



Department of Political Science  
Political Science 4110 WA  
**Research Methodology**  
Winter 2012

Time: Tuesday: 2:30pm - 5:30 pm;  
Place: RB 3046

Instructor: Zubairu Wai  
Office: RB 2041  
Office Hours: Tuesdays 1pm – 2pm  
Email: zubawai@lakeheadu.ca

### **Course Descriptions**

What is research methodology? How are research methods related to the practice and politics of knowledge production in the social sciences and humanities? What are the diverse ways in which knowledge and research can be approached? In this course, we will examine various methodological approaches to social science inquiry. The course seeks to acquaint students with the necessary tools for crafting and undertaking social science research. We will ask how different theories and politics of knowing and being shape the kind of research we engage in, and how different social scientists think about knowledge production and how that ultimately reflects the methods that they employ. We will explore the conditions of knowledge production, the methodological diverseness of social scientific practice, the assumptions underpinning the various epistemological positions and methodological approaches, and the implications of deploying specific research methods. Students will engage in various exercises geared towards familiarising them with the practices, techniques and ethics of research and knowledge production. The course will be part lecture and part seminar, based on student's presentations, class discussions, group work and individual assignments.

### **Requirements and Evaluation**

Students are required to regularly attend classes, do the assigned readings before coming to class, do at least one class presentations as assigned per week and take part in class discussions; complete a five-page (double-spaced) critical reflection paper, engage in a group work and submit a 8 – 10 page (double-spaced, fonts 12) research proposal. All written work must be submitted on time.

The final grade will be calculated in the following manner:

Presentation:	20%
Critical Review:	20%
Group Work:	25%
Research proposal:	35%

### **Note:**

The critical review essay is a five-page double-spaced [12 point fonts] essay that critically engages with one of the major questions in the social sciences. The group work is a quantitative

research proposal and the final paper is a full length research proposal based on qualitative research techniques and methods.

### **Required texts:**

1. W. Lawrence Neuman, *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative 7e* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2009)
2. Linda T. Smith, *Decolonising Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (London: Zed Books, 1999)
3. David Marsh & Gerry Stoker (eds.) *Theory and Methods in Political Science 3e* (New York: 2010)
4. Additional readings in course Kit

### **Students with Special Needs**

Students with special needs can request accommodations in accordance with the Senate Policy on Students with Disabilities. Please endeavour at the earliest opportunity to advise the Student Accessibility Services (formerly the Learning Assistance Centre) and the course instructor of your special needs so that appropriate arrangements can be made to accommodate such 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 course instructor and the Student Accessibility Services.

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

Students are expected to uphold the academic honour code at all times and are advised to familiarise themselves with the university policy on academic dishonesty, especially in relation, but not limited, to plagiarism, cheating, impersonation etc. Violation of this policy can lead to serious consequences.

## **Course Schedule**

### **Week 1 (Jan. 10): Introduction to the Course**

### **PART I: - SOME BASIC PROBLEMS WITH KNOWLEDGE**

### **Week 2 (Jan. 17): Science and Social Inquiry**

#### **Readings**

W. Lawrence Neuman, *Social Research Methods*, Chs. 1 & 2

Samir Okasha, *Philosophy of Science: a Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Ch. 1: 'What is Science?', pp. 1 – 17

Robert C. Bishop, *Philosophy of the social Sciences: An Introduction* (New York: Continuum, 2007): Chapter 1 "Conceptions of Science"; pp. 7 – 28

Karl Popper, "Science: Conjectures and Refutations", in in Klemke et. al. (eds.) *Introductory Readings in the Philosophy of Science* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus, 1998), pp. 38 – 47

Charles Taylor, "Interpretation and the Sciences of Man", in Klemke et. al. (eds.) *Introductory Readings in the Philosophy of Science* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus, 1998), pp. 110 – 127

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

### **[Thursday 19 January is the Final Date of Registration]**

#### **Week 3 (Jan. 24): Ontology and Epistemology in Social Inquiry**

##### Readings

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

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;

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 (Jan. 31): Theory, Methodology and Modes of Inquiry**

##### Readings

W. Lawrence Neuman, *Social Research Methods*, Chs. 3 & 4

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

David Marsh, "Meta-Theoretical Issues" in David Marsh and Gerry Stoker (eds.), *Theory and Methods in Political Science*, 3rd ed. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010); pp. 212 – 231

Robert W. Cox, "Social Forces, States, and World Order: Beyond International Relations Theory," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 2, (1981)

Abraham Kaplan, "Methodology" in his *The Conduct of Inquiry: Methodology for Behavioural Science* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1964 [2002]), pp. 3 – 32

#### **Week 5 (Feb. 7): Power, Knowledge and Social Inquiry**

##### Readings

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

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

Linda T. Smith, *Decolonising Methodologies*; Introduction; Chs. 1, 2 & 3

Jonathan Crush, "Introduction: Imagining Development" in Crush (ed.) *Power of Development* (New York: Routledge, 1995); pp. 1 – 23

Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage, 1978); Introduction

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

### **Week 6 (Feb 14): Quantitative Research Design**

#### Readings

W. Lawrence Neuman, *Social Research Methods*, Chapters. 6 & 7

Bob Hancké, "The Challenge of Research Design", **and** 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. 233 – 248 and 267 – 284

Norman Blaikie, *Designing Social Research* 2e (London: Polity, 2010), Ch. 1: Preparing Research Designs; pp. 13 – 34

**[Note: Critical review paper is due]**

### **Week 7 (Feb 21): Reading Week: no class**

### **Week 8 (Feb 28): Surveys, Sampling and Statistical Analysis**

#### Reading

W. Lawrence Neuman, *Social Research Methods*, Chapters 8, 9, 10, 11 & 12

### **Week 9 (March 6): Qualitative Research Design**

#### Reading

W. Lawrence Neuman, *Social Research Methods*, Chapters 6 & 7

Bob Hancké, "The Challenge of Research Design", **and** Ariadne Vromen, "Debating Methods: Rediscovering Qualitative Approaches", in David Marsh and Gerry Stoker (eds.), *Theory and Methods in Political Science*, 3rd ed. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010); pp. 233 – 248 and 249 – 266

Norman Blaikie, *Designing Social Research* 2e (London: Polity, 2010), Ch. 1: Preparing Research Designs; pp. 13 – 34

George Thomas, "The Qualitative Foundations of Political Science Methodology," *Perspectives on Politics* Vol. 3, No. 4, (2005), pp. 855 – 866

Barbara Geddes, "How the Cases you Choose Affect the Answers You Get: Selection Bias in Comparative Politics," *Political Analysis* 2, 1990: 131-150

David Collier and James Mahoney, "Insights and Pitfalls: Selection Bias in Qualitative Research," *World Politics* 49, 1996: 56-91

**[Wednesday 7 March is the Final Date for Withdrawal without Academic Penalty]**

**[Note: Group assignment due in class]**

## **Week 10 (March 13): Field Research and Ethnography**

### Reading

W. Lawrence Neuman, *Social Research Methods*, Chapters 13 & 15

Elisabeth Jean Wood, "Field Research" in Carles Boix and Susan Stokes (eds.) *Handbook of Comparative Politics*, (Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 123 – 146

Mary Louise Pratt, "Fieldwork in Common Places" **and** Rosaldo Renato, "From the Door of His Tent: The Fieldworker and the Inquisitor" in James Clifford and George E. Marcus, (eds.) *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California press, 1986)

Dvora Yanow, "Dear Author, Dear Reader: The Third Hermeneutic in Writing and Reviewing Ethnography," in Edward Schatz, ed., *Political Ethnography: What Immersion Contributes to the Study of Power* (Chicago, 2009)

Lorraine Bayard de Volo and Edward Schatz, "From the Inside Out: Ethnographic Methods in Political Research" *PS: Political Science and Politics*, Vol. 37. No. 2, 2004; pp. 267-271

Karl G. Heider, "The Rashomon Effect: When Ethnographers Disagree," *American Anthropologist* Vol. 90, No. 1, March 1988, pp. 73-81

## **Week 11 (March 20): Marxist & Comparative Approaches**

### Reading

W. Lawrence Neuman, *Social Research Methods*, Chapters 14 & 15

Karl Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach", and "The German Ideology" in Robert C. Tucker (ed.) *The Marx-Engels Reader* [Second Edition] (New York: W.W. Norton & Co, 1978

Dorothy Smith, "Ideology, Science and Social Relations: A Reinterpretation of Marx's Epistemology", *European Journal of Social Theory*, Vol. 7, No 4, 2004; pp. 445 – 462;

F. Douglas Dion, "Evidence and Inference in the Comparative Case Study," *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 30, No. 2, January 1998; pp. 127-146

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

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

## **Week 12 (March 27): Discourse Analysis and Deconstruction**

### Reading

Jennifer Milliken, "The Study of Discourse in International Relations: A Critique of Research and Methods" *European Journal of International Relations* Vol. 5, No.2, 1999, pp. 225 – 54

Jonathan Crush, "Introduction: Imagining Development" in Jonathan Crush (ed.) *Power of Development* (London & New York: Routledge, 1995), pp. 1 – 26

Arturo Escobar, "Imagining A Post-Development Era" in Jonathan Crush (ed.) *Power of Development* (London & New York: Routledge, 1995); pp. 211 – 227

Aubrey Neal, "Promise and Practice of Deconstruction" *Canadian Journal of History* Vol. 30, April 1995, pp. 49 – 76,

Shaul R. Shenhav, "Thin and Thick Narrative Analysis: On the Question of Defining and Analyzing Political Narratives," *Narrative Inquiry* Vol. 15, No. 1, 2005; pp. 75 – 99

### **Week 13 (April 3): Aboriginal Concerns and Research Agendas**

#### Reading

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

**[Note: Final paper – Research Proposal - due at the end of class]**

**April 10 – 20: Examination Period. There will be no exam for this course**