

Federal State Autonomous Educational Institution of Higher Education National Research University "Higher School of Economics"

Department of Political Science

Course syllabus

Project seminar

1. Course Description

- a. Title of a Course: "Project seminar"
- b. Pre-requisites: For the development of the discipline students must have basic knowledge in political science, qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis
- c. Course Type: compulsory
- d. Abstract

The course intends to familiarize students with the study and practical mastering of ways of methodological approximation of qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis in modern political science. It is designed as a review of theoretical foundations followed by a practical component in the form of preparation of group projects and presentations by students. The practical part of the course is based on qualitative and quantitative content analysis strategies, as well as a method of qualitative comparative analysis (QCA), which involves establishing a connection between a set of conditions and a set of results (responses) of certain processes. This allows one to correlate the impact of various factors (socio-political background, conditions, remote and immediate causes, triggers, etc.) on various political events, in particular protest actions, anti-government demonstrations, etc.

2. Learning Objectives

The goal of the project is to gain experience in selecting the appropriate strategy and design for the analysis, as well as the skills of applying qualitative and quantitative content analysis strategies and the method of qualitative comparative analysis in modern political science. The course also aims at acquainting students with main theories and practical applicability of alternative qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis and advancing their skills of research design, project work and presentation.

3. Learning Outcomes

Participation in the course will help students to:

- acquire knowledge on the opportunities of using combined qualitative and quantitative methods in political research,

- achieve the ability to choose a strategy suitable for a particular research;
- get skills of using content analysis and qualitative comparative analysis in their different variations;
- gather material for improving the choice of research strategy;
- get experience of project work and research results presentation.

4. Course Plan

	Section title	Classroom hours	Project work	Self-study
1	Qualitative vs. quantitative methods in modern social and political science	4		16
2	Basics of academic writing in empirical research projects	6		16
3	Data collection and field research	6		18
4	Qualitative comparative analysis and applying of QCA in social and political science research	6		18
5	Content analysis as a data processing method in social science	6		18
6	Total			114

Theme 1. Qualitative vs. quantitative methods in modern social and political science

The paradigms of scientific knowledge. Discussions on interdisciplinarity. World-systems approach. Qualitative and quantitative methods in political science: pros and cons. Strengths and weaknesses of the respective models.

Factors on which the choice of strategy and research methods depends: topic, number of cases, sample size, etc.

Combinatorics. Configurational Comparative Methods. Qualitative Comparative Analysis.

Contents Analysis.

Readings (required)

- Wallerstein I., "World-System Analysis," in A. Giddens & J.H. Turner, eds., *Social Theory Today* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1987), 309-24.
- Kuhn, Thomas S. *The structure of scientific revolutions*. University of Chicago press, 2012.
- Seawright, J. and Gerring, J., 2008. Case selection techniques in case study research: A menu of qualitative and quantitative options. *Political Research Quarterly*, 61(2), pp.294-308.
- McNabb, D.E., 2015. *Research methods for political science: Quantitative and qualitative methods*. Routledge.
- Gerring, J., 2008. Case selection for case-study analysis: qualitative and quantitative techniques. In *The Oxford handbook of political methodology*.

Theme 2. Basics of academic writing in empirical research projects

The choice of purpose, audience and style of academic paper.

Main semantic blocks of the text, the logic and coherence of the study.

Research designs.

Building an academic text: research question, the novelty of the study, hypotheses, literature review models, the rationale for the choice of methods, variables, the chronological framework of the study, interpretation of the results, etc.

References. Citation styles. Journals' guidelines.

Presentation skills.

Readings (required)

- Swales, John and Christine B. Feak. *Academic Writing for Graduate Students: Essential Skills and Tasks*. 2nd edition. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2004.
- Turabian, Kate L. *A manual for writers of research papers, theses, and dissertations: Chicago style for students and researchers*. University of Chicago Press, 2013.
- O'Connor, Maeve. *Writing successfully in science*. Routledge, 2002.

Theme 3. Data collection and field research.

Conducting field research.

Data collection and field research techniques: direct observation, interviews, analysis of documents and other information, overt observation, experiments, etc.

Qualitative and quantitative aspects of field research.

Readings (required)

- Singleton Jr, Royce, et al. *Approaches to social research*. Oxford University Press, 1988.

- Van de Ven, Andrew H., and Marshall Scott Poole. "Field research methods." *The Blackwell companion to organizations*(2017): 867-888.

Theme 4. Qualitative comparative analysis and applying of QCA in social and political science research

Qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) as a method of social and political research.

CsQCA, fsQCA, mvQCA

Areas in which such an analysis tool can be applied

Justification of the choice of cases, variables and chronological framework for the design study.

Discussion on the effectiveness of the QCA model and its applicability in a broader context.

Case-study. QCA analysis of the Arab spring

Readings (required)

- Ragin, C.C. and Rihoux, B.. Qualitative comparative analysis (QCA): State of the art and prospects. *Qualitative Methods*, 2(2), 2004.
- Schneider, C.Q. and Wagemann, C. Standards of good practice in qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) and fuzzy-sets. *Comparative Sociology*, 9(3), 2010. Pp.397-418.
- Zschoch, M.A., 2011. *Configurational Comparative Methods: Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) and Related Techniques*, Rihoux Benoit and Ragin Charles, eds., Thousand Oaks CA: Sage Publications, 2009, pp. xxv, 209. *Canadian Journal of Political Science/Revue canadienne de science politique*, 44(3), pp.743-746.

Theme 5. Content analysis as a data processing method in social science

Qualitative content analysis: general approach.

Quantitative content analysis: general approaches and techniques.

The choose of content analysis strategy, materials and codes for the analysis.

Discussion on the effectiveness of the QCA model and its applicability in a broader context.

Readings (required)

- Attridge-Stirling, J. (2001). Thematic networks: an analytic tool for qualitative research. *Qualitative research*, 1(3), 385-405.
- Hsieh, H. F., & Shannon, S. E. (2005). Three approaches to qualitative content analysis. *Qualitative health research*, 15(9), 1277-1288.
- Zhang, Y., & Wildemuth, B. M. (2016). *Qualitative analysis of content. Applications of social research methods to questions in information and library science.*

Additional reading

- Boyatzis, R. E. (1998). Transforming qualitative information: Thematic analysis and code development. sage.
- Saldaña, J. (2009). The coding manual for qualitative researchers. Lontoo: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Riff, D., Lacy, S., & Fico, F. (2014). Analyzing media messages: Using quantitative content analysis in research. Routledge.
- Barringer, B. R., Jones, F. F., & Neubaum, D. O. (2005). A quantitative content analysis of the characteristics of rapid-growth firms and their founders. *Journal of business venturing*, 20(5), 663-687.

5. Reading List

a. Required

- Gerring, J., 2008. Case selection for case-study analysis: qualitative and quantitative techniques. In *The Oxford handbook of political methodology*.
- Kuhn, Thomas S. *The structure of scientific revolutions*. University of Chicago press, 2012.
- McNabb, D.E., 2015. *Research methods for political science: Quantitative and qualitative methods*. Routledge.
- O'Connor, Maeve. *Writing successfully in science*. Routledge, 2002.
- Ragin C. C. *Fuzzy-Set Social Science*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.
- Ragin C. C. *The Comparative Method. Moving Beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies*. Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1987.
- Ragin, Charles C. *The Comparative Method: Moving Beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies*. University of California Press, 1987. P. 84.
- Rihoux B., Ragin C. *Configurational Comparative Methods: QCA And Related Techniques // Applied Social Research Methods Series, Vol. 51*. Sage, 2009.
- Rihoux, B., & Grimm, H. *Innovative comparative methods for policy analysis: Beyond the quantitative–qualitative divide*. New York: Springer, 2010.
- Seawright, J. and Gerring, J., 2008. Case selection techniques in case study research: A menu of qualitative and quantitative options. *Political Research Quarterly*, 61(2), pp.294-308.
- Singleton Jr, Royce, et al. *Approaches to social research*. Oxford University Press, 1988.
- Swales, John and Christine B. Feak. *Academic Writing for Graduate Students: Essential Skills and Tasks*. 2nd edition. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2004.

- Turabian, Kate L. A manual for writers of research papers, theses, and dissertations: Chicago style for students and researchers. University of Chicago Press, 2013.
- Van de Ven, Andrew H., and Marshall Scott Poole. "Field research methods." The Blackwell companion to organizations(2017): 867-888.
- Wallerstein I, "World-System Analysis," in A. Giddens & J.H. Turner, eds., Social Theory Today (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1987), 309-24.

b. Optional

- Barringer, B. R., Jones, F. F., & Neubaum, D. O. (2005). A quantitative content analysis of the characteristics of rapid-growth firms and their founders. Journal of business venturing, 20(5), 663-687.
- Boyatzis, R. E. (1998). Transforming qualitative information: Thematic analysis and code development. sage.
- Ragin, C.C., Drass, K.A. and Davey, S. Fuzzy-set/qualitative comparative analysis 2.0. Tucson, Arizona: Department of Sociology, University of Arizona, 2006.
- Riff, D., Lacy, S., & Fico, F. (2014). Analyzing media messages: Using quantitative content analysis in research. Routledge.
- Rihoux, B., Rezsohazy, I., & Bol, D. Qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) in public policy analysis: An Extensive Review. German Policy Studies, 7(3), 2011. P. 9–82.
- Saldaña, J. (2009). The coding manual for qualitative researchers. Lontoo: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Vancea M. RAGIN, Charles C. The Comparative Method: Moving Beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies. Fuzzy-Set Social Science. Papers: revista de sociologia. 2006(80):299-301.

6. Grading System

Type of activity	Contribution, %
Activity at seminars	30
Project work (mid-term evaluation)	40
Final presentation and text	30

Total grade: 10

Work on research projects is performed in groups, however, each participant of the course receives a separate assessment depending on the contribution to the joint work, the final presentation and text, as well as activity in discussing colleagues' projects at seminars.

7. Methods of Instruction

Lectures, master classes, self-study and project work. In the framework of the course it is also planned to hold consultations and seminars on topics and methods of research chosen by students.

8. Special Equipment and Software Support (if required)

Equipment necessary for powerpoint presentations, Internet access.