Government 601: Methods of Political Analysis I

Fall 2004, Tuesday 7:00–9:00p (WE 106)

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office hours: T 4:30–5:30, W 2–4 or other times by appointment

Assignment Due Dates

due date description
October 26 “explanations” paper
November 16 research pre-proposal
December 14 research proposal

Reading Availability

We will be reading large proportions of most of the following books, and most are worth having on the shelf, so you may want to buy them. On the other hand, several are expensive. Most of the books should also soon appear on reserve in the Government Reading Room in Olin (room 405). Photocopies of other required reading should also be available in the Reading Room.


Reading schedule

Items with a bullet (●) are required. Others are supplementary.
1. Goals of Political Science Research (Sept 7)

- Monroe. *Contemporary Empirical Theory*. Chapters 1–4, 7, 9, 10, 12 (Easton; Gunnell; Grofman; Laponce; Zuckert and Zuckert; Riker; Hardin; Hartsock).


2. Interpretations (Sept 14)


3. Explanation, Mechanisms, Models, Theory (Sep 21)

- Hedström and Swedborg. *Social Mechanisms*. Chapters 1–3, 5–8, 10 (Hedström and Swedborg; Schelling; Elster; Gambetta; Cowen; Kuran; Boudon; Sorenson).


4. Individualism and Rationality (Sept 28)


5. Causal Confirmation (Oct 5)


6. Trying to Demonstrate Intentions (Oct 19)

- Bauer, Yehuda. 2001. Rethinking the Holocaust. Yale UP. Chapters 1, 2 and 5
- Browning. Nazi Policy, Jewish Workers, German Killers. Entire.


7. Basic Statistics (Oct 26)


8. Testing Explanations: Conditional Expectation and Experiments (Nov 2)


9. Manipulation, Counterfactuals and Observational Studies (Nov 9)


10. Selection Biases (Nov 16)

- Skocpol, Theda. 1979. States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia and China. Cambridge UP. Chapters 1–3.


11. Processes and Selection (Nov 23)


12. Generalities (Nov 30)

- Selections from Brady and Collier, Rethinking Social Inquiry.