

1. Course Description

a. Title of a Course

THEORY AND METHODOLOGY OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND ECONOMICS

b. Pre-requisites

Contemporary political theory, contemporary economics, intellectual history

b. Course Type

Compulsory

c. Abstract

The course expounds major methodological approaches applied in contemporary political science and economics. Analyses of established and emerging research programs highlights relations between their basic assumptions and theoretical models, interactions between task setting and the choice of adequate research strategies.

The course departs from core epistemological principles of modern science and particularly social sciences. It further sets off the existing corpus of methods handled in political science and economics, traditionally grouped into quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods. The course explains their subtle nature as methods of measurement and calculus (metretics), of form and configuration studies (morphetics) and of sense and meaning analysis and interpretation (cemiotics).

The course explains how to combine a range of different methods and techniques into a single research design, or develop an interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary research.

An integral part of the course is team-work of students on common research projects undertaken under the guidance of instructors who practice specific methodological techniques and research practices.

2. Learning Objectives

The course objective is to shape students' critical thinking and to help them to face multiple epistemological challenges they would confront in their own research. The course explains major research strategies, working methodologies and theoretical approaches practiced in contemporary social sciences. It informs students to understand their powers and limits, to develop skills necessary for choosing analytical tools adequate to specific research areas and tasks. It promotes development of student cognitive capacities instrumental for development of research projects of their own and related research designs and arrangements.

3. Learning Outcomes

New competencies acquired from the course are:

- contemporary understanding of science norms and values,
- knowledge of crucial theoretical and methodological controversies in social sciences with special emphasis on political science and economics;
- ability to recognize preconceptions behind particular schools of social thought, political and economic theories,
- competencies to differentiate kinds of social science knowledge: positive and normative; theoretical, empirical, and applied, their specific features and interconnections;
- ability to recognize basic types of scientific information and its sources,
- competencies to apply variety of assessment criteria of scientific outcomes – logical, empirical, pragmatic, ethical;
- competencies to master skills of searching social science information and developing bibliographies for standard topics, as well as for new interdisciplinary projects.

4. Course Plan

Lectures

- Introduction to the philosophy and methodology of science
- Ontological and epistemological assumptions of social sciences
- Introduction to the methods of economics
- Introduction to the methods of political science
- Measurement, comparison, analysis, interpretation
- Comparative method in political science (Lars Mjøset)
- Grounded theory and thick comparisons (Lars Mjøset)

Seminars

- On the logic of social sciences
- Methodological divides in political science
- Comparative method in political science (Lars Mjøset)
- Grounded theory and thick comparisons (Lars Mjøset)
- Challenges of (neo)institutionalism(s)
- Challenges of transdisciplinarity

Workshops for team-work

- Quantitative research (with Andrey Korotaev)
- Qualitative research (with Ivan Fomin)
- Qualitative comparative analysis in political studies (with Alisa Shishkina)
- Studying crisis, choice and change in political studies (with Mikhail Ilyin)

5. Reading List

a. Required

1. Adorno T. *On the Logic of the Social Sciences*.
2. Almond G.A. *Separate Tables: Schools and Sects in Political Science // Political Science and Politics*, Vol. 21, No. 4 (Autumn, 1988), pp. 828-842.
3. Bateson G. *Form, Substance and Difference*.
4. *Crisis, Choice, and Change: Historical Studies of Political Development*, Boston, Little Brown, 1973.
5. Dryzek J.S. *Revolutions without Enemies: Key Transformations in Political Science // The American Political Science Review*. Vol. 100. No. 4. 2006. P. 487-492.
6. Mahoney J., Goertz G. *A Tale of Two Cultures: Contrasting Quantitative and Qualitative Research*. *Political Analysis*, vol. 14, no. 3. 2006. P. 227–249.
7. Nicolescu B. *Methodology of transdisciplinarity: Levels of reality, logic of the included middle and complexity*.
8. Popper K. *The Logic of the Social Sciences*.
9. Popper, K. *Of Clouds and Clocks*.
10. Schutz, A. (1954). *Concept and theory formation in the social sciences*. *Journal of Philosophy*, 51, 257-273.
11. Taagepera, Rein (2015) *Logical Models and Basic Numeracy in Social Sciences*. Manuscript. Available at: www.psych.ut.ee/stk/Beginners_Logical_Models.pdf

b. Optional

1. Agassi, J. *Institutional individualism*. *The British Journal of Sociology*, vol. XXVI (2), 1975, 144-155.

2. Blaug, M. *Methodology of Economics*. Cambridge University Press. 1992 (1980). (<http://digamo.free.fr/blaug80.pdf>)
3. Caldas-Coulthard, Carmen Rosa, and Malcolm Coulthard. 1996. *Texts and Practices: Readings in Critical Discourse Analysis*. Taylor & Francis.
4. Coase, R. The nature of the firm // *Economica*, New Series, Vol. 4, No. 16. (1937), pp. 386-405.
5. Colander D. From muddling through to the economics of control. Middlebury College Economics Discussion Paper No 04-21.
6. David Marsh, Gerry Stoker, eds.: *Theory and Methods in Political Science*.
7. Dijk, Teun A. van, ed. 1997. *Discourse as Structure and Process*. Calif.: SAGE.
8. Giddens, A. "New rules of sociological method"
9. Hausman, D. , ed. *Philosophy of economics. An Anthology*. 3d ed. Cambridge University Press. 2007 (<http://digamo.free.fr/hausman82.pdf>)
10. Hudik, M. Why economics is not a science of behavior. *Journal of Economic Methodology*, vol. 18 (2), 2011, 147-162.
11. Katznelson, I., & Milner, H., eds. *Political Science: The State of the Discipline*. NY: Norton, 2002.
12. Mäki, U., ed. *The Economic World View. Studies in the Ontology of Economics*. Cambridge University Press. 2001.
13. Reiss, J. *Philosophy of Economics. Contemporary Introduction*. Routledge. 2013.
14. Risjord, M. *Philosophy of Social Science. A Contemporary Introduction*. Routledge. 2014.
15. Samuels, W. «Truth» and «discourse» in the social construction of reality . *Journal of Post Keynesian Economics*. 1991. Vol. 13, N 4, pp. 511-524.
16. Searle, J. What is an institution? *Journal of the Institutional Economics*, vol. 1 (1), 2005, 1-22.
17. Sen, A. Description as choice. *Oxford Economic Papers*, New Series, Vol. 32, No. 3 (1980), pp. 353-369
18. Shugart, Matthew S and Rein Taagepera (2017) *Votes from Seats: Logical Models of Electoral Systems*. Cambridge University Press.
19. Taagepera, Rein (2008) *Making Social Sciences More Scientific: The Need for Predictive Models*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
20. The New Palgrave. *Dictionary of Economics* (selected items).
21. *The Oxford Handbook of Contextual Political Analysis* / Ed. by R.E. Goodin and Ch. Tilly. Oxford University Press, 2008.
22. *The Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology*. Ed. by J.M. Box-Steffensmeier e.a. Oxford University Press, 2008.

6. Grading System

The final grade will be composed of:

- a preliminary accumulated grade (70%) and a grade for a written exam (30%)
- a preliminary accumulated grade is composed of a grade for the participation in lectures and seminars (35%), a grade for the general contribution in workshops (30%) and a grade for the workshop project presentation (35%).

$$\text{Final assessment} = 0,7 * Q_{\text{prelim.}} + 0,3 * Q_{\text{exam}}$$

$$Q_{\text{prelim.}} = 0,35 * Q_{\text{L\&S activity}} + 0,3 * Q_{\text{workshop}} + 0,35 * Q_{\text{project}}$$

Additional condition: grades below 4 are not rounded.

7. Guidelines for Knowledge Assessment

Students are expected to study recommended literature before respective lectures, seminars and workshops. Participation in seminar discussion and workshop exercises, including team work in class and empirical research project presentation is required. Class presentations should be prepared in PowerPoint.

9. Methods of Instruction

Students are encouraged to interact with colleagues and teachers, propose topics of their projects.