

# Research Methods

Mondays and Wednesdays (4:00pm-5:20pm)  
Hill 210

**Instructor:** Deborah Morrison-Santana

**Contact:** [deborah.morrison@rutgers.edu](mailto:deborah.morrison@rutgers.edu)

**Office Hours:** Mondays 2:30pm-4:00pm

**Required Texts:** All readings are available on Blackboard.

**About this Course:** Based on the assumption that the method of observation often creates the phenomena or influences the conclusions, the student uses a number of political science methodologies to study one subject. This course will examine various qualitative methods of political science using a positivist approach. The methods examined will be comparative case studies, interviews/surveys, critical discourse analysis, and process tracing through an interdisciplinary lens. Students will learn to write a research paper throughout the semester utilizing the different techniques learned in class.

The purpose of this course is for students to go through the process of writing a research paper using a political science format and methodologies. The breakdown of the paper, that will be written across the entire semester, is as follows:

## Paper 1:

- This paper is for the purpose of helping a student pick a research area for their final paper. It is to be 2-3 pages long and include an observation, puzzle, & research question.

## Paper 2:

- Building on (revised) paper 1, this paper is to add in a literature review embedded in alternative explanations to the research question. It is to be 5-7 pages long (added onto paper 1's 2-3 pages).

## Paper 3:

- Building on (revised) papers 1 and 2, paper 3 adds in a methodology section that chooses methodologies that can best help to test each hypothesis as well as the type of data that needs to be collected in order to answer the research question. (Length: 2-3 pages added onto papers 1 and 2).

## Final Paper:

- The final paper will combine papers 1, 2, & 3 (all revised), and it will test the hypotheses by collecting and analyzing data to answer the research question and the findings of the student's research. It will be 15-20 pages long (not including the cover page and bibliography). Students will present their papers at the end of the semester with a 10-minute PowerPoint presentation.

## Paper Requirements (for all papers):

- .doc or .docx formats ONLY (Microsoft Word) – **must be submitted through Blackboard before the class starts on the day it's due. No late papers will be accepted.**
- 12-point Times New Roman font
- Double-spaced
- 1-inch margins on all sides
- Page numbers
- Footnotes (not endnotes) – must include bibliographic information
- Quotes longer than 3 lines must be single-spaced and indented
- The parameters for each individual paper will be discussed in class

## Grading:

- Attendance/Participation – 20%
- In-class Assignments – 10%
- Homework Assignments – 10%
- Paper 1 – 10%
- Paper 2 – 10%
- Paper 3 – 10%
- Presentation – 5%
- Final Paper – 25%

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100%

## COURSE POLICIES:

1. **Attendance** is mandatory for this course and will be taken each class. Missing classes without proper documentation (i.e. a doctor's note) will affect your participation grade. You are only allowed 5 absences (excused or unexcused), and any more will result in a failing grade for the course. If you do miss a class, it is your responsibility to get notes from a fellow student on what you missed (do not email me asking what you missed). Excessive lateness will also affect the attendance/participation grade.
2. **No personal technology devices allowed in class.** This means no cell phones, iPads, laptops, or any other kinds of electronic devices (unless needed for medical reasons, with the proper documentation). If you are caught using your phone or another device, you will lose participation credit for the day.
3. **Academic Dishonesty:** Taking the words and ideas of another and presenting them as your own without proper use of citation constitutes plagiarism and it is considered grounds for receiving an "F" for the course and suspension/expulsion from the university. All students are required to uphold the honor code.

For more information, please read Rutgers University's Academic Integrity Policy:  
<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>

4. Students should present official medical or legal documentation if they cannot fulfill any part of the course requirements. Exceptions will only be made under extraordinary circumstances such as serious illness and/or legal obligations.
5. Please always show me and your fellow students respect. If you are disrespectful, you will be asked to leave the class and lose participation credit for the day. Disciplinary action through the university will be taken for repeated disrespect.
6. **Open Communication:** I am always available to help you succeed in this course. You may see me during my office hours or reach me through email. Please do not hesitate to contact me.

## Course Schedule (Subject to change):

DATE	TOPIC	READING DUE
W 1/17	Introduction	
M 1/22	What is a Research Paper?	Baglione Ch. 2
W 1/24	Sources	Baglione Ch. 3
M 1/29	Citing & Plagiarism	Link in Course Documents ( <u>must complete undergraduate certificate &amp; email me results</u> )
W 1/31	Observation	<b>Bring in an observation</b>
M 2/5	Puzzle	<b>Bring in a puzzle</b>
W 2/7	Research Question	<b>Bring in potential research question</b>
M 2/12	Alternative Explanations	Baglione Ch. 4 <b>Paper #1 Due</b>
W 2/14	Realism	Viotti & Kauppi Ch. 2
M 2/19	Liberalism	Doyle - "Liberalism and World Politics"
W 2/21	Constructivism	Reich Ch. 1 & 2
M 2/26	Political Science Methodologies (Qualitative)	Smith & Malici Ch. 1 & 2
W 2/28	Case Studies #1	He Chapter
M 3/5	Case Studies #2	Kuperman Article
W 3/7	Interviews #1	Thalhammer Chapter <b>Paper #2 Due</b>
<b>M 3/10 - 3/18</b>	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>	
M 3/19	Interviews #2	<b>Bring in Interview Results</b>
W 3/21	Surveys #1	Pews Research Center (see link in Course Documents)
M 3/26	Surveys #2	<b>Bring in Survey Results</b>
W 3/28	Critical Discourse Analysis #1	Obama's 2009 & 2014 West Point Speeches
M 4/2	Critical Discourse Analysis #2	<b>Bring in Discourse Analysis Results</b>
W 4/4	Process Tracing	"Understanding Process Tracing"
M 4/9	Archival Work	<b>Paper #3 Due</b>
W 4/11	Issues #1	Blowback Ch. 1
M 4/16	Issues #2	TBA
W 4/18	Student Presentations	
M 4/23	Student Presentations	
W 4/25	Student Presentations	<b>Optional Rough Draft Due</b>
M 4/30	Student Presentations	
<b>Final Paper Due by 6pm on date of Final Exam (not yet released)</b>		