

## Course Syllabus

Title of the course	<b>Research Seminar (4th year)</b>		
Title of the Academic Programme	Political Science and World Politics		
Type of the course	Obligatory		
Prerequisites	Research Seminars for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd year students Comparative Politics		
ECTS workload	2		
Total indicative study hours	Directed Study	Self-directed study	Total
	30	46	76
Course Overview	<p>The course is devoted to the basics of research activity, methodology and methods in political science. Its goal is twofold. Firstly, the seminar assists the students to prepare their final thesis to be submitted and defended by the end of the undergraduate programme. Secondly, the seminar pictures what it means to be a researcher in the modern academic world, how contemporary political science looks like and why skills in doing research can be useful not just for future researchers, but for those who are going to continue their careers in very different professional fields.</p>		
Intended Learning Outcomes (ILO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Able to identify scientific subject</li> <li>● Able to solve professional problems based on synthesis and analysis</li> <li>● Able to outlines the need for resources and plan its using for solving professional problems</li> <li>● Work with information: find, define and use the information from different sources which required for solving of research and professional problems (including the system approach)</li> <li>● Able to do research, including the problem analysis, setting goals and objectives, defining the research subject, selecting research methods including its quality control</li> <li>● Student is capable of posing research problems relevant to the study of political phenomena and political processes; setting particular research tasks; and putting together a research design.</li> <li>● Student is capable of choosing research methods appropriate for resolving the professional tasks.</li> <li>● Student is capable of retrieving, collecting, processing and analyzing information relevant for achieving goals in the professional field.</li> <li>● Student is capable of executing applied analysis of the political phenomena and political processes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- by using political science methods</li> <li>- and in support of practical decision making process.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Student is capable of reporting the results of the information retrieval and analysis, academic or applied research she/he has conducted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- in various genres (including reviews, policy papers, reports and</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		

	publications pertaining to socio-political subject matter); - and depending on the target audience.				
Teaching and Learning Methods	The course is taught through discussion groups (hereafter DGs) only (no lectures given). DGs are interactive and include discussions over the essential readings and videos that students watch at home. There are also some practical workshops within the course.				
Content and Structure of the Course					
№	Topic / Course Chapter	Total	Directed Study		Self-directed Study
			Lectures	Tutorials	
1	Introduction	4	0	2	2
2	Particularities and Constraints of Social Sciences	8	0	4	4
3	Guidelines for a Good Research Design	32	0	12	20
4	Research Strategies, Methodologies and Methods	32	0	12	20
<b>Total study hours</b>		76	0	30	46
Indicative Assessment Methods and Strategy	The mark for the research proposal (5 pages) adds up to 40% to the overall cumulative grade for the course. Each research proposal is to include all the major elements of the research design discussed in the classroom. The research proposal is to be submitted to the instructor by the end of the fourth week of the second module via LMS. 20% comes from the students' work in class during the DGs (which of course includes the assessment of their quantitative and qualitative contribution to the discussions, etc). The exam adds the final 30%; it is a multiple-choice test which consists of three parts. Part one is a simple one correct answer quiz. Part two is a French-system MCQ with the number of correct answers from null to all. Part three consists of open questions where students can demonstrate their deeper knowledge of the subject.				
Readings / Indicative Learning Resources	<p><u>Mandatory</u> Geddes, B. Paradigms and Sand Castles: Theory Building and Research Design in Comparative Politics. University of Michigan Press, 2003. Brady, H.E., Collier, D. Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards. Rowman &amp; Littlefield Publishers, 2010.</p> <p><u>Optional</u> Ragin, C.C. The Comparative Method. Moving Beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies. University of California Press, 2014. Saris, W.E., Gallhofer, I.N., Design, Evaluation, and Analysis of Questionnaires for Survey Research. John Wiley &amp; Sons, Incorporated, 2014. 'Symposium: Interview Methods in Political Science' // PS: Political Science and Politics, 2002, vol. 35, No 4, p. 663 – 688. Bernard, H.R. Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches. Rowman &amp; Littlefield Publishers, 2017. De Vaus, D. Surveys in social research. Routledge, 2002.</p>				

	Halperin, S., Heath, O. Political Research: Methods and Practical Skills. 2nd edition. NY: Oxford University Press.		
Indicative Self- Study Strategies	<b>Type</b>	<b>+/-</b>	<b>Hours</b>
	Reading for seminars / tutorials (lecture materials, mandatory and optional resources)	+	13
	Assignments for seminars / tutorials / labs		
	E-learning / distance learning (MOOC / LMS)		
	Fieldwork		
	Project work	+	23
	Other (please specify)		
	Preparation for the exam	+	10
Academic Support for the Course	Academic support for the course is provided via LMS, where students can find: guidelines and recommendations for doing the course; guidelines and recommendations for self-study; samples of assessment materials		
Facilities, Equipment and Software	(If required)		
Course Instructor	Dr. Andrey Starodubtsev		

## Annex 1

### Course Content

#### Introduction

Requirements and the course's goal. Political science and international relations. Empirical and normative research. Positivism and interpretivism. Quantitative and qualitative methods.

#### Particularities and Constraints of Social Sciences

Criteria of scientific knowledge, the potential of scientific realism, positivism and interpretivism as approaches to the study of the social phenomena. The methods of induction and deduction, criticism of positivism. Research problem, research question, purpose of the research.

#### Guidelines for a Good Research Design

Is it possible to plan and conduct research without a research question? What types of research questions do exist? What is the role of literature review and how questions are formulated?

How are basic concepts operationalized? What is theory? Hypothesis.

Research designs' structure. Case selection. Research methods.

Conceptualization and operationalization of concepts. Data and how it should be collected and analyzed.

#### Research Strategies, Methodologies and Methods

Comparative research. How surveys should be conducted. Particularities of interview designs.

Ethnographic research. Methods of text analysis. Quantitative research.

## Assessment Methods and Criteria

### Assessment Methods

Types of Assessment	Forms of Assessment	Modules		
		1	2	3
Formative Assessment	Project (research proposal)		*	
	In-class Participation	*	*	*
Interim Assessment (if required)	Assignment (e.g. written assignment)		*	
Summative Assessment	Exam			*

### Assessment Criteria

#### In-class Participation

Grades	Assessment Criteria
«Excellent» (8-10)	A critical analysis which demonstrates original thinking and shows strong evidence of preparatory research and broad background knowledge.
«Good» (6-7)	Shows strong evidence of preparatory research and broad background knowledge. Excellent oral expression.
«Satisfactory» (4-5)	Satisfactory overall, showing a fair knowledge of the topic, a reasonable standard of expression. Some hesitation in answering follow-up questions and/or gives incomplete or partly irrelevant answers.
«Fail» (0-2)	Limited evidence of relevant knowledge and an attempt to address the topic. Unable to offer relevant information or opinion in answer to follow-up questions.

#### Project Work

Grades	Assessment Criteria
«Excellent» (8-10)	A well-structured, analytical presentation of project work. Shows strong evidence and broad background knowledge. In a group presentation all members contribute equally and each contribution builds on the previous one clearly; Answers to follow-up questions reveal a good range and depth of knowledge beyond that covered in the presentation and show confidence in discussion.
«Good» (6-7)	Clearly organized analysis, showing evidence of a good overall knowledge of the topic. The presenter of the project work highlights key points and responds to follow up questions appropriately. In group presentations there is evidence that the group has met to discuss the topic and is presenting the results of that discussion, in an order previously agreed.
«Satisfactory» (4-5)	Takes a very basic approach to the topic, using broadly appropriate material but lacking

	focus. The presentation of project work is largely unstructured, and some points are irrelevant to the topic. Knowledge of the topic is limited and there may be evidence of basic misunderstanding. In a group presentation, most of the work is done by one or two students and the individual contributions do not add up.
«Fail» (0-2)	Fails to demonstrate any appropriate knowledge.

### **Recommendations for students about organization of self-study**

Self-study is organized in order to:

- Systemize theoretical knowledge received at lectures;
- Extending theoretical knowledge;
- Learn how to use legal, regulatory, referential information and professional literature;
- Development of cognitive and soft skills: creativity and self-sufficiency;
- Enhancing critical thinking and personal development skills;
- Development of research skills;
- Obtaining skills of efficient independent professional activities.

Self-study, which is not included into a course syllabus, but aimed at extending knowledge about the subject, is up to the student's own initiative. A teacher recommends relevant resources for self-study, defines relevant methods for self-study and demonstrates students' past experiences. Tasks for self-study and its content can vary depending on individual characteristics of a student. Self-study can be arranged individually or in groups both offline and online depending on the objectives, topics and difficulty degree. Assessment of self-study is made in the framework of teaching load for seminars or tests.

In order to show the outcomes of self-study it is recommended:

- Make a plan for 3-5 presentation which will include topic, how the self-study was organized, main conclusions and suggestions and its rationale and importance.
- Supply the presentation with illustrations. It should be defined by an actual task of the teacher.

### **Recommendations for research proposal**

The student has to write a short research proposal of her or his final thesis. The paper should be submitted to LMS by the end of the 4th week of the 2nd module. If the paper is not submitted at time, the instructor decreases her or his grade for the paper (one point for each day after the deadline). The length of the research proposal is 5 pages (Times New Roman, 12, single line spacing), excluding bibliography.

The paper includes the following elements of the research design:

1. literature review;
2. research problem, research question and the goal of the research;
3. research tasks;
4. theoretical frameworks and hypothesis;
5. research strategy;
6. research methods.

All of these elements should be highlighted in bold in the text of the research project.

If an evidence of plagiarism is found in the paper, the instructor must grade "0" for the research proposal.

## Special conditions for organization of learning process for students with special needs

The following types of comprehension of learning information (including e-learning and distance learning) can be offered to students with disabilities (by their written request) in accordance with their individual psychophysical characteristics:

- 1) *for persons with vision disorders*: a printed text in enlarged font; an electronic document; audios (transferring of learning materials into the audio); an individual advising with an assistance of a sign language interpreter; individual assignments and advising.
- 2) *for persons with hearing disorders*: a printed text; an electronic document; video materials with subtitles; an individual advising with an assistance of a sign language interpreter; individual assignments and advising.
- 3) *for persons with muscle-skeleton disorders*: a printed text; an electronic document; audios; individual assignments and advising.

### Intended Learning Outcomes (ILO) Delivering

Programme ILO(s)	Teaching and Learning Methods for delivering ILO(s)	Indicative Assessment Methods of Delivered ILO(s)
Able to identify scientific subject	Discussions of the recommended literature and students' research projects Preparing research proposals	In-class participation Research proposal
Able to solve professional problems based on synthesis and analysis	Discussions of the recommended literature and students' research projects Preparing research proposals	In-class participation Research proposal
Able to outlines the need for resources and plan its using for solving professional problems	Discussions of the recommended literature and students' research projects Preparing research proposals	Research proposal
Work with information: find, define and use the information from different sources which required for solving of research and professional problems (including the system approach)	Discussions of the recommended literature and students' research projects Preparing research proposals	In-class participation Research proposal
Able to do research, including the problem analysis, setting goals and objectives, defining the research subject, selecting research methods including its quality control	Discussions of the recommended literature and students' research projects Preparing research proposals	In-class participation Research proposal
Student is capable of posing research problems relevant to the study of political phenomena and political processes; setting particular research tasks; and putting together a research design	Discussions of the recommended literature and students' research projects Preparing research proposals	In-class participation Research proposal
Student is capable of choosing research methods appropriate for resolving the professional tasks	Discussions of the recommended literature and students' research projects	In-class participation Research proposal

	Preparing research proposals	
Student is capable of retrieving, collecting, processing and analyzing information relevant for achieving goals in the professional field	Discussions of the recommended literature and students' research projects Preparing research proposals	In-class participation Research proposal
Student is capable of executing applied analysis of the political phenomena and political processes - by using political science methods - and in support of practical decision making process	Discussions of the recommended literature and students' research projects Preparing research proposals	In-class participation Research proposal
Student is capable of reporting the results of the information retrieval and analysis, academic or applied research she/he has conducted: - in various genres (including reviews, policy papers, reports and publications pertaining to socio-political subject matter); - and depending on the target audience	Discussions of the recommended literature and students' research projects Preparing research proposals	Research proposal