

**Political Science 826**  
**Dissertation Research Seminar in Comparative Politics**

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This course is designed for students to construct and implement their own research. At the end of the quarter, each student will produce a polished piece of research, which may be a dissertation proposal, an article or a dissertation chapter. The course meets on Wednesday from 3:30-6:30.

- Week 1. 4/3      **Discussion of Your Proposals**  
Where do ideas come from? How do you know good ones from bad ones?  
Students should identify two research questions that they may pursue this quarter.
- Week 2. 4/10     **Research Design**  
King, Keohane, and Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry*, pages, 3-74;  
Timothy McKeown, "Case Studies and the Statistical Worldview: Review of KKV's  
Designing Social Inquiry," *International Organization*, 53:1, 161-190.
- Week 3. 4/17     **Initial Presentation of Research Ideas**  
Turn in outlines of papers. Initial critique and analysis of research design.  
\*\*\*Papers due at 5:00 on Tuesday April 16.\*\*
- Week 4. 4/24     **Building Theory**  
Discussions of the theoretical sections of your research proposals.  
We will also discuss examples of "good theories and bad theories."  
What are the qualities of good theory?
- Week 5. 5/1       **Data**  
Students should identify and assess the quality of qualitative and quantitative sources of  
data for their project. What original sources of data are available? Do canned data sets  
exist for your project?
- Week 6. 5/8       **Hypothesis Testing**  
Students should generate both large n and small n ways to assess the explanations offered  
in their paper.  
How can we most profitably combine large n and small n research?  
King, Keohane, and Verba, 75-114.
- Week 7. 5/15      **Independent Research/No Class.**
- Week 8. 5/22      **Practical Problems in Implementing Designs.**  
Missing Data, Scope Conditions, Caveats, etc.  
\*\*\*Second Draft of Papers due on May 21 at 5:00.\*\*\*
- Week 9. 5/29      **Analysis and Critique of Second Drafts.**
- Week 10. 6/5      **Student Presentations**  
\*\*\*Papers for presentation are due on June 3<sup>rd</sup> at 5:00\*\*\*

**Academic Honesty:** All of the work you do in this course is expected to be your own. Absolutely no cheating or plagiarism (using someone else's words or ideas without proper attribution) will be tolerated. Any cases of cheating or plagiarism will be handled according to university policy and, when appropriate, reported to the university Committee on Academic Misconduct.

**Special Needs:** Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disabilities Services will be appropriately accommodated, and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs.

**Grading:** 80% Research Paper/Article/Charter. Final Paper is due on June 9 at 5:00. Late Papers lose a letter grade for each day that they are late.

20% Participation in the seminar.