

# **POLI-4110FA: Research Methodology**

## **Course Outline**

Fall 2019

Instructor: Zubairu Wai, PhD

Office: RB 2041

Office Hours: Wednesday 2:30-4:00PM (or by appointment)

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**Meeting: Wednesday 11:30AM-2:30PM; RB-2026**

### **Course Descriptions**

What is research methodology? How are research methods related to the politics of knowledge production in the social sciences and humanities? What are some of the diverse ways that research can be approached and what are their implications for the types of knowledge we produce? In this course, we will examine various methodological approaches to social science research and consider their implications for the politics of knowledge production. The intent is to familiarise students with the necessary tools for crafting social science research. We will ask how different theories and politics of knowing shape the kind of research we engage in, and how different social scientists think about knowledge production and how that ultimately reflects the methods they employ. We will explore the conditions of knowledge production, the methodological diverseness of social scientific practice, the assumptions underpinning the various methodological approaches, and the implications of adopting specific research methods.

### **Learning Objectives**

By the end of the course, students should:

- Be able to craft social research
- Have a critical understanding of the practices, techniques, methodologies and ethics of doing research and producing knowledge in the social sciences;
- Be conversant with the different methodological approaches to social scientific practice;
- Be familiar with the ontological and epistemological assumptions underpinning these approaches, and their implications for social scientific research practice;
- Be acquainted with the necessary tools for crafting social science research and be able to design both quantitative and qualitative research proposals
- Have a critical understanding of the power-knowledge regimes that underpin social research

### **Course Structure, Requirements and Evaluation**

This course comprises 12 weekly seminars based on student-led presentations of the course materials. We will meet every Wednesdays between 11:30AM and 2:30pm in RB-

2026. As the success of the course will depend on attendance, class participation and critical engagement with the course material, students registered on the course are required to regularly attend classes, do the assigned readings before coming to class, do at least one class presentation on the weekly assigned readings, and take part in class discussions. They are also required to complete an annotated bibliography, engage in group work and submit a final research proposal.

The final grade will be weighted and calculated in the following manner:

Attendance and participation:	10%
Presentation:	20%
Annotated bibliography:	20%
Group Assignment (Quantitative Research Proposal):	25%
Individual Assignment (Qualitative Research proposal):	25%

### **1. Attendance and participation: (worth 10% of final grade)**

Attendance and participation are crucial for the success of the course. Students registered on the course are required to attend classes regularly, do the assigned readings before coming to class and take part in class discussions. A register of attendance will be kept throughout the duration of the course.

**2. Presentation: (worth 20% of final grade):** Each class will be organised around student-led presentations. Typically, a class presentation should not be more than 20 minutes per presenter. Every student must do at least one class presentation based on the identified themes and assigned readings per week. The order of presentation will be decided on the first day of class. Presentations are a major component of student evolution in the course. They are intended to help develop and enhance their ability to critically summarise, analyse and present academic material in a concise and systematic manner. A good presentation requires careful planning, proper organisation and analytical clarity. Presentations should be well organised, capable of critically summarising and commenting on the assigned readings, drawing out the main points, how they relate to the theme of the week and how the individual readings also relate to each other: What is the main point /argument of the readings? How are the ideas developed/presented? How do they relate to the theme/topic of the week? How do the individual readings relate to or complement each other? What are their limitations? The presentation will be evaluated based on grasp of the literature, clarity of oral presentation of the material, attending to the ideas, and critically engaging with, and commenting on the material.

### **3. Short annotated bibliography: (worth 20% of final grade):**

This assignment should be approximately 7-8 double spaced pages. It will have *two parts*: an analytical section and an annotated bibliography:

The first part of the assignment involves identifying a theme or topic of your interest.

1) Identify a theme/topic for investigation that we will/have covered in the course and why you chose it (one paragraph, about 100 words).

2) Develop a thesis statement on the topic (offers a concise summary of the main point/claim/argument of an essay).

3) Explain why your research question is important (one paragraph, about 100 words)

4) Develop three supporting arguments to support your thesis and briefly explain why they are important to your argument (about 75-100 words for each argument explanation).

\*Part 1 should be about 2 pages in total: first 3 sections = about one page in length; section 4 = about one page in length.

The second part involves critically compiling an annotated bibliography in support of theme you have selected. An annotated bibliography is a series of brief but critical summaries of academic sources. These sources will be chosen on the basis that they support your thesis and the arguments outlined in part one. You will need a minimum of 10 entries. The quality of your sources is very important and will be closely assessed. Your sources must be acceptable academic sources: specifically, books and peer-reviewed journal articles. (**No Wikipedia entries, news articles, popular books, popular internet sites and so on**). As well, the quality of your annotations will be critically assessed based on the following:

- 1) A Brief summary of the source's main argument (one paragraph, about 100 words).
- 2) What the strengths/limitations of this source are (one paragraph, about 100 words).
- 3) How the source contributes to supporting your thesis statement and the supporting arguments (one paragraph, about 100 words).

Please note that all formatting guidelines (see notes below) apply to this assignment. This is a great opportunity to start thinking about a possible topic for your final essay. We will discuss this further in class.

#### **4. Group Assignment: Quantitative Research Proposal (worth 25% of final grade):**

The group assignment is intended to test knowledge of quantitative research methods as well as the ability to work together as a team in developing a research proposal. Students bear the responsibility for forming their respective groups, each of which should comprise 3-5 members. Each group will be graded as a unit, which means that every member bears responsibility for the success of the group. The group proposal should be between 10 and 15 (double-spaced) pages long.

#### **5. Individual Assignment: Qualitative Research Proposal (25% of final grade):**

The final assignment is an individual research proposal. It is intended to test your knowledge of qualitative research methods. It is an opportunity to demonstrate your ability to work independently in developing/crafting a research proposal. The proposal should be between 10 and 15 (double-spaced) page long.

### **Notes on Written Assignments:**

Written assignments are a major component of student evolution and evaluation in the course. The assignments are intended to help develop and enhance your writing and analytical skills. Specific to this course, they are also intended to help develop your ability to conceive a research project on a chosen topic. In addition to citation, formatting, and grammatical rules, all written work will be evaluated based on organisation, clarity of style, grasp of the topic, the systematic and coherent way ideas are presented, and your overall ability to craft a research project both as an individual researcher and as a member of a group.

### **Please Note:**

- It is the responsibility of every student to choose their own topics based on their individual interests. However, such topics should first be discussed and cleared with the instructor.
- All written assignments should have a title page indicating the title of the work; the name of the student and their student number; the course number, the name of the instructor. All written work should be **doubled-spaced, Times New Roman 12-point fonts, 1-inch margin**. Manipulating the margins or font size will be penalised.
- All written work must be properly organised and free of spelling and grammatical errors. They must include appropriate citations and complete bibliography of work cited. Students are required to cite all facts and figures that are not common knowledge, as well as ideas that are borrowed from other authors. Failure to do so will result in substantial penalty in calculating your grade for the assignment and overall grade for the course.
- For citation and referencing, **use only the Chicago referencing style for all written work** (see the link below for a quick guide):  
[https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools\\_citationguide/citation-guide-1.html](https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide/citation-guide-1.html)
- All written assignments must be submitted on the date specified in the course outline. **Late submissions will be subject to a penalty of 2% a day**, including weekends. Assignments will not be accepted two weeks beyond the due date.

Exceptions will be made only in those cases of special circumstances, (e.g. illness, bereavement) and where the student has verifiable documentary evidence. In these circumstances, students may seek extension, prior to, not after, the due date. No retroactive extensions will be granted.

- **Failure to follow these instructions will result in a 20% deduction from the total points scored for the assignment, in addition to the 2% a day penalty for late submission.**

### **Required texts:**

1. W. Lawrence Neuman, *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches 7e* (Pearson, 2014)
2. Linda T. Smith, *Decolonising Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples 2e* (London: Zed Books, 1999)
3. David Marsh and Gerry Stoker (eds.), *Theory and Methods in Political Science, 3e* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010)
4. Additional Course material on D2L

### **Students with Special Needs**

Students with special needs may request accommodations in accordance with the Senate Policy on Students with Disabilities. Such students should at the earliest opportunity advise the Student Accessibility Services, and the instructor of such needs so that appropriate arrangements can be made to accommodate their needs. Those who encounter extenuating circumstances which may interfere with the successful completion of the course should, as soon as possible, discuss these circumstances with the instructor and the Student Accessibility Services.

### **Lakehead Policy on Academic Dishonesty**

As academic integrity is crucial to the pursuit of university education, students are always expected to uphold the academic honour code and are advised to familiarise themselves with the university's policy on academic dishonesty, especially in relation, but not limited, to plagiarism, cheating, impersonation, recycling an old assignment or submitting the same assignment in two different courses, and so forth. In order to make sure that a degree awarded by Lakehead University is a reflection of the honest efforts and individual academic achievement of each student, Lakehead University treats cases of academic dishonesty very seriously and severely penalises those caught in violation of

the university's policy on academic honesty. Please make sure that you are familiar with the regulations regarding instructional offences.

### **Policy on Electronic Devices**

Cell phones are distracting and therefore should be turned off and kept out of sight during lectures. The instructor will assume that a visible phone is being used. In such a scenario, the offending student may be asked to leave the class. As well, audio or video recording of lectures by students is only allowed with the prior consent of the instructor or as part of an approved accommodation plan. Where permission is sought and granted, recorded material should be used solely for the student's private use, and not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent from the instructor.

### **Email Policy:**

While I welcome emails from students, they are not a substitute for in-person communication. My scheduled office hours are stated in this outline. If you cannot make those times, we may always schedule to meet at times outside the office hours. Email will be answered within two business days. Except where instructed to do so, or where prior permission has been granted by the instructor, students are discouraged from submitting any class assignments by email. Please use email only for quick queries and to set up appointments out of regularly scheduled office hours. All students are required to have a valid Lakehead email address. It is your responsibility to maintain your email address in good working order. The University expects you to correspond with your professors through your official university email address, and not through other email accounts such as Hotmail or yahoo. Failure to receive important class announcements and messages from your professors because of a faulty email account (for example, an account which screens out emails as junk mail; bounced messages because of overloaded caches) are not legitimate excuses. Forwarding your Lakehead email to a Hotmail, Gmail, Yahoo or other type of email accounts is not advisable. In some cases, messages from your Lakehead addresses sent to Hotmail, or Yahoo accounts may be filtered as junk mail, which means that emails from your professors may end up in your spam or junk mail folder.

### **Classroom Civility**

Debates and disagreements are a healthy part of the processes of learning. However, debate does not provide the cover or excuse for conducting ourselves in manners that disrupt teaching and learning or create hurt, discomfort, and toxic environment in the classroom. In this, we are all required to conduct ourselves at all time in a manner that is collegial and respectful. No racist, homophobic, or sexist comment will be tolerated.

## Course Schedule

### Week 1 (September 4): Introduction to the Course;

House Keeping

#### PART I: - BASIC PROBLEMS WITH SOCIAL SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE

### Week 2 (September 11): Knowledge Production in the Social Sciences

#### Readings

Neuman, *Social Research Methods*, Chapter 1, & 2

Charles Taylor, 'Interpretation and the Sciences of Man,' *The Review of Metaphysics* 25, no. 1 (1971), pp. 3-51

Thomas S. Kuhn, 'The Natural and Human Sciences,' in Klemke et. al. (eds.) *Introductory Readings in the Philosophy of Science* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus, 1998), pp. 128 – 132

Sandra Harding, *Whose Science, Whose Knowledge: Thinking from Women's Lives* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University press, 1990) Ch. 1

Donna Haraway, 'Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective,' *Feminist Studies* 14, no. 3 (Autumn, 1988), pp. 575-599

**[Note: 16 September is the final date of registration]**

### Week 3 (September 18): Ontology, Epistemology, & Methodology

#### Readings

Neuman, *Social Research Methods*, Chapter 4

Paul Furlong & David Marsh, 'A Skin Not a Sweater: Ontology and Epistemology in Political Science' in David Marsh and Gerry Stoker (eds.), *Theory and Methods in Political Science*, 3e (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp. 184-211

Stephen R. Bates and Laura Jenkins, 'Teaching and Learning Ontology and Epistemology in Political Science', *Politics* 27, no.1 (2007), pp. 55–63

Abraham Kaplan, 'Methodology' in *The Conduct of Inquiry: Methodology for Behavioural Science* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2002), pp. 3-32

Peter Hall, 'Aligning Ontology and Methodology in Comparative Research,' in James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer (eds.), *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003)

#### **Week 4 (September 25): Theory, Method, and Modes of Inquiry**

##### Readings

Neuman, *Social Research Methods*, Chapter 3

Robert C. Bishop, 'Five Modes of Inquiry', in his *Philosophy of the social Sciences: An Introduction* (New York: Continuum, 2007), pp. 45 – 77

Robert W. Cox, 'Social Forces, States and World Orders: Beyond International Relations Theory,' *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 10, no. 2 (1981), pp. 126-155

David Marsh, 'Meta-Theoretical Issues' in David Marsh and Gerry Stoker (eds.), *Theory and Methods in Political Science*, 3e (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp.213-229

Ian Shapiro, 'Problems, Methods, and Theories in the Study of Politics, or What's Wrong with Political Science and What to Do about It,' *Political Theory* 30, no. 4, (Aug. 2002), pp. 596-619

#### **Week 5 (October 2): Power/Knowledge and Inquiry**

##### Readings

Linda T. Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies*; Introduction & Chapters 1, 2, & 3

Anibal Quijano, 'Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism, and Latin America,' *Nepantla: Views of the South* 1, no. 3 (2000), pp. 533-580

Michel Foucault, 'Two Lectures' and 'Truth and Power' in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972–1977*; [Edited by Colin Gordon] (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), pp. 78-133

Robert Young, 'Edward Said and Colonial Discourse.' Chapter 26 in his *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2001), pp. 383-394;

### **PART II: - RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS**

#### **Week 6 (October 9): Designing Social Science Research**

##### Readings

Neuman, *Social Research Methods*, Chapters 5 & 6

Peter John, 'Quantitative Methods' in David Marsh and Gerry Stoker (eds.), *Theory and Methods in Political Science*, 3rd ed. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010); pp. 267 – 284

Norman Blaikie, 'Preparing Research Designs' in *Designing Social Research* 3e (London: Polity, 2010), pp. 13-34

Bob Hancké, 'The Challenge of Research Design' in David Marsh and Gerry Stoker (eds.), *Theory and Methods in Political Science*, 3e (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp. 233-248

**Week 7 (October 16): [Fall Study Break: 14 – 18 October; NO CLASS]**

**Week 8 (October 23): Measurement and Sampling**

Reading

Neuman, *Social Research Methods*, Chapters 7 & 8

**[Note: Annotated bibliography is due in class on October 23]**

**Week 9 (October 30): Surveys and Experiments**

Readings

Neuman, *Social Research Methods*, Chapters 9, 10, 11 & 12

**Week 10 (November 6): Ethnography and Field Research**

Reading

Neuman *Social Research Methods*, Chapter 13

Johannes Fabian, 'Time and the Emerging Other', in his *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes its Object* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983 [2002], pp. 1-35

Mary Louise Pratt, 'Fieldwork in Common Places' in *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*, edited by James Clifford and George E. Marcus, (Berkeley, CA: University of California press, 1986)

Lorraine Bayard de Volo and Edward Schatz, 'From the Inside Out: Ethnographic Methods in Political Research' *PS: Political Science and Politics* 37, no. 2, (2004), pp. 267-271

**[Note: Group assignment due in class on 6 November]**

**[Note: 9 November is the final date for withdrawal without academic penalty]**

**Week 11 (November 13): Historical Research and Comparative Methods**

Reading

Neuman *Social Research Methods*, Chapter 14

Jonathan Hopkin, 'The Comparative Methods' in in David Marsh and Gerry Stoker (eds.), *Theory and Methods in Political Science*, 3rd ed. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010); pp. 285 – 307

Philip McMichael, 'Incorporating Comparison within a World-Historical Perspective: An Alternative Comparative Method,' *American Sociological Review* 55, No. 3 (1990), pp. 385-397

Barbara Geddes, 'How the Cases You Choose Affect the Answers You Get: Selection Bias in Comparative Politics,' *Political Analysis* 2, (1990), pp. 131-150

Ian Lustick, "History, Historiography, and Political Science: Multiple Historical Records and the Problem of Selection Bias," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 90, 1996, pp. 605-618

## **Week 12 (November 20): Discourse Analysis and Deconstruction**

### Reading

Neuman *Social Research Methods*, Chapter 11

Jennifer Milliken, 'The Study of Discourse in International Relations: A Critique of Research and Methods' *European Journal of International Relations* 5, no.2, (1990), pp. 225-54.

Aubrey Neal, 'Promise and Practice of Deconstruction' *Canadian Journal of History* 30, (1995), pp. 49 – 76.

Robert J.C. Young, *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2001), pp. 395- 426.

Jonathan Crush, 'Introduction: Imagining Development' in Jonathan Crush (ed.) *Power of Development* (New York: Routledge, 1995), pp. 1-26

## **Week 13 (November 27): Worlds and Knowledges Otherwise: Indigenous Research Agendas**

### Reading

Linda T. Smith, *Decolonising Methodologies*; chapters 6-10

Arturo Escobar, 'Worlds and Knowledges Otherwise: The Latin American Modernity/ Coloniality Research Program,' *Cultural Studies* 21, Nos. 2 & 3 (2007), pp. 179-210

**[Note: Final paper, Qualitative Research Proposal, is due on 27 November]**

**There will be no exam for this course**