

POLS 60835
Field Research Methods
Spring 2020

Instructor: Jaimie Bleck
Course Time: T: 3:30-6:15PM
Location: Jenkins-Nanovic Hall B058
Office Hours: T: 6:15-7:15 or by appointment

Office: 2130C Jenkins Nanovic
Email: jbleck@nd.edu
Phone 1-5069

Course Overview

This course introduces students to a range of methodological approaches to generate and gather original data. The course will highlight “best practices” in research design and implementation, but it will also address the logistical constraints and trade-offs that graduate students face while conducting fieldwork. Over the course of the semester, all students will develop multiple strategies to strengthen and evaluate their own research questions.

Learning Objectives

- Students will be able to evaluate strengths and weaknesses of different research methodology
- Students will generate a research design for their own dissertation proposals incorporating techniques and methods from the course
- Students will have exposure to a “real time” data collection project

Books

Field Research in Political Science: Practices and Principles, by Diana Kapiszewski, Lauren MacClean, and Benjamin Read

Surviving Field Research: Working in Violent and Difficult Situations, Eds. Chandra Lekha Sriram, John C. King, Julie A. Mertus, Olga Martin-Ortega, Johanna Herman

Peaceland: Conflict Resolution and the Everyday Politics of International Intervention by Séverine Autesserre

Assignments

| Due Date | Assignment | Percentage |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|------------|
| January 14 | Initial Memo due by email | 10% |
| Ongoing | Class Discussant | 10% |
| Ongoing | Participation | 10% |
| 3 Selected Classes | Research Method Application | 30% |
| TBD | Peer Discussant for Final Project | 10% |
| May 8 | Final Research Design | 30% |

Initial Research Design Memo

Part 1: Complete a 6-8 page (double spaced) memo

A. What is your research question? Choose a puzzle that you could collect data for that you think is important, underexplored, or misunderstood. Describe what the puzzle is and why it's important for political science to know more about it. Provide at least one hypothesis that is clear, can be tested with data, and falsifiable.

B. Write about how you see the fieldwork element of your own dissertation. What role will fieldwork play in your project (complementary, primary data, supplemental etc)? Sketch out a tentative Research Design to Share with the class. Explore the mechanisms that link cause and effect. In thinking about tests of your (or competing) hypotheses – identify observable implications and the types of data that you would need to confirm or reject these hypotheses. What would ideal data look like?

C. What do you feel most prepared for? What do you feel least prepared for? At this point in time, describe the general research approaches that you hope to employ and generate a timeline for these activities.

Class Discussant

Each student will have the opportunity to serve as class discussion leader for 1 class. (S)he will be responsible for doing a short over-view lecture and then lead discussion with fellow students. The discussion should take the form of a conference panel discussant. Presenters can bring audio-visual materials or handouts if they like to clarify their ideas. **Class discussants are required to submit their discussion questions to Professor Bleck the night before they present.**

Discussants will rate the participation of their peers and non-discussants will rank the discussant. Discussants are rated on the following criteria: knowledge of the readings, clarity of presentation, ability to stimulate discussion, and ability to bridge readings with broader research

concepts/class discussions/debates within political science related to research design and measurement. Participants will be rated by discussants in terms of the quality of their participation (understanding of the readings, active engagement in discussion).

Research Method Application (Due 3 of 8 weeks we read new methods)

Pick 3 of the 8 field methods (potential options have an asterisk). Write a two-page single-spaced memo about how you might use this research method as an additional test or to gather important descriptive data for your research question. Be specific and consider some of the following factors as you describe your research design: who are the actors that you hope to engage in the research, what observable implications of your theory do you hope to test, what kind of questions do you hope to ask, what evidence would help you reject competing theories, what types of observations will you try to make, what are the ethical considerations to bear in mind, what are the relevant logistical challenges?

Methods Applications should be submitted in hard copy the day of class that specific method is discussed.

Final Paper

Each student will write a 20 page on research design and fieldwork strategy including theory, hypotheses, but with a particular emphasis on data collection including how you will measure key variables, how you will test your hypotheses as well as alternative explanations, and how you will adjudicate between causal mechanisms.

Initial drafts are due electronically to the entire class by April 14th. Peer discussants will workshop the papers on April 21 or April 28. Final drafts are due to me electronically by May 5th.

Class Schedule

January 14th

No Class

*******Submit Initial Research Design by Email** *****

Readings:

Bleck and Michelitch, "The Malian Crisis of 2012 as an Empirical State Crisis: Voices from Rural Villagers," with Kristin Michelitch, 2015, *African Affairs*, 114 (457): 598-623.

Bleck and Michelitch, "Capturing the Airwaves, Capturing the Nation: Citizen Response to Putschist Controlled Radio," Working Paper and Online Appendix

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2015/11/27/this-is-what-citizens-say-is-needed-to-end-malis-insecurity/>

January 21

Field Research in Political Science

Readings:

Field Research in Political Science

Chapter 1 History, Borders, and Varieties of Field Research in Political Science

Chapter 3 Preparing for Field Research

Measurement Validity: A Shared Standard for Qualitative and Quantitative Research, Adcock and Collier, APSR 2001

95(3). <http://users.polisci.wisc.edu/schatzberg/ps816/AdcockCollier2001.pdf>

Philips, Brian. 2015. "What Is a Terrorist Group? Conceptual Issues and Empirical Implications." *Terrorism and Political Violence* 27(2): 225-242

Ayoub, Wallace, and Zepeda-Milan. "Triangulation in Social Movement Research." In *Methodological Practices in Social Movement Research*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

January 28 **Archives and Beyond: Textual Analysis, Historical Data, Existing Data Sets ***

Readings:

Field Research in Political Science

Chapter 5 Thinking Outside the (Archive) Box: From Documents to Political Cartoons

Stasavage, David. *When Distance Mattered: Geographic Scale and the Development of European Representative Assemblies* (appendix) *American Political Science Review*, 2010: http://politics.as.nyu.edu/docs/IO/5395/when_distanced_mattered.pdf

Nielsen, Richard. 2019. "Women's Authority in Patriarchal Social Movements: The Case of Female Salafi Preachers." *American Journal of Political Science*, Forthcoming (Available online August 2019).

Grossman, Guy. 2015. Renewalist Christianity and the Political Saliency of LGBTs: Theory and Evidence from Sub-Saharan Africa. *Journal of Politics*. Vol. 77, No. 2 (April 2015), pp. 337-351

Gottlieb, Jessica and Katrina Kosec. 2019. "The Countervailing Effects of Competition on Public Goods Provision: When Bargaining Inefficiencies Lead to Bad Outcomes." *American Political Science Review* 113 (1): 88-107.

Recommended:

Lucas et al. 2015. Computer assisted text analysis for comparative politics. *Political Analysis*, *Political Analysis*, 23(2), 254-277

Huff, C., & Tingley, D. (2015). "Who are These People?": Evaluating the Demographic Characteristics and Political Preferences of MTurk Survey Respondents. *Research and Politics*, *Research and Politics*, July-September(1), 1-12

Laver, Michael, Kenneth Benoit and John Garry. 2003. "Extracting policy positions from political texts using word as data." *American Political Science Review* 97(2):311–331.

Greenstein, Fred I. and Richard H. Immerman. 1992. "What Did Eisenhower Tell Kennedy About Indochina? The Politics of Misperception." *Journal of American History* 79(2): 568-87.

Lustick, Ian S. 1996. "History, Historiography, and Political Science: Multiple Historical Records and the Problem of Selection Bias." *American Political Science Review* 90, 3: 605-618.

Stasavage, David. 2014. "Was Weber Right? The Role of Urban Autonomy in Europe's Rise" *American Political Science Review*.

February 4

Field Experiments and Natural Experiments*

Readings:

Hyde, Susan D. 2010. "The Future of Field Experiments in International Relations." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 628:72-84.

Olken, Benjamin A. 2007. "Monitoring Corruption: Evidence from a Field Experiment in Indonesia." *Journal of Political Economy* 115, 2: 200-249.

<http://www.nber.org/~bolken/corruptionexperiments.pdf>

Dunning, Thad. 2008. "Improving Causal Inference: Strengths and Limitations of Natural Experiments." *Political Science Quarterly* 61, 2:282-93.

Nunn, Nathan, and Leonard Wantchekon. "The slave trade and the origins of mistrust in Africa." *American Economic Review* 101.7 (2011): 3221-52.

Trujillo, M., & Paluck, E.L. (2011). [The devil knows best: Experimental effects of a televised soap opera on Latino trust in government and support for the 2010 Census.](#) *Analysis of Social Issues and Public Policy*.

Recommended

Paluck, E.L. & Green, D.P. (2009). [Deference, dissent, and dispute resolution: A field experiment on a mass media intervention in Rwanda.](#) *American Political Science Review*, 103(4), 622-644

February 11

Ethnography*

Readings:

Field Research in Political Science

Chapter 7. Site-Intensive Methods: Participant Observation and Ethnography

Auteserre, Severine. 2014. [Peaceland: Conflict Resolution and the Everyday Politics of International Intervention.](#) *Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.*

Recommended:

Schatz, Edward. 2009. *Political Ethnography: What Immersion Contributes to the Study of Power?* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Harris-Lacewell, Melissa Victoria. *Barbershops, Bibles, and BET: Everyday talk and black political thought.* Princeton University Press, 2010.

Karrie J. Koesel. "The Political Economy of Religious Revival." *Politics and Religion* (June 2015): 211-235.

Kendhammer, Brandon. 2013. The Sharia Controversy in Northern Nigeria and the Politics of Islamic Law in New and Uncertain Democracies *Comparative Politics* 45 (3): 291-311.

Feb 18

Surveys*

Readings:

Field Research in Political Science, Chapter 8. Surveys in the Context of Field Research

Auerbach, Adam. 2015. CLIENTS AND COMMUNITIES The Political Economy of Party Network Organization and Development in India's Urban Slums. *World Politics, forthcoming.*

Benstead, Lindsay. 2014. Does Interviewer Religious Dress Affect Survey Responses? Evidence from Morocco *Politics and Religion*, 7 (2014), 734–760.

Tingley, D. (2014). Survey Research In International Political Economy: Motivations, Designs, Methods. *International Interactions*, 40(3), 443-451.

Egan, Patrick J. and Megan Mullin. 2012. "Turning Personal Experience into Political Attitudes: The Effect of Local Weather on Americans' Perceptions about Global Warming." *Journal of Politics* 74(3): 796-809.

Sperber, Liz and Erin Hern. 2018 “Pentecostal Identity and Citizen Engagement in Sub-Saharan Africa: New Evidence from Zambia.” *Religion and Politics*. 11(4): 830-862

Thachil, Tariq. 2018. “Improving Surveys Through Ethnography: Insights from India’s Urban Periphery.” *Studies in Comparative International Development* 53: 281-299.

Recommended:

Adida, Ferree, Posner, and Robinson. 2015. Who’s asking? Interviewer coethnicity effects in African survey data. *Afrobarometer Working Paper 158*.

Stasavage, David and Robin Harding. "What Democracy Does (and Doesn't Do) for Basic Services: School Fees, School Inputs, and African Elections" (With Robin Harding) *Journal of Politics*, 2014.

Feb 25

Interviews and Focus Groups*

Readings:

Field Research in Political Science, Chapter 6 Qualitative Interviewing: In-depth Interviews, Focus Groups and Oral Histories

Process Tracing and Elite Interviewing: A Case for non-probability Sampling:

<http://www.nuffield.ox.ac.uk/Politics/papers/2006/tansey.pdf>

Leech, Beth, L. 2002. Symposium: Interview Methods in Political Science. *PS: Political Science and Politics* 35 (4):663-688.

Aldrich, Daniel. 2009. The 800-Pound Gaijin in the Room: Strategies and Tactics for Conducting Fieldwork in Japan and Abroad. *PS: Political Science and Politics*

Sutton, James E. "A review of the life-events calendar method for criminological research." *Journal of Criminal Justice* 38.5 (2010): 1038-1044.

Cyr, Jennifer. "The pitfalls and promise of focus groups as a data collection method." *Sociological Methods & Research* 45.2 (2016): 231-259.

Paluck, E.L. (2010). [The promising integration of field experimentation and qualitative methods.](#) *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 628, 59-71.

March 3 **Lab in the Field and Experimental Games***

Readings:

Dunning, Thad, and Lauren Harrison. 2010. "Cross-cutting Cleavages and Ethnic Voting: An Experimental Study of Cousinage in Mali." *American Political Science Review* 104, 1: 21-39.

Paluck, E.L. Shepherd, H., & Aronow, P. (2016). Changing climates of conflict: A social network driven experiment in 56 schools. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.

Scacco, Alexandra and Shana Warren. 2018. "Can Social Contact Reduce Prejudice and Discrimination? Evidence from a Field Experiment in Nigeria." 112 (3): 654-677.

Michelitch, Kristin. "Does electoral competition exacerbate interethnic or interpartisan economic discrimination? Evidence from a field experiment in market price bargaining." *American Political Science Review* 109.1 (2015): 43-61

Conroy-Krutz, Jeffrey, and Devra C. Moehler. "Moderation from bias: A field experiment on partisan media in a new democracy." *The Journal of Politics* 77.2 (2015): 575-587

March 10 ***Spring Break***

Mar 17 **Geo-Spatial Data*/Intro to GIS**

Guest Lecture: Matthew Sisk, GIS Librarian

Readings:

Fagerholm, Nora. 2014. Whose Knowledge, Whose Benefit? Ethnical Challenges of Participatory Mapping, In *Fieldwork in the Global South: Ethical Challenges and Dilemmas*

Lyall and Dafoe. "From Cell Phones to Conflict? Reflections on the Emerging ICT-Political Conflict Research Agenda." *Journal of Peace Research* 52:3 (May 2015), 401-413.

Cammet and Issar. 2010. "Bricks and Mortar Clientelism: The Political Geography of Welfare in Lebanon." *World Politics* 62, no. 3(July 2010): 381-421.

Holland, Alisha. 2015. "The Distributive Politics of Enforcement." *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 59, No. 2, April 2015, Pp. 357–371

Braun, Robert. 2015. "Religious Minorities and Resistance to Genocide." *American Political Science Review*.

Smith, Amy Erica. 2016 "Talking It Out: Political Conversation and Knowledge Gaps in Unequal Urban Contexts." *British Journal of Political Science* 48 (407-425).

Recommended:

Fagerholm, Nora. 2014. Whose Knowledge, Whose Benefit? Ethical Challenges of Participatory Mapping, In *Fieldwork in the Global South: Ethical Challenges and Dilemmas*

Grannis, Rick. 2009. *From the Ground Up: Translating Geography into Community through Neighbor Network*, Chapters TBA

March 24 **Conjoint and Survey Experiments***

Blair, Imai, and Lyall. 2014. *Comparing and Combining List and Endorsement Experiments: Evidence from Afghanistan*. *American Journal of Political Science*, 58:4 (October 2014), 1043-1063.

Auerbach, Adam Michael, and Tariq Thachil. "How Clients Select Brokers: Competition and Choice in India's Slums." *American Political Science Review* 112.4 (2018): 775-791.

Creighton, Mathew J., and Amaney Jamal. "Does Islam play a role in anti-immigrant sentiment? An experimental approach." *Social Science Research* 53 (2015): 89-103.

Leeper, Thomas J., Sara Hobolt, and James Tilley. "Measuring subgroup preferences in conjoint experiments." *Political Analysis* (2019).

Thachil, Tariq. 2017. "Do Rural Migrants Divide Ethnically in the City? Evidence from an Ethnographic Experiment in India." *American Journal of Political Science* 61 (4): 908-926

Suggested Reading

Hainmueller, Jens and Daniel Hopkins. 2015. "The Hidden American Immigration Consensus: A Conjoint Analysis of Attitudes toward Immigrants." *The American Journal of Political Science* 59 (3): 529-548.

Abramson, Scott, Korhan Koçak, & Asya Magazinnik. 2019. "What Do We Learn About Voter Preferences From Conjoint Experiments?"

March 31 **Field Logistics, Knowledge Production, and Research Ethics (Part 1)**

Readings:

Field Research in Political Science

Chapter 10. Analyzing, "Fixing Broken Projects," and Writing in the Field

Chapter 4. *Operating in the Field: Managing Research, Managing People*

Smith, Linda Tuhiwai, "De-colonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples."

Introduction.

Hardt, Heidi, Hannah June Kim, Amy Erica Smith and Philippe Meister. 2019. "The Gender Reading Gap in Graduate Training." *The Journal of Politics* 81(4), 1528-1532.

April 7 **Field Ethics (Part 2) and IRB**

Presentation by Eric Felde, Director of Research Compliance, University of Notre Dame

Readings:

Surviving Field Research: Working in Violent and Difficult Situations

Familiarize yourself with the Notre Dame IRB website:
<http://or.nd.edu/research-compliance/human-subjects-research/institutional-review-board-irb/>

If you have not already done so, complete the Social and Behavioral Sciences portion of the CITI training (you will need to complete this before you submit your IRB application):
<https://www.citiprogram.org>

If you need assistance in completing the training – you can contact Nakesha Alexander in the IRB office (Nakesha.Alexander.65@nd.edu)

April 14 **The Future of Fieldwork in Political Science**

*******Draft Research Design due *******

Readings:

The Future of Field Research in Political Science

Chapter 11 The Future of Fieldwork in Political Science

The class will select and read one of the following prize-winning dissertations with an emphasis on their fieldwork/research methods:

