as indicated in the syllabus. Finally, I will be passing out a small number of photocopied articles; these are denoted by [XR].

Homework assignments and occasional overhead projector slides used during the lectures, and an assortment of links to other political science research sites are available at the course web site:

<http://people.ku.edu/~schrodt/intl701>

Evaluation

Your grade will be determined by the following:

1. A number of small assignments throughout the semester: most of these will involve your critiquing short examples of research methods that will be discussed in class. The first draft of these assignments are due the day of class and will be used in class discussion, but you can turn a revised draft the next week based on the class discussion. These written critiques should be around 1 to 2 pages in length. There are a total of 12 such assignments—you are expected to do 5 of these, including at least one of the empirical assignments in weeks 11, 12, and 13. [30%]
2. Research paper framework: The paper will develop the early parts of a research framework, including
 - a. A clear statement of a thesis or hypothesis;
 - b. A *thorough* discussion of the existing literature;
 - c. Justification of the cases and/or data set that will be studied;
 - d. Clear identification of the variables or aspects of the case that will be studied and why these are important, as well as evidence that they *can* be studied (that is, the information you need is available)
 - e. Discussion of the research methodology justified with respect to the readings we have considered during the semester

Note that the paper will *not* involve extensive actual research, although you will need to do sufficient research to establish the credibility of your approach. You can do this paper on any topic that would be suitable as an M.A.I.S. thesis topic, and in the case of advanced students, you will probably want to focus on your intended thesis. [35%]

3. Two 4-5 page essays: one will be near the middle of the semester, the other at the end. These will deal with questions that will allow you to integrate the material we have covered. [20%]
4. Participation in class discussion and evidence of timely reading of the assigned material. [15%]

Any student in this course who has a disability that is documented by the KU Services for Students with Disabilities office and may prevent him/her from fully demonstrating his/her abilities should contact me personally as soon as possible so that we can discuss accommodations necessary to ensure full participation and facilitate the educational opportunity.

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

The World Wide Web, while a fabulous resource that I enthusiastically endorse and encourage you to use, appears to have substantially increased the occurrence of plagiarism in student papers. Or, more pessimistically, it has just increased our ability to detect this. Either way, I will be using a near-zero-tolerance policy for plagiarism in this class. First, the research paper and the 4-5 page essays (but not the weekly assignments) will go through the TurnItIn.com web site—I will give you instructions on how to do this (it is straightforward). On the *first paper only*, if the paper turns out to contain plagiarized material, you will have the option of either taking an “F” on the paper, or writing a new paper on a different topic. On the remaining assignments, *plagiarism will result in a zero* (not an “F”) on the assignment. Per standard KU requirements, all instances of plagiarism will be reported to the College of Arts and Sciences office.

The official word on this from KU: “The issue of digital plagiarism has raised concerns about ethics, student writing experiences, and academic integrity. KU subscribes to a digital plagiarism detection program called Turnitin.com which may be used to check papers submitted in this course. You may [will] be asked to submit your papers in a digital format (email attachment, BlackBoard™ digital drop box or on disk) so that your paper can be checked against web pages and databases of existing papers. Although you may never have engaged in intentional plagiarism, many students do incorporate sources without citations; this program can alert me to your academic needs.”

Contacting me

Email: schrodt@ku.edu

Lawrence office: Blake 523 phone: 864-9024

Hours: Monday 3-5, Wednesday 1:30-3:30 or by appointment

Edwards Campus office: Room 111 at least one-half hour before class (phone: 864-8520)

Schedule of Topics and Required Readings

Week 1: Introduction to the Course

22 January

Readings: none

Week 2: What is “scientific” about social science?: basic research design issues

29 January

Readings: King, Keohane, and Verba, chapter 1;
Geering, preface, chapter 1, 2.

Assignment: Choose a topic in international behavior and find two different studies of it, one using a large-N statistical approach and one using a small-N case-study or comparative approach. Compare and contrast these—to what extent are they looking at the same thing; to what extent are they different? Which is more credible and why? Bring a copy of the studies to class.

Week 3: Concepts and Operationalization

5 February

Readings: Geering, chapters 3, 4.

David Collier and James E. Mahoney, "Conceptual Stretching Revisited: Alternative Views of Categories in Comparative Analysis," *American Political Science Review* 87:4 (1993), 845-855. [KUEJ]

Assignment: Choose a general topic in international behavior (e.g. rebellion, conflict, development, moderization) and find two or three different ways that it has been conceptualized and operationalized. Compare and contrast these—to what extent are they looking at the same thing; to what extent are they different? Which is more credible and why? Bring a copy of the studies to class.

Week 4: Propositions and hypotheses

12 February

Readings: Geering, chapters 5 and 6

Assignment (due in class): Come up with three different credible propositions about some international phenomenon and critique these: what is the proposition trying to get it; why the proposition might it be true?

Week 5: Causality

19 February

Readings: King, Keohane, and Verba, chapter 3;
Geering, chapter 7

James Fearon, "Counterfactuals and Hypotheses Testing in Political Science." *World Politics* 43 (1991) 169-95. [KUEJ]

Assignment (due in class): Find an article dealing with some international phenomenon that makes an assertion of causality (or makes a counter-factual argument), and critique the quality of the argument based on the criteria discussed in the readings.

No class on 26 February: International Studies Association meetings

Week 6: The Case Study

5 March

Guest Lecturer: Dr. Michael Mosser

Readings: Alexander George. 1979. "Case Studies and Theory Development: The Method of Structured, Focused Comparison." In Paul Lauren, ed. *Diplomacy: New Approaches to History, Theory and Policy*. (New York: Free Press) [XR]

Timothy J. McKeown. 1999. "Case Studies and the Statistical Worldview: Review of King, Keohane and Verba. *International Organization* 53,1: 161-190. [KUEJ]

King, Keohane, and Verba, chapter 6.

Assignment: Locate a study of international behavior that uses the case study approach and write a critique of it. What was the focus of the study, why was the particular case selected, what is the implicit (or explicit) comparison group; what were the primary results, and what weaknesses can you identify in the study. Bring a copy of the study to class.

Week 7: What makes a study interesting? Elements of the Research Paper

12 March

Readings: Geering research design chapters 8,9,10

Assignment (everyone): Initial description of your research paper topic (two to three pages, including an initial bibliography and a discussion of the relevant theories)

Related readings:

See the course web site for links to references on the APA and MLA style guides.

Cuba, Lee. 1997. *A Short Guide to Writing About Social Science*. New York: Longman.

The Economist. 1991. *The Economist Style Guide*. London: Economist Books. [particularly good on the use and mis-use of contemporary political terminology]

- Garson, G. David. 2001. *Guide to Writing Empirical Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. New York: Marcel Dekker.
- Diana Hacker. 2000. *A Pocket Manual of Style* (3rd edition). New York: St. Martin's. (She also now has a web site: <http://www.dianahacker.com/>)
- Beth Luey. 1995. *Handbook for Academic Authors*, 3rd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- William Strunk Jr. and E.B. White. 1972. *The Elements of Style*. New York: MacMillan. [*the classic guide to expository writing in English*]
- Kate L. Turabian. 1987. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations* (5th edition). Chicago: University of Chicago Press. [This has long been the standard reference for dissertations. Turabian's bibliographic reference style has been somewhat superceded by the APA and MLA standards, but the book covers much, much more than this.]

19 March: Spring break, no class

Week 8: Large N Statistical Studies

26 March

Readings: King, Keohane, and Verba, chapters 2 and 4;
Ragin, chapters 4, 5.

Assignment: Locate a study of international behavior that uses the large-N approach and write a critique of it. What are the hypotheses being tested; what was the population from which the cases were selected and how was the specific selection made; what data sets and analytical methods were used; what were the primary results, and what weaknesses can you identify in the study (focus specifically on the possible case-selection problems identified in KKV). Bring a copy of the study to class.

Week 9: Small-N Comparison

2 April

Readings: Ragin, chapters 1, 2, 3

Arendt Lijphart, "Comparative Politics and Comparative Method," *American Political Science Review* 65:3 (1971), 682-693. [JSTOR]

Assignment: Locate a study of international behavior that uses the small-N comparative approach and write a critique of it. What are the hypotheses being tested (and/or what concepts are the focus of the study); what was the population from which the cases were selected; what was the case-selection criterion; what were the primary results, and what weaknesses can you identify in the study. Bring a copy of the study to class.

Week 10: Field Research Methods

10 April

Guest Lecturer: Dr. Deborah Gerner

Readings: Jarol B. Manheim and Richard C. Rich. 1995. *Empirical Political Analysis*. White Plains, NY: Longman. chapter 11, "Direct Observation". [XR]

Charlotte Allen. 1997. "Spies Like Us: When Sociologists Deceive their Subjects". *Lingua Franca* (November 1997) pp. 31-39. [XR]

Fiona McLaughlin and Thierno Seydou Sall. 1999. "The give and take of fieldwork: Noun classes and other concerns in Fatick, Senegal 1989." In Paul Newman and Martha Raliff, eds. *Linguistic fieldwork: A collection of essays on the practice of empirical linguistic research*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (this is a good description of the experience of field research in less-developed areas; just read past the linguistic content) [XR]

Assignment: Locate a study of international behavior that has used direct observation. Assess the extent to which the study is (a) cumulative—that is, it builds on other work rather than treating the case as unique and (b) is clearly driven by theoretical concerns and specific theses/hypotheses. Studies will vary widely on both of these dimensions, so don't assume that the study you have found will be particularly strong or weak on either. Bring a copy of the study to class.

Week 11: Techniques: Statistical Hypothesis Testing and Comparison of 2 populations

16 April

Readings: I've provided multiple references for each of these topics. This material is completely standard—that is, there is no disagreement on the content—but the three sites give different levels of detail (also you need to read past the medical examples in the BJM site). You should also feel free to browse the web for other alternatives—these are the best I've found so far but other material should be coming on line and I may not have seen it.

Significance tests:

From the StatSoft "Statistics Homepage"

<http://www.statsoft.com/textbook/stathome.html>
[click "Elementary Concepts" link]

David Garson's "StatNotes" web site:

<http://www2.chass.ncsu.edu/garson/pa765/signif.htm>

Difference of means test:

From the British Journal of Medicine web site:

<http://bmj.com/collections/statsbk/5.shtml>

David Garson's "StatNotes" web site:

<http://www2.chass.ncsu.edu/garson/pa765/ttest.htm>

Assignment (due Week 12): Develop a simple quantitative hypothesis that can be tested using a difference of means test, find an appropriate data set (the World Wide Web will be your most likely source) and do an analysis of it.

Related readings:

Garson has a set of links to other statistics texts on the web at

<http://www2.chass.ncsu.edu/garson/pa765/texts.htm>

This being the web, many of the links have links to other links. There are literally thousands of data sets accessible from this point, and lots of additional instructional material.

Week 12: Techniques: Ragin's QCA Boolean Analysis

23 April

Readings: Ragin, chapters 6, 7, 8.

Assignment (due Week 13): Develop a simple quantitative hypothesis that can be tested using QCA, find an appropriate data set, and do an analysis of it.

Assignment (everyone): Draft of your research paper design—this should have all of the components of the paper. I will evaluate these and indicate any areas where I think you need to do additional work.

Week 13: Techniques: Statistical Correlation

30 April

Readings: King, Keohane, and Verba, chapter 5

Correlation:

From the British Journal of Medicine web site:

<http://bmj.com/collections/statsbk/11.shtml>

David Garson's "StatNotes" web site:

<http://www2.chass.ncsu.edu/garson/pa765/correl.htm>**Regression:**

From the StatSoft "Statistics Homepage"

<http://www.statsoft.com/textbook/stathome.html>

[click "Linear Regression" link]

David Garson's "StatNotes" web site:

<http://www2.chass.ncsu.edu/garson/pa765/regress.htm>

Assignment (due Week 14): Develop a simple quantitative hypothesis that can be tested using regression analysis, find an appropriate data set, and do an analysis of it.

Week 14: Research design and applied international policy

7 May

Readings: Geering, postscript

Alexander George. 1993. *Bridging the Gap: Theory and Practice in Foreign Policy*. (Washington: U.S. Institute of Peace Press), pp. 1-29, 107-145 [XR].Deborah J. Gerner and Philip A. Schrodtt "Taking Your Academic Expertise Public: Lessons Learned from Responding to the 11 September Crisis." *International Studies Perspectives* 3,2: 221-229. (Spring, 2002)[<http://people.ku.edu/~schrodtt/ISP.2002.pdf>]**Final version of paper** and the final essay is due in the Political Science office (or via email) by 11:30 p.m. on Wednesday 14 May.