Summary:
This class is the introduction to the study of research methods of political science. The course has two main goals. First, it is a broader introduction to the key debates within the philosophy of science literature. In other words, how do we learn about a subject and how do we know that we learned something. These are questions that are not specific to any sub-field in political science nor even to political science but are vital any endeavor that claims to be scientific.

The second goal of the course is more practical and that is to introduce the basic methods used in political science. There are numerous methods used and as such this course only provides a broad overview of the various approaches and discusses the benefits and costs of each approach. In addition, the course will provide an overview of how one designs and implements a research project starting from the research question to the completed manuscript.

Brief Overview of Requirements:

Attendance and Participation: 20% of final grade.
Research questions: 5% of final grade
Research pages: 10% of final grade
Literature reviews: 15%
Final Paper Assignment: 25% of final grade.
Final Exam: 25% of final grade.
**Reading assignments**  
Many of the readings for this course come from the books. Significant portions of the readings, however, come from articles that you will need to acquire. For each week the assignments are listed in a specific order meant to demonstrate the development of the literature. Please read them in the order that they are listed.

**Required Books:**

ISBN-10: 162466038X

ISBN-10: 0300066368

ISBN-10: 1133607675

ISBN-10: 0226458121

ISBN-10: 4880592900
Grading System:

Attendance and Participation (20%): Attendance and participation account for 20% of your final grade. It is vitally important for you to come to class prepared, i.e. having carefully read the assignments. Simply showing up for class is not sufficient. You will need to consistently contribute to class discussion in order to satisfy the participation aspect of this part of your grade.

Paper Assignment (25%): During the semester you will be required to write one 20-25 research paper. This is the equivalent of a research article but without the actual data analysis. The topic is up to you but the paper will have a literature review, theory section, and research design. As a way to prepare for the final paper, there are a series of additional graded assignments that lead up to the final paper.

Research question (5%): This is a set of 20 research questions (if-then statements about a particular topic). Your final paper topic will come from one of these questions, so be sure to cover a large set of potentially interesting topics.

Research pages (10%): You will take 10 of the research questions and expand them into a single page (single spaced). The research page essentially expands on the question and both highlights the question/puzzle that is to be answered as well as how you will answer it.

Literature review (15%): You will take 2 of the topics in the research pages and expand them into a full literature review. This is a 10-15 page examination of the previous literature on the topic that both covers what has been done but also shows why there is a question to be answered. These are meant to be comprehensive reviews, so the expectation is to have 30+ articles/books in the review.

Final Exam (25%): At the end of the semester you will be given a final exam. The final exam will contain a set of open ended questions that mainly test basic issues in philosophy of science but there will also be part of the exam that examines the different research methodologies.
Week 1 (August 24th): Introduction

Philosophy of Science

Week 2 (August 31st): What is Science and its Limits?
Chalmers, Chapters 1-7

Week 3 (September 7th): The Research Program Approach
Chalmers, Chapters 8-11

Week 4 (September 14th): The Sociological Approach
Research Questions Due

Week 5 (September 21st): Recent (relatively speaking) Approaches
Chalmers, chapters 12-17

Week 6 (September 28th): Attack of the -isms


Political Science Research

Week 7 (October 12th): The Research Question
Hoover and Donovan, chapters 1-3

Week 8 (October 19th): Measuring and Testing
Hoover and Donovan, chapters 4-5
Research pages Due

Week 9 (October 26th): Rational Choice

Week 10 (November 2nd): Methods of Political Theory

Required Reading for Phenomenological Inquiry:


References for Examples of their Method of Analysis


**The Political Science Article**

**Week 11 (November 9th): Literature Review**


**Week 12 (November 16th): Theory**


**Literature Reviews Due**

**Week 13 (November 30th): Research Design and Results**


**Final Exam**: Tuesday of finals week. I will email you the exam 9AM and you need to email me back the exam by noon.