

**GGOV701 – GLOBAL GOVERNANCE RESEARCH METHODS**  
**Winter 2015**

**Time: Thursday, 1:30-4:20; Location: BSIA 311**  
**Instructor: Thomas Homer-Dixon**  
**Office: BSIA 312; Email address: tad@homerdixon.com**  
**Office Hours: Tuesday, 2-4 pm (please make an appointment)**

**Quantitative Instructor: JJ Huo**

The seminar examines questions of epistemology, ontology and methodology in the social sciences, especially as they relate to the design of dissertation research projects in interdisciplinary fields such as global governance. It thus addresses issues that transcend all three core courses in the Global Governance PhD, gives students tools that enable them to assess relevant scholarly research, and prepares students for their dissertation research.

**SCHEDULE**

Component A: Philosophical Context (Homer-Dixon)

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|---------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. 8 January  | Introduction: A map of the terrain  |
| 2. 15 January | Evidence, law, and theory: Part one |
| 3. 22 January | Evidence, law, and theory: Part two |
| 4. 29 January | Causation                           |
| 5. 5 February | Meaning                             |

Component B: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches (Homer-Dixon)

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|----------------|------------------------|
| 6. 12 February | Point and counterpoint |
| 7. 26 February | Bridging the divide    |

Component C: Quantitative Techniques (Huo)

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|--------------|--|
| 8. 5 March   | Concepts, measurements, and data       |
| 9. 12 March  | Theory testing                         |
| 10. 19 March | Data collection and analysis, practice |

Component D: Qualitative Techniques (Homer-Dixon)

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|--------------|--|
| 11. 26 March | Tools and strategies in qualitative research |
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Component E: Preparing Dissertation Proposals (Homer-Dixon)

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|-------------|----------------------------------|
| 12. 2 April | Proposal writing; mock proposals |
| 13. 9 April | Mock proposals                   |

**GRADING**

Components A, B, D, and E (Homer-Dixon)	70% of total
Reaction briefs (10% x 2)	20%
Seminar rapporteur notes and presentation	10%
Seminar facilitation	10%
Attendance and participation	10%
Mock proposal I: Statement of argument	10%
Mock proposal II: Statement of research design and method	10%
Component C (Huo)	30% of total
Reaction brief	10%
Take-home work on quantitative hypothesis testing	20%

**ASSIGNMENTS****Components A, B, D, and E (Homer-Dixon)***Reaction briefs*

Reaction briefs identify the most important issues raised by a particular week's readings. They also examine how the readings fit together, in what sense they complement one another, and the tensions between them. Finally, the briefs outline how the readings align with the broader class discussions.

A brief should provide a concise overview of the readings' central arguments, but *it should not summarize* the readings. Rather it should *synthesize* the readings with an eye to the context of the broader course materials.

A brief should also **present the student's reaction to the readings** as a clear central argument. This argument should focus on considerations such as:

If there are tensions among the readings, is one perspective more compelling than other?

Are key issues or perspectives not adequately addressed?

How important is the readings' overall contribution to the broader course discussion?

Students are required to complete **two** reaction briefs, **one from the five topics in component A and one from the two topics in component B.**

The reaction briefs should be *no more* than 6 pages (1,500 words) in length. Appropriate citation is required, but students should attach a bibliography only if materials other than those read in the course are cited.

**Reaction briefs are due *before* the start of class in the week following the class in which the readings the brief considers were discussed.**

Note: the briefs *should not simply reprise the previous week's discussion*.

Late submissions will be penalized 10 per cent (of the 100 per cent available for that particular assignment) for each day or part thereof they are late. Submissions will not be accepted after seven days have elapsed. Exceptions will be made only in extraordinary circumstances, usually related to medical emergencies supported by documentation. As soon as the student realizes that his or her assignment may be submitted late, he or she should contact the instructor.

### *Mock proposal*

Students will prepare, submit, and present an abbreviated mock dissertation proposal. Before beginning this component of the course's work, they are advised to review the readings on writing a proposal listed for seminar 12. The proposal will be submitted in two parts. The first, **due at the beginning of the February 12 class**, should summarize in no more than 1,000 words the dissertation's central thesis in the context of relevant literatures. This part should demonstrate a detailed grasp of—and thoughtful consideration of—the issues treated in component A of the course. The second, **due at the beginning of the March 26 class**, should summarize in no more than 1,000 words the dissertation's proposal research design and methodology, taking account of the issues and readings considered in components B, C, and D.

**Students will present both parts of their mock proposals on either April 2 or April 9.**

### *Seminar rapporteur*

Each student will act as a rapporteur for one seminar. Dates will be assigned at the beginning of the course.

A rapporteur will submit a brief report (maximum two pages) to the class by **email before 9:00 a.m. on the Tuesday following the seminar**. The report should capture the overall flow of the discussion focusing on the most important themes, outlining the degree to which consensus was reached by the class regarding the various question and issues discussed, and identifying any issues that remain unresolved. At the start of the next seminar, the rapporteur will give a brief overview (5 minutes) of the previous week's discussion and his or her assessment of it.

The rapporteur's report is due on Tuesday so that it is available for use by students preparing for the class on Thursday. Students have a right to expect that the report will be available on time. As such, the assignment will be considered not to have been completed if it is not available on time and assigned a grade of zero.

### *Facilitation*

Each student will act as a facilitator for one seminar. Dates will be assigned at the beginning of the course.

At the start of the seminar, following the rapporteur's report, the facilitator will briefly (5 minutes) outline the themes and questions that should be the focus of the day's discussion. He or she should identify the linkages between the readings for the week, place the readings in the broader context of the class discussions to date, and outline a set of discussion questions for the seminar. **Facilitators are encouraged to circulate a one-page summary of these points on the day of the class.**

Facilitators should assume all students have done the readings and, as such, should *not* provide an overview of the readings or of any individual reading. Although the facilitator is not expected to run the seminar *per se*, he or she will be expected to help move the discussion along and ensure that all of the relevant issues are touched upon.

## **Component C (Huo)**

### *Reaction Brief*

For one of the first two weeks of component C (at the student's discretion), students are required to submit a reaction brief that reviews readings assigned in that particular week. If students choose to review readings from the first week, their reaction brief is due **at the beginning of the second week's class**; if students choose to review readings from the second week, their reaction brief is due **at the beginning of the third week's class**.

Component C's readings each week fall into two categories: (1) those that address abstract methodological arguments and (2) and a research example. Each reaction brief should cover one reading from (1) and one reading from (2).

The reaction brief *should not summarize the readings*.

It should be about 1,200 words in length.

For reviews of methodological arguments, students should develop their opinions and responses to the readings. For example, what are questions left unanswered? Are the author's arguments plausible? Are these methodological suggestions and recommendations empirically feasible? Can the arguments be extended?

For reviews of the research example, students should think of themselves as a journal referee with a focus on research methodology. The student's evaluation must relate to the methodological arguments the seminar is discussing that particular week. For example, was there a meaningful and significant research question? Was data measurement appropriate? Did the research design adequately test and confirm the theoretical proposition? As the editor of a journal, would you accept this article based on its methodology, and why?

*Take-Home Work*

For component C, students will complete a take-home project of data analysis using STATA. Students should propose a causal hypothesis related to a research topic of their own interest, collect data that allow quantitative testing of this hypothesis, and then use the data to test this hypothesis.

In its final form for submission, the assignment should, in the following order:

1. Discuss what motivated the hypothesis and why this hypothesis addresses an important issue in the literature;
2. Explain the causal mechanism behind the hypothesis;
3. Outline the potential alternative explanations for the outcome of interest and explain whether these alternative explanations are taken into consideration in the quantitative analysis;
4. Explain the data and measurement;
5. Interpret the findings from the statistical analysis and in particular identify what variables are important or unimportant determinants of the outcome of interest; and,
6. Discuss whether the causal mechanism can be tested quantitatively. If it cannot be tested, offer some brief qualitative evidence in support of the causal mechanism.

In its final, complete, form, **the assignment is due on April 9<sup>th</sup>**. It should not exceed 2,500 words in length (references and tables excluded).

Individual components of the assignment should be finished much earlier than April 8<sup>th</sup>, in order to ensure the on-time completion of the final project. In particular, students need to formulate their hypothesis by the end of the third week of class, and send the hypothesis to the component's instructor. He will discuss with students individually the feasibility of the hypothesis for quantitative testing. After the hypothesis is finalized, students need to start collecting data for their quantitative testing. This task should be finished at least a month before the assignment's final due date, to leave enough time for data analysis and write-up.

*STATA information*

Each student is expected to purchase a STATA license (small data package, STATA 9 or higher) for the duration of the course. The cost is about \$40.

University of Waterloo students can order the software here:

[http://ist.uwaterloo.ca/admin/available\\_software.html](http://ist.uwaterloo.ca/admin/available_software.html)

Wilfrid Laurier University students can order the software here:

[www.stata.com](http://www.stata.com)

**READINGS****Component A: Philosophical Context (Homer-Dixon)**1. January 8 *A Map of the terrain*

Clarke, Kevin, and David Primo. 2012. "Overcoming 'Physics Envy.'" *The New York Times*.

MacMillan, Margaret. 2001. *Paris 1919: Six Months that Changed the World*. New York, Random House. Read "Introduction," xxv-xxxii.

Moore, Barrington. 1966. "Preface," xi-xix in *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World*. Boston: Beacon.

Moul, William. 2003. "Power Parity, Preponderance, and War between Great Powers, 1816-1989." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 47: 468-489.

Achen, Christopher and Duncan Snidal. 1989. "Rational Deterrence Theory and Comparative Case Studies." *World Politics* 41 (2): 143-69.

2. January 15 *Evidence, law, and theory: Part one*

Homer-Dixon, Thomas. 2006. "Cycles within Cycles," chapter 9 in *The Upside of Down: Catastrophe, Creativity and the Renewal of Civilization*. Toronto: Knopf. Read pages 208-11.

George, Alexander and Andrew Bennett. 2005. "Case Studies and the Philosophy of Science," **Chapter 7 only** in *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

"Carl Hempel," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, available at: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/hempel/>. Skim section 1, read section 2 through subsection 2.1.1 ("Quine's Complaints"), and skim the rest of section 2; skim section 3; **read the opening paragraphs of section 4** ("Scientific Explanations"); and skim the remainder of the post.

Friedman, Milton. 1953. "The Methodology of Positive Economics," in *Essays in Positive Economics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), 3-43.

Ball, Philip. 2002. "The Physical Modelling of Society: A Historical Perspective." *Physica A* **314**: 1-14.

Popper, Karl. 1962. "Science as Falsification," in *Conjectures and Refutations*. New York: Basic Books.

### 3. January 22 Evidence, law, and theory: Part two

“Historicist Theories of Rationality,” *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, available at: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/rationality-historicist/>. Read the introductory paragraphs and sections 1, 2, and 3 carefully; skim sections 4 and 5.

Kuhn, Thomas. 1970. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970. Skim chapters 1, 4 through 7; **read** the Postscript to the 1970 edition.

Mayoral, Juan. 2012. “Five Decades of *Structure*. A Retrospective View.” *Theoria* 75: 261-80.

Lakatos, Imre. 1970. “Science as Successful Prediction,” excerpts from *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Quine, Willard Van Orman. 1953. “Two Dogmas of Empiricism.” Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980.

Lewthwaite, Andrew. 2003. “A New Look at Falsification in Light of the Duhem-Quine Thesis,” *Ecclectica*.

### 4. January 29 Causation

Bennett, Andrew and Colin Elman. 2006. “Epistemological Issues: Effects of Causes versus Causes of Effects,” 456-8 **only** excerpted from “Qualitative Research: Recent Developments in Case Study Methods,” *Annual Review of Political Science* 9: 455-76.

Mahoney, James, Erin Kimball, and Kendra L. Koivu. 2009. “The Logic of Historical Explanation in the Social Sciences.” *Comparative Political Studies* 42: pages 114-28 on different meanings of “causation.”

Mahoney, James. 2008. “Toward a Unified Theory of Causality.” *Comparative Political Studies* 41: 412-36.

Pierson, Paul. 2004. “Positive Feedback and Path Dependence,” Chapter 1 in *Politics in Time: History, Institutions, and Social Analysis*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 17-53.

Peter Hedstrom and Richard Swedberg. 1996. “Social Mechanisms,” *Acta Sociologica* 39: 281-308.

### 5. February 5 Meaning

Wolfe, Alan. 1993. “A Distinct Science for a Distinct Species,” Chapter 1 in *The Human Difference: Animals, computers, and the necessity of social science*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1-27.

Hollis, Martin. 1994. "Understanding Social Action," Chapter 7 in *The Philosophy of Social Science: An introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 142-63.

Little, Daniel. 1991. "Interpretation Theory," Chapter 4 in *Varieties of Social Explanation: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Social Science*. Boulder, CO: Westview, 68-90.

Winch, Peter. 1958. Excerpts from "The Idea of a Social Science," in *The Idea of a Social Science and the Relation to Philosophy*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Alasdair MacIntyre, 1962. "A Mistake about Causality in Social Science," in *Philosophy, Politics, and Society (Second Series)*, Peter Laslett and W.G. Runciman, eds. Oxford: Blackwell, pp. 48-70

## **Component B: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches (Homer-Dixon)**

### *6. February 12 Point and counterpoint*

King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane and Sidney Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Selected sections. Princeton University Press.

Mahoney, James. 2010. "The New Methodology of Qualitative Research," *World Politics* 62: 120-47.

Bennett, Andrew and Colin Elman. 2006. "Qualitative Research: Recent Developments in Case Study Methods," *Annual Review of Political Science* 9: 455-76.

Mahoney, James and Gary Goertz, 2006. "A Tale of Two Cultures: Contrasting Qualitative and Quantitative Research." *Political Analysis* 14: 227-249.

### *7. February 26 Bridging the divide*

Collier, David, and Thad Dunning. 2014. "Questioning Set-Theoretic Comparative Methods: Admirable Goals, Problematic Tools, Better Options. Draft.

Humphreys, Macartan, and Alan Jacobs. 2014. "Mixed Methods: A Bayesian Integration of Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches to Causal Inference." Draft.

Mildenberger, Matto. 2014. "Process-tracing, Counterfactual Comparisons and Causal Inference: A New Bridge over the Qualitative-Quantitative Divide." Draft.

Hoffmann, Matthew, and John Riley, Jr. 2002. "The Science of Political Science: Linearity or Complexity in Designing Social Inquiry," *New Political Science* 24: 303-20.



Hall, Peter A. 2003. "Aligning Ontology and Methodology in Comparative Research," in James A. Mahoney and Dietrich Reuschmeyer, ed., *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 373-404.

### **Component C: Quantitative Techniques (Huo)**

#### *8. March 5 Concepts, measurements, and data*

Methodological Arguments:

Sartori, Giovanni. 1970. "Concept Misformation in Comparative Politics," *American Political Science Review* 64: 1033-1053.

Adcock, Robert and David Collier. 2001. "Measurement Validity: A Shared Standard for Qualitative and Quantitative Research," *American Political Science Review* 95: 529-546.

Research Examples:

Elkins, Zachary. 2000. "Gradations of Democracy? Empirical Tests of Alternative Conceptualizations," *American Journal of Political Science* 44: 293-300.

#### *9. March 12 Theory testing*

Methodological Arguments:

Fearon, James. 1991. "Counterfactuals and Hypothesis Testing in Political Science," *World Politics* 43:169-195.

Bates, Robert, et al. 1998. "The Politics of Interpretation: Rationality, Culture, and Transition." *Politics and Society* 26: 603-42.

Lieberson, Stanley. 1985. "Variation, Levels of Analysis and the Research Question," in *Making It Count: The Improvement of Social Research and Theory*. Berkeley: University of California.

Research Examples:

Swank, Duane. 1998. "Globalization and the Taxation of Businesses in Advanced Market Economies," *Political Studies* 46: 671-692.

#### *10. March 19 Data Collection and Analysis Practice*

## Component D: Qualitative Techniques (Homer-Dixon)

11. March 26      *Tools and strategies in qualitative research*

Munck, Gerardo. 2004. "Tools for Qualitative Research," in Henry E. Brady and David Collier, ed., *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards*. Toronto: Rowman and Littlefield. 105-21.

Bennett, Andrew and Colin Elman. 2006. "Complex Causal Relations and Case Study Methods: The Example of Path Dependence." *Political Analysis* **14**: 250-67.

Seawright, Jason, and John Gerring. 2008. "Case Selection Techniques in Case Study Research," *Political Research Quarterly* 61: 294-308.

Mahoney, James. 2007. "Qualitative Methodology and Comparative Politics." *Comparative Political Studies* 40: 122-44.

Snyder, Richard. 2001. "Scaling Down: The Subnational Comparative Method," *Studies in Comparative International Development* 36: 93-110.

Thelen, Kathleen. 1999. "Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Politics," *Annual Review of Political Science* **2**: 369-404.

## Component E: Preparing Dissertation Proposals (Homer-Dixon)

12. April 2      *Proposal writing; mock proposals*

[Note: There is no facilitator this week.]

Przeworski, Adam and Frank Solomon. *The Art of Writing Proposals*. PDF.

Goff, Patti and Gerry Boychuk. *Conceptualizing a Major Research Program*. PDF.

George, Alexander and Andrew Bennett. 2005. Chapter 4 regarding preparing proposals in *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Hancké, Bob. 2009. *Intelligent Research Design: A Guide for Beginning Researchers in the Social Sciences*. Oxford University Press, 27-33.

13. April 9      *Mock proposals*