

BSST 638P
Qualitative Research Methods
Spring 2018
University of Maryland

Lecture: Monday 6:00-8:30pm

Professor: Dr. Omi Hodwitz
Email: omi@uidaho.edu
Office hours: Skype by appointment

TA: Joseph Oudin, MA
Email: joudin@umd.edu
Office hours: Skype by appointment

Course Description and Objectives

This course covers research design and qualitative methods using a hands-on approach. The course considers general themes such as the logic of inquiry, the appropriateness of qualitative approaches, as well as more specific topics such as process tracing, archival research, and survey methodology. It also provides students with the opportunity to learn and apply different tools for social science research.

The primary goals of the course are to: 1) formulate a proper research question in terrorism/counter-terrorism studies 2) present the appropriate qualitative research design to tackle the formulated question 3) introduce problems/issues one faces in terrorism research such as bias and causal complexity, and 4) cultivate a set of qualitative skills in order to analyze terrorism. By the end of the semester, students will have a better understanding of the qualitative research methods needed to answer important questions related to terrorism and counterterrorism.

Course Assessment

Final grades will be assigned according to the student's performance on the following items:

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|---|-----|
| 1) Class participation based on readings/discussion questions | 20% |
| 2) Assignment 1 | 40% |
| 3) Assignment 2 | 40% |

1) Regular class attendance and active class participation (20% of the course grade): The expectation is that students will be prepared to constructively participate in class discussions. This requires completing the assigned readings before each class, attending class regularly, and being on time for class. The teaching assistant, Joe Oudin, will post discussion questions before each class and students should be prepared to discuss these questions during each lecture. If you are unable to attend a class due to health, work, or family considerations, you may post responses to the discussion questions on the course website *before* class begins to receive participation credit for the week. Please ensure that you have working headphones

and a microphone (webcams are not required).

2) *Assignments* (80% of your course grade, 40% each): Each student will complete two assignments during the course. Students should post their assignments on ELMS. If you have questions about how to do this, please email Joe Oudin.

■ **Assignment 1: (due April 9th)**

Assignment one is a qualitative essay that will rely on case-based methods (e.g. process-tracing, in-depth singular case study, comparative case studies, etc.). The purpose of the paper is to carry out a methodological case-based study of an issue that is both interesting to you and pertinent to contemporary counterterrorism policy. Your essay should include the following:

- Research question/s
- Theory
- Literature review
- Method
- Operationalization of key concepts
- Case selection criteria
- Case study analysis
- Evidence-based policy or theory recommendations
- Limitations
- Conclusions
- Reflections on methods

This essay should be between 15-20 pages, double-spaced. It should include a title page, a references page and, if necessary, appendices; these are not included in the page count.

■ **Assignment 2: (due May 11th)**

Assignment two is a qualitative essay that will rely on **ONE** of the following methods: archival research, ethnographic observation, or content analysis. The purpose of the paper is to carry out a methodological study of an issue that is both interesting to you and pertinent to contemporary counterterrorism policy. Your essay should include the following:

- Research question/s
- Theory
- Literature review
- Methods
- Operationalization of key concepts
- Analysis
- Limitations
- Conclusions
- Reflections on methods

This essay should be between 15-20 pages, double-spaced. It should include a title page, a references page and appendices (e.g. codebook, list of archival documents, field notes, etc.); these are not included in the page count.

Expectations

This is a graduate course. Students are advised not to fall behind in the reading.

Powerpoint will be provided during lectures to guide note-taking and a recording of the lecture will be posted on Elms after the session has concluded. Students are expected to attend class regularly, arrive early and prepared, and conduct themselves with respect and courtesy toward others in the classroom.

Grading Scale

Grades will be assigned following the University of Maryland standard grading scheme:

Percentage	Letter Grade	Qualitative Description
97-100	A+	Achievement that is <u>outstanding</u> relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.
93-96	A	
90-92	A-	
87-89	B+	Achievement that is <u>significantly above</u> the level necessary to meet course requirements.
83-86	B	
80-82	B-	
77-79	C+	Achievement that is <u>in keeping</u> with the course requirements in every respect.
73-76	C	
70-72	C-	
67-69	D+	Achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements.
60-66	D	
0-59	F	Work that was either completed but not worthy of credit, or incomplete

Extensions and Incompletes

In the event that a serious problem emerges that you feel necessitates an extension or an incomplete, you must speak with us *before* the due date regarding this request. Extensions and incompletes are usually granted in the case of sickness, required official school events, familial bereavement, and religious holidays. Extensions and incompletes will not be granted if the request is made after the relevant deadline.

Plagiarism Policy

Academic dishonesty of any form will absolutely not be tolerated. Academic dishonesty encompasses the traditional behavior such as cheating on exams and assignments, giving false statements, etc., but also includes activities such as possessing and/or reviewing previous semester's assignments. The University of Maryland, College Park has a nationally Recognized Code of Academic Integrity, administered by the Student Honor Council. This Code sets standards for academic integrity at Maryland for all undergraduate and graduate students. As a student you are responsible for upholding these standards for this course. It is very important for you to be aware of the consequences of cheating, fabrication, facilitation, and plagiarism. For more information on the Code of Academic Integrity or the Student Honor Council, please visit <http://www.studenthonorcouncil.umd.edu/whatis.html>.

Required & Suggested Readings

The reading materials are available on the ELMS course website. Additional readings may be posted throughout the semester.

Books (you will be reading specific chapters from these books but you are advised to read the whole book at some future time):

- 1) Alexander George and Andrew Bennett. *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005).
- 2) Gary Goertz and James Mahoney. *A Tale of Two Cultures: Qualitative and Quantitative Research in the Social Sciences*. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012).
- 3) Herbert Rubin and Irene Rubin. *Qualitative Interviewing. The Art of Hearing Data*, 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2012).
- 4) Layna Mosley, ed. *Interview Research in Political Science*. (Cornell University Press, 2013).
- 5) Karl Krippendorff. *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology*. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage).

For those interested in pursuing these topics further, there are multiple major scholarly journals with a specific focus on terrorism and counterterrorism research and methods: *Terrorism and Political Violence*, *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, *Political Analysis*, *Criminology*, *Democracy and Security*, *International Organization*, *International Security*, *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, *International Studies Quarterly*, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *Journal of Peace Research*, *Security Studies*, *Civil Wars*, *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, *Critical Terrorism Studies* and *Journal of Strategic Studies*.

MODULE 1: The Fundamentals of Doing Research

Jan 29

Introduction to the Study of Research Methods

Doing Research: Purpose, Process, Products, and Ethics

- Royce A. Singleton and Bruce C. Straits, *Approaches to Social Research*, 4th ed (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2005), Chapters 1 and 2.

Feb 5

Research Questions and Literature Reviews

- Mats Alvesson and Jorgen Sandberg, *Constructing Research Questions: Doing Interesting Research* (London: Sage Publications, 2013), Chapters 2 and 5.
- Jeffrey W. Knopf, "Doing a Literature Review," *Political Science and Politics*, vol. 39, no. 1 (2006), pp. 127-132.
- John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Method Approaches*, 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA; Sage Publications, 2009), Chapter 2.

- Lee Jarvis, Stuart Macdonald, and Lella Nouri, "The Cyberterrorism Threat: Findings from a Survey of Researchers," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* vol. 37, no. 1 (2014), pp. 68-90 (**focus on pp. 68-72 only**).
- Svante Cornell, "Narcotics and Armed Conflict: Interaction and Implications," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, vol. 30: pp. 207-227 (**focus on pp. 207-214 only**).

Feb 12

The Building Blocks of Research

Theory, Conceptualization, Operationalization, Measurement

- Gary Goertz, *Social Science Concepts* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006), Chapter 2.
- John Gerring, "What Makes a Concept Good? A Criterial Framework for Understanding Concept Formation in the Social Sciences," *Polity* vol. 31, no. 3 (1999), pp. 357-393.
- Leonard Weinberg, Ami Pedahzur, and Sivan Hirsch-Hoeffler, "The Challenges of Conceptualizing Terrorism," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, vol.16, no. 4 (2004), pp. 777-794.
- Recommended (**but not required**) reading
 - Giovanni Sartori, "Concept Misformation in Comparative Politics," *American Political Science Review*, vol. 64, no. 4 (1970), pp. 1033-1053.

Feb 19

Theories of Terrorism

- Martha Crenshaw, "The Causes of Terrorism," *Comparative Politics* (July 1981), pp. 379-399.
- Jeff Victoroff, "The Mind of the Terrorist," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, vol. 49, no. 1 (2005), pp. 3-42.
- Randy Borum, "Radicalization into Violent Extremism I: A Review of Social Science Theories." *Journal of Strategic Security*, vol. 4, no. 4 (2011), pp. 7-36.
- Erica Chenoweth, "Terrorism and Democracy," *Annual review of Political Science*, vol. 16 (2013), pp. 335-378.
- Recommended (**but not required**) reading
 - Audrey Kurth Cronin, "How al-Qaida Ends: The Decline and Demise of Terrorist Groups," *International Security*, Vol. 31, No. 1 (Summer 2006), pp. 7-48.

<h2>MODULE 2: Case Study Methods</h2>
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Feb 26

Logic of Inference

- Gary Goertz and James Mahoney, *A Tale of Two Cultures: Qualitative and Quantitative Research in the Social Sciences* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012), Chapters 1-3.
- Bryan C. Price, "Targeting Top Terrorists: How Leadership Decapitation Contributes to Counterterrorism," *International Security*, vol. 36, no. 4 (2012), pp. 9-46.

- Michael Freeman, “A Theory of Terrorist Leadership (and its Consequences for Leadership Targeting),” *Terrorism and Political Violence*, vol. 26, no. 4 (2014).

Mar 5

Case Studies and Case Selection

- Alexander George and Andrew Bennett. *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press (2005), Chapters 1, 3, and 4.
- Gary King, Robert Keohane, and Sidney Verba. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton: Princeton University Press (1994), Chapter 4.
- Angela Bourne, “Why ban Batasuna? Terrorism, Political parties and democracy,” *Comparative European Politics*, vol. 13, pp. 325-344.
- Recommended (**but not required**) reading
 - Elisabeth Wood. *Insurgent Collective Action and Civil War in El Salvador*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, (2003).
 - John Gerring. *Case Study Research: Principles and Practices*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press (2007), Chapters 3 and 5.

Mar 12

Process Tracing

- Andrew Bennett and Jeffrey T. Checkel, eds., *Process Tracing: From Metaphor to Analytic Tool* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), Chapter 1.
- Jytte Klausen et al, “Toward a Behavioral Model of “Homegrown” Radicalization Trajectories,” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, vol. 39, pp. 67-83.
- Svante Cornell, “Narcotics and Armed Conflict: Interaction and Implications,” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, vol. 30: pp. 207-227.
- Recommended (**but not required**) reading
 - Alexander George and Andrew Bennett. *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press (2005), Chapter 10.

March 19

Spring Break

Mar 26

Comparative Method

- Alexander George and Andrew Bennett. *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press (2005), Chapter 8.
- Stanley Lieberson, “Small N’s and Big Conclusions: An Examination of the Reasoning in Comparative Case Studies Based on a Small Number of Cases,” *Social Forces* vol. 70 (1991), 307-20.
- Jeffrey Ian Ross and Ted Robert Gurr, “Why Terrorism Subsides: A Comparative Study of Canada and the United States,” *Comparative Politics* vol. 21 (1989), pp. 405-426.
- Recommended (**but not required**) reading
 - David Collier, “The Comparative Method,” (1993), pp.105-119.
 - Alexander George and Andrew Bennett. *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press (2005), Chapter 9.

- Richard Ned Lebow, *Forbidden Fruit: Counterfactuals and International Relations*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press (2010), Chapter 2.

MODULE 3: Other Qualitative Methods

Apr 2

Archival Research

- Cameron Thies, “A Pragmatic Guide to Qualitative Historical Analysis in the Study of International Relations,” *International Studies Perspectives* vol. 3, no. 4 (2002), pp. 351-372.
- Marc Trachtenberg. *The Craft of International History: A Guide to Method*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press (2006), Chapter 5.
- Jacob Bercovitch, “Social Research and the Study of Mediation: Designing and Implementing Systematic Archival Research,” *International Negotiation* vol. 9, no. 3 (2005), pp. 415-428.
- David Rapoport. “Fear and Trembling: Terrorism in Three Religious Traditions,” *The American Political Science Review* vol. 78, no. 3 (1984), pp. 658-677.
- Recommended (**but not required**) reading
 - Robert Vitalis. “The Past is Another Country.” In Ellen Perecman and Sara Curran, eds. *A Handbook for Social Science Field Research: Essays & Bibliographic Sources on Research Design and Methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage (2006), Chapter 1.
 - Ian Lustick, “History, Historiography, and Political Science: Multiple Historical Records and the Problem of Selection Bias,” *American Political Science Review* vol. 90, no. 3 (1996), pp. 605-18.

Apr 9

Content Analysis, Discourse Analysis

Assignment 1 Due

- Karl Krippendorff. *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, Chapters 4-7.
- Max Abrahms, Nicholas Beauchamp, and Joseph Mroszczyk, "What Terrorist Leaders Want: A Content Analysis of Terrorist Propaganda Videos," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* vol. 40, no. 11 (2017), pp. 899-916.
- Onook Oh, Manish Agrawal, and H. Raghav Rao, “Information Control and Terrorism: Tracking the Mumbai Terrorist Attack through Twitter,” *Information Systems Frontiers*, vol. 13 (2011), pp. 33-43.
- Recommended (**but not required**) reading
 - Kimberly Neuendorf, “Content Analysis: A Contrast and Complement to Discourse Analysis,” (2004)

Apr 16

Ethnography and Participant Observation

- Martyn Hammersley, “Ethnography: problems and prospects,” *Ethnography and Education*, vol. 1, no. 1 (2006), pp. 3-14.

- Lisa Wedeen, “Reflections on Ethnographic Work in Political Science,” *Annual Review of Political Science* vol. 13 (2010), pp. 255–272.
- Cynthia Mahmood, “Terrorism, Myth, and the Power of Ethnographic Praxis,” *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* vol. 30, no. 5 (2001), pp. 520-545.
- Zohreh Mehravipour, “Endless Terror? Hidden Function of the Culture on Terror,” *Journal of Political & Social Sciences*, vol. 2, no. 2 (2015), pp. 38-43,
- Recommended (**but not required**) reading
 - Clifford Geertz. *The Interpretation of Cultures*. New York: Basic Books (1973), Chapter 1.
 - Edward Schatz. *Political Ethnography: What Immersion Contributes to the Study of Power*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press (2010), Chapter 4 (if you enjoy ethnographies, I would suggest you skim Chapter 6 as well).

Apr 23

Field Work and Surveys

- Scott Keeter. “Survey Research.” in Daniel Druckman, *Doing Research: Methods of Inquiry for Conflict Analysis*. (Sage Publications, 2005), pp. 123-162.
- Nissim Cohen and Tamar Arieli, “Field Research in Conflict Environments: Methodological Challenges and Snowball Sampling,” *Journal of Peace Research* vol. 48, no. 4 (July 2011), pp.423-436.
- Rosemary Saiyigh, “Resources, Researchers and Power: Recording ‘Real Life’ in Wadi Zeineh,” *Middle East Report* vol. 173 (November-December 1991), pp. 23-25.
- Jarvis Lee, Stuart Macdonald, and Lella Nouri, "The Cyberterrorism Threat: Findings from a Survey of Researchers," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* vol. 37, no. 1 (2014), pp. 68-90.
- Recommended (**but not required**) reading
 - Lisa D. Pearce, “Integrating Survey and Ethnographic Methods for Systematic Anomalous Case Analysis,” *Sociological Methodology* vol. 32 (2002), pp. 103-32.

Apr 30

In-Depth Interviewing

- Herbert Rubin and Irene Rubin. *Qualitative Interviewing. The Art of Hearing Data*, 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage (2012), Chapter 7.
- Layna Mosley, ed. *Interview Research in Political Science*. Cornell University Press (2013). Introduction, Chapters 1 and 5.
- John Horgan. “Interviewing the Terrorists: Reflections on Fieldwork and Implications for Psychological Research,” *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression*, vol. 4, no. 3 (2012), pp. 195-211.
- Neil, Ferguson, Mark Burgess, and Ian Hollywood. "Crossing the Rubicon: Deciding to Become a Paramilitary in Northern Ireland," *International Journal of Conflict and Violence*, vol. 2, no. 1 (2008), pp. 130-137.
- Recommended (**but not required**) reading
 - Joe Soss, “Talking Our Way to Meaningful Explanations: A Practice-Centered Approach to In-Depth Interviews for Interpretive Research.” In D. Yanow and P. Schwartz-Shea, eds. *Interpretation and Method* (M.E. Sharpe, 2006)

- Jerrold Post, Ehud Sprinzak, and Laurita Denny. “The Terrorists in Their Own Words: Interviews with 35 Incarcerated Middle Eastern Terrorists,” *Terrorism and Political Violence*, vol. 15, no. 1 (2003), pp. 171-184.

May 7

Catch-up, Q&A, the Future of Terrorism Research

- Depending on whether we are lagging behind, we may simply use this as a catch-up class or a time to field any outstanding questions. Otherwise, we will use this class to discuss the future of terrorism research. If the latter, readings will be assigned two weeks prior to the class (this ensures that we have the most current research from which to draw).

May 11

Assignment 2 Due

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