

Syllabus "Theory and Methodology of Political Research"

Approved by
Academic Council
of the Master's Programme
№1 dated 27.06.2017

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Number of credits	5
Contact hours	52
Self-study hours	138
Study year	1
Educational format	Without use of online course

I. Aim, Results of Mastering the Discipline and Prerequisites

The objectives of the course "Theory and Methodology of Political Research" are:

- To gain knowledge of the field of political theory and the public policy theory
- To acquire skills and abilities of the "fundamental" and applied policy research

As a result of studying of the course the student should:

- Know the basics of political theory, the basic concepts of public policy (government, public policy and the public sphere, the state, democracy, civil society), the theoretical and methodological approaches to political research, methodology of public policy analysis
- Be able to apply the concepts and methods of political research in the applied areas of public policy analysis
- Have skills to plan and to conduct political research in the applied areas of public policy analysis

This course is the basic one for Master Degree Programme "Political Analysis and Public Policy"

The main propositions of the course to be used later in the study the following subjects:

- Quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis
- Global actors in public policy
- Think tanks as policy actors
- Social policy and welfare state
- Research Seminar

II. Content of the Course

Topic 1. The Logic of Scientific Discovery.

What is science? The Problem of Induction. The Problem of Demarcation. Falsifiability as a Criterion of Demarcation. Paradigm. Scientific Research Program. Methodology. Epistemology. Ontology. Epistemological Foundations. Methodological Approaches. Methods. Frameworks. Techniques. Criticism and the growth of knowledge. Is science rational? What is the connection between truth and method? Are all the methods of the sciences the same? What is the connection

between the physical sciences and the social sciences? What is relativism and is it dangerous to civil society? What is the role of science in society? How do we categorize kinds of knowledge?

Topic 2. The Logic of Social and Political Research.

The research process: the main stages. Academic and applied political research. Stages of the academic research. Conceptualization (formulation of the theory.) Operationalization (theory). Measurement (choice of adequate methods for the study). Data Visualization. Aggregation of data. Interpretation of results. Scientific presentations. Stages of applied research. Compilation of the research program. Development tools. Data collection. Data processing. Analysis of data. Interpretation of results. Presentation of the results of the study. Relation of stages of "fundamental" and applied research. Problems arising in front of the researcher and analyst at different stages.

Topic 3. Review of Epistemological Foundations, Methodological Approaches, and Methods of Social Sciences.

Choice of epistemological foundation, theoretical and methodological approach of the study. Review of political research epistemological foundation. Idealism, Marxism, Freudianism, positivism, neo-Marxism, post-positivism, structuralism and post-structuralism, post-modernism. Rational choice theory and neoinstitutionalism. Socio-constructivist. Hermeneutic. Subject-institutional approach to the analysis of the political process.

Topic 4. Science 'before Positivism'. Conceptual Analysis

General rationality and challenge by irrational, changing focus from structures to individuals. Epistemological Foundations. Historical, Legal, Institutional approaches. Methods of Formal logic, Description, Analysis, Comparison, Deduction, Induction. Psychoanalysis as an approach. Methods of Interview, Experiment. Political History, Political Philosophy, Comparative Politics. Political Psychology.

Topic 5. (Post-) Positivism: 'hard' laws and methods in social sciences

Approaches: Behaviorism, System approach, Structural functionalism; Phenomenological Sociology, Ethnomethodology, Theory of rational choice, Neo-institutionalism. Methods: Sociological, Economic, Mathematical, Statistical. Comparative Analysis. Sociological methods of data collection and analysis. Quantitative and qualitative methods. Foundation of choice. Advantages and disadvantages.

Topic 6. Interpretivism and Political Analysis Methods.

Approaches: Structural constructivism, Actors Centered. Methods: Case studies, Event analysis, Situational analysis, Impact Analysis, Policy Analysis. Expert and political science methods of data collection and analysis. Methods of Independent review. Group contacts methods of expert evaluation. "Brainstorming". Synectics method. Polylogue method. Group correspondence methods of independent review. Delphi method. Pattern Method. Event analysis. The concept of "event". Stages of event analysis. Auxiliary operations in event analysis. Situational analysis. The concept of the "situation." Stages of a situation analysis. Stakeholder Analysis. Stage of analysis of interested parties in solving the problem. The first stage. Identify Key Stakeholders. The second stage. Assess Stakeholder Interests and the Potential Impact of the Project on These Interests. The third stage. Assess Stakeholder Influence and Importance. The fourth stage. Outline a Stakeholder Participation Strategy Political Forecasting methods. The notion of political forecasting. Search and regulatory expectations. Active and passive, self-fulfilling and self-defeating forecasts. The period of forestalling of forecasts. Scenario methods.

Topic 7. (Post-) Structuralism and Discourse Analysis

Approaches: Social constructivism, Hermeneutic; Communicational, Feminism.

Methods: Qualitative Methods of Text analysis, Discourse analysis; Network Analysis.

Linguistic methods of data collection and analysis. Interpretation and presentation of the results of research

Methods for analysis of texts. Content analysis. Preparing for the content analysis. Conduct substantive content analysis. Implementation of structural content analysis. Discourse analysis. The method of the formal "arrays".

Data processing. Information technology and statistical packages. Opportunities and constraints. Representation of data. Visualizations. Charts and diagrams. Types of diagrams.

Interpretation of data. Features of interpretations of various kinds of information.

III. Grading

Professor assesses both students' work in class and individual students' work.

Work in class: students' activity in discussions on the results of the reading of required literature, and reports on the results of the reading of additional literature. Professor puts marks for the work in class in the work statement. Accumulated score from 10-point scale for the work in class defined before the intermediate or final control – Owork in class.

Essay. Paper - no less than 5,000 symbols. Accumulated score from 10-point scale for essay is determined before the final control – Oessay.

Individual students' work – 3 Homeworks - professor puts in the work statement. Accumulated score from 10-point scale for Individual students' work is determined before the final control – Ohomeworks.

$O_{current} = O_{essay}$

$O_{cumulative} = 0,2 * O_{current} + 0,6 ((O_{homework1} + O_{homework2} + O_{homework3})/3) + 0,2 * O_{work\ in\ class}$

$O_{final} = 0,8 * O_{cumulative\ final} + 0,2 * O_{final\ exam}$

The approximation method for the current, cumulative, and final grade is arithmetic. On re-take the student is not given the opportunity to receive an additional point for the assessment of compensation for the current control.

At the exam student can receive an additional question (additional practical problem to solve, to retake the homework), the answer to which is valued at 1 point.

At the exam the student may receive an additional question (for more practical problem to solve, to retake the homework), the answer to which is valued at 1 point.

IV. Grading Tools

Essay: Conceptual Analysis of one chosen concept.

Analysis of the chosen concept made individually at home. The goal of the essay is to give students understanding of the role of conceptualization in the process of scientific research.

The essay should illustrate the process of moving from broad concept a set of measureable meanings and characteristics.

Steps of analysis:

- semantic and etymological analysis: to define the set of meanings and references of the concept, analyze how have the meanings changed in time and space
- specification of the concept by relating the concept to the broader theory
- distinguishing the concept from other elements (concepts, causal relations, features, meanings, characteristics, cases, which are related or not related to the concept).
- comparing Add indexes which measure the concepts. If you have chosen democracy, find some Democracy Indexes and add them to your paper. Notice, which indicators are used in these indexes.

Homework 1: Review of one chosen “Law” in Social Sciences

Based on the book:

Stein Ugelvik Larsen (ed.) Theory and Methods in Political Science: First Steps to Synthesize a Discipline. Social Science Monographs. 2005.

The homework is done in groups at home, and presented in class. The goal is to give students general understanding of positivist and post-positivist logic in social sciences. Based on the chapters of the book and articles, students should analyze and empirically apply the theoretical hypothesis and outline their limitations.

Students should choose the chapter from the book, read it, and perform an empirical of the hypothesis. For the empirical tests, students may use articles provided to them by the teachers. In case, the chosen hypothesis is not provided with the article, students may choose article on their own, or make their own application of the hypothesis on the gathered data.

After the research process, student should present their findings in class. The presentations should be 15 minutes long and consist of: original formulation of the hypothesis, background, critique, and empirical testing with the focus on limitations of the hypothesis.

Homework 2: Analysis on Social Conflicts

Make and present results of event\situational analysis of a chosen conflict

Homework 3: Discourse Analysis

Make and present results of Discourse Analysis of chosen problem.

V. Sources

5.1. Main Literature

1. Theory and methods in political science / Ed. by D. Marsh, G. Stoker. – 3rd ed. – New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010. – 392 c. – (Political analysis) . – На англ. яз. - ISBN 978-0-230-57627-8. **OR:** Theory and methods in political science / Ed. by D. Marsh, G. Stoker. – 2nd ed. – New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002. – 368 c. – (Political analysis) . – На англ. яз. - ISBN 0-333-94855-6.
2. Political Theory : Methods and Approaches, edited by David Leopold, and Marc Stears, Oxford University Press USA - OSO, 2008. ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/hselibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=415667>.

- Making Political Science Matter : Debating Knowledge, Research, and Method, edited by Sanford F. Schram, and Brian Caterino, New York University Press, 2006. ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/hselibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=2081670>.

5.2. Additional Literature

- Johnson, J. B. Political science research methods / J. B. Johnson, H. T. Reynolds. – 7th ed. – Los Angeles [etc.]: SAGE Publications: CQ Press, 2012. – 646 с. – На англ. яз. - ISBN 978-1-608-71689-0. **OR:** Johnson, J. B. Political science research methods / J. B. Johnson, H. T. Reynolds, J. D. Mycoff. – 6th ed. – Washington: CQ Press, 2008. – 613 с. – На англ. яз. - ISBN 978-0-87289-442-6. **OR:** Johnson, J. B. Political science research methods / J. B. Johnson, H. T. Reynolds, J. D. Mycoff. – 8th ed. – Los Angeles [etc.]: SAGE Publications, 2016. – 632 с. – На англ. яз. - ISBN 978-1-506-30782-4.
- Cambridge Handbook of Experimental Political Science, edited by James N. Druckman, et al., Cambridge University Press, 2011. ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/hselibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=691881>.
- Heck, Ronald H.. Studying Educational and Social Policy : Theoretical Concepts and Research Methods, Routledge, 2004. ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/hselibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=234242>.

5.3. Software

№	Name	Access conditions
1.	MicrosoftWindows 7 Professional RUS MicrosoftWindows 10 MicrosoftWindows 8.1 Professional RUS	<i>From the university's internal network (contract)</i>
2.	Microsoft Office Professional Plus 2010	<i>From the university's internal network (contract)</i>

5.4. Professional databases and reference systems. Internet resources (electronic educational resources)

№	Name	Access conditions
<i>Professional databases and reference systems</i>		
1.	Consultant Plus	<i>From the university's internal network (contract)</i>
2.	URAIT Electronic library system	URL: https://biblio-online.ru/
<i>Internet resources (electronic educational resources)</i>		
1.	Open Education	URL: https://openedu.ru/

5.5. Material and technical support

Classrooms for lectures on the discipline provide for the use and demonstration of thematic illustrations corresponding to the program of the discipline, consisting of:

- PC with Internet access (operating system, office software, antivirus software);
- multimedia projector with remote control.