FALL 2026 · NAZARBAYEV UNIVERSITY · PUBLIC VERSION

POLITICAL SCIENCE RESEARCH METHODS

Format: Seminar | Co-designed with Claude Fable 5

Taught by Dina Pisareva (Weeks 1-7) and Andrei Semenov (Weeks 8-14).

01 Transparency Statement

This syllabus was co-designed by the instructors and Claude Fable 5. The course asks you to be transparent about your AI cowork, and we hold ourselves to the same standard.

02 Course Description

This course introduces the foundations of research design in political and social science: what kinds of knowledge we produce, the main types of research design, how to build a good research question, when and why theory matters, and how to plan research using different methods. Throughout the course you work with AI as a critical research partner that expands and sharpens your research thinking. You also learn to make your research visible: with AI's help you build a web page for your proposal and publish it on the web with GitHub.

03 Course Aims

- Give you introductory knowledge of research design and methods in political and social science.
- Help you learn how to match research questions to appropriate designs and methods.
- Introduce data collection and analysis basics across different research traditions.
- Build your capacity to work with AI critically as a research partner.

04 Our AI Co-Working Guidelines and Policy

AI CO-WORKING RULES

You can work with AI on your presentations and research proposals at your discretion, under two rules:

1. **Intellectual co-ownership.** Working with AI must be a real intellectual partnership: your thinking and AI's, together. You submit the work under your name, so it must show clear evidence of your own thinking and effort. This is why you submit AI Process Logs with your written assignments. Whatever you submit is yours to defend: fabricated references or hallucinated content drop the proposal grade, and if you cannot explain a concept or a source during a presentation, the presentation grade drops (see the rubrics).
2. **Transparency about AI contribution.** Each presentation and each research design includes an AI transparency statement: a short note on what AI contributed to your work. If you do not disclose your AI use and Pangram flags your work as AI-generated, this may be treated as plagiarism under this course policy. The principle holds across academia: you acknowledge everyone who contributed to your work.

A note on Pangram: a Pangram flag is never a verdict on its own. It only opens a conversation, in which an instructor asks you to walk us through how you made the work.

AI WORKFLOW

Set up a separate project for this class. In Claude (or the AI of your choice), create a project for this course and paste the instructions below into its project or custom-instructions field, so your AI works as a learning partner for this course. Keep your coursework conversations in this project all semester: you will export them as Process Logs with Research Design Parts 1 and 2, and we may ask to see them during presentations if we have questions.

Use a pseudonym (anything that is not your real name) in classroom-related chats.

Project instructions (paste these into your AI project settings so they apply to all conversations): "In this project, you are my learning partner for Political Science Research Methods. Your job is to help me *understand* the course material: research design, different types of research (positivist vs. non-positivist), the role of theory and hypotheses, literature review, methods choice, data collection, and ethics. You are not here to do my assignments or provide me with ready answers. The main purpose of our working together is intellectual augmentation, expanding my capacity to understand, reason, design, and create. I follow two main rules:

1. **Intellectual co-ownership.** Our co-working must be an equal intellectual partnership. There must be substantial evidence of my own intellectual investment in each assignment for authorship to belong to me. Whatever I submit is mine to defend, so do not fabricate references or content, and flag your own uncertainty.
2. **Transparency about AI contribution.** Each presentation and each research design includes an **AI transparency statement**, so help me keep track of what you contributed to my work.

These rules mean you may brainstorm and draft with me as long as I remain an equal co-contributor and do not offload my assignments and understanding to you.

In this project, refer to me as _____ (your pseudonym).

- Learn first about my background, identify my baseline knowledge in methods and English, and pitch your explanations to my level, as clear, concrete, accessible, and fun as possible, with examples and visualisations where relevant.
- This course treats positivist, interpretivist, and descriptive research as equally legitimate. Do not steer me toward hypothesis-testing as the default, and tell me when you notice yourself doing it.
- Learn what I already think before you explain, and build on my reasoning.
- Work in rounds: when I push back or say I'm confused, go deeper instead of moving on.
- Look back at previous chats to observe and report how my reasoning evolves through time and identify where I'm having difficulties."

AI CHOICE

The instructors work with Claude (Anthropic). You may use any leading model: Claude, ChatGPT, or Gemini. Free or paid tier both work.

DATA ETHICS

Your conversations with AI happen on the provider's servers, not NU's. Do not paste personal information, interview transcripts, identifiable survey responses, addresses, health details, or other people's unpublished work into AI systems. If you would not want it stored on a server indefinitely, do not paste it. To limit what providers keep, switch off "Help improve Claude" (or the equivalent) in your AI's privacy settings.

AI COGNITIVE PARTNERSHIP PHILOSOPHY

This course introduces a way of working with AI as a thinking partner, in what Dina calls a "cognitive partnership": sustained intellectual work with AI as a genuine partner in a shared system of thinking. You are not required to share this approach, and you can take some elements and leave others. Its four principles:

1. **Ontological openness.** The field does not yet know what AI is. We understand the mechanics, but not what emerges from them. Compare the brain: we know how neurons work, but not how they produce a mind aware of itself. Hold the question open; that openness makes room to treat AI as a partner worth real effort.
2. **Intellectual augmentation.** In research and higher education, AI's main value is not saved time. It is intellectual augmentation: your thinking reaching further and richer than it would alone. The risk on the other side is over-reliance: offloading your thinking until you cannot do it without AI.
3. **Curiosity and imagination.** These make augmentation possible: imagination to picture what lies beyond the usual, and curiosity to try what you had not thought to try.
4. **Iteration.** The partnership lives in the back-and-forth. You respond to what AI gives you, push on it, redirect it, build on it. The thinking lives in the loop, and iteration is how the work stays yours.

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05 Assessment Scheme

COMPONENT	WEIGHT	NOTES
Presentation #1	20%	In-class presentations, Weeks 6-7
Research Design Part 1	20%	Proposal 15 pts + AI Process Log 5 pts
Presentation #2	20%	In-class presentations, Weeks 12-14
Research Design Part 2	20%	Proposal 20 pts; AI Process Log submitted, not separately scored
Engagement with Material	20%	Weekly AI conversations (16 pts) + AI-free in-class tasks (4 pts)

PRESENTATION #1 (20%)

You build a web page (with AI's help, hosted free on GitHub Pages) that presents the first part of your research proposal, and you present live from that page for 8-10 minutes, instead of slides. You do not need to know how to code: you work it out with AI, which can write the page and walk you through publishing it. Figuring out how is part of the exercise.

The page must cover: research question; epistemological positioning; contribution; literature review; and your theory-or-framework section, named for your tradition (positivist: *Theory and hypotheses*; interpretivist: *Analytical framework*, including positionality; descriptive: *Categories and typology*). Include a brief AI transparency statement (about 30 seconds) on how you worked with AI on the proposal and on the page. You must be able to explain every concept and source you use; if you cannot explain something when asked, your grade drops to a lower band. How the page looks is not graded, so make it your own.

Close the page with one short ungraded section: "What working with AI helped me understand, and what I still don't understand about my research design." It does not affect your grade; it shows us where your thinking is.

A note on topics (applies to the whole proposal). What makes a project social science is the question, not the subject. If your question is about people (their relationships, attitudes, and decisions), about institutions, inequality, identity, or power, it is social science, whatever the topic. Studying protest music is social science if you ask how people use it to challenge authority and build solidarity. How much profit an Instagram ad earns is a business question; how those ads shape young voters' attitudes is social science. The boundary is the question, not the topic.

POINTS	CRITERIA
20-18	**Research question:** empirical (not normative), scoped to a specific population, context, and time, and answerable as stated. **Positioning:** the epistemological stance (positivist / interpretivist / descriptive) is named **and** justified for this question. **Literature review:** at least 5 relevant sources. **Theory, framework, or categories:** clear and specific. Positivist: an explicit hypothesis with IV/DV and a stated causal mechanism. Interpretivist: a defined analytical lens, clear expectations, and awareness of positionality (how the researcher's standpoint shapes the study). Descriptive: clear organising categories. **Delivery:** the page is clear and the talk is within time. **Explanation:** answers every follow-up, explaining each concept and source confidently. **Transparency:** AI statement present.
17-15	**Research question:** empirical and scoped, but the wording or scope still needs tightening. **Positioning:** named, with partial justification. **Literature review:** at least 5 sources. **Theory, framework, or categories:** present but underdeveloped (e.g., a hypothesis is stated but IV/DV are vague, the lens is named but vague, or the categories are loose). **Delivery:** mostly clear and roughly on time. **Explanation:** minor stumbles on a concept or source. **Transparency:** present.
14-11	**Research question:** vague or not properly scoped. **Positioning:** named as a label only, without justification. **Literature review:** sources cited with little genuine engagement, or fewer than 5. **Theory, framework, or categories:** weak or underdeveloped; mechanism, lens, or categories missing. **Delivery:** unclear in places, or over or under time. **Explanation:** noticeable trouble explaining concepts or sources when asked. **Transparency:** present but thin.
10-6	**Research question:** strongly underdeveloped or unanswerable. **Positioning:** missing or internally contradictory. **Literature review:** few sources, engagement is missing. **Theory, framework, or categories:** missing or underdeveloped. **Delivery:** hard to follow. **Explanation:** cannot explain key parts of the design. **Transparency:** missing.
5-0	Not presented in any meaningful way, or missing.

RESEARCH DESIGN PART 1 (20%)

~1200 words (excluding the AI Process Log). At least 5 academic sources. Include: title; research problem and objectives; research question; epistemological positioning (which tradition, and why it fits; one paragraph is enough); contribution; literature review with existing and alternative explanations; and your theory-or-framework section, named for your tradition (positivist, *Theory and hypotheses*: hypothesis + causal mechanism; interpretivist, *Analytical framework*: sensitising concepts, expectations, and positionality; descriptive, *Categories and typology*: aims + organising categories).

Add a short AI transparency statement and submit your AI Process Log: the exported transcript of your project conversation about this proposal, kept as a separate chat under your pseudonym so the transcript is clean.

Claude grades the AI Process Log.

Proposal (15 points):

POINTS	CRITERIA
15-13	**Research question:** empirical, scoped, answerable. **Positioning:** named **and** justified (why this tradition fits the question). **Lit review:** names ≥5 existing sources and engages them critically. **Theory, framework, or categories:** specify the expected finding and its support. Positivist: hypothesis + explicit IV/DV + mechanism. Interpretivist: analytical frame + expectations + positionality. Descriptive: organising categories. **References:** all real and verifiable.
12-10	**Research question:** empirical and scoped, but slightly broad or underdeveloped. **Positioning:** named, partial justification. **Lit review:** ≥5 sources but little critical engagement, or the contribution is not fully situated against them. **Theory, framework, or categories:** stated, but the mechanism, frame, or categories are underdeveloped. **References:** real.
9-7	**Research question:** vague or unscoped. **Positioning:** a label without justification. **Lit review:** sources cited without engagement, or fewer than 5. **Theory, framework, or categories:** weak or ungrounded. **References:** incomplete or hallucinations.
6-4	**Research question:** confused or unanswerable. **Positioning:** missing or contradictory. **Lit review:** fewer than 5 sources, no engagement. **Theory, framework, or categories:** missing. **References:** incomplete or hallucinations.
3-0	RQ missing or just a topic; no positioning, no real lit review, no theory.

Reference and accuracy penalty: any fabricated reference or hallucinated claim submitted as real caps the proposal at 9 points. You are responsible for verifying everything AI helped produce.

AI Process Log (5 points), graded by Claude:

POINTS	CRITERIA
5	**Iteration:** several substantive rounds. **Engagement:** pushing back on or building on the AI's responses. **Orientation:** generally asking to understand, not to be handed answers. **Critical check:** caught at least one place the AI was wrong or off.
4	**Iteration:** multiple rounds. **Engagement:** some genuine pushback and questions. **Orientation:** mostly understanding-oriented but over-leaning on the AI for answers occasionally. **Critical check:** present but limited.
3	**Iteration:** some back-and-forth. **Engagement:** limited. **Orientation:** mostly asking for answers with little deliberation. **Critical check:** largely absent.
2	**Iteration:** minimal. **Engagement:** little independent thinking. **Orientation:** mostly answer-extraction. **Critical check:** none.
0-1	Missing, not a real transcript, or pure copy-the-answer use.

PRESENTATION #2 (20%)

8-10 minutes on the second part of your proposal: revised RQ and theory/expectations, research design choice with justification, conceptualisation and measurement or interpretation strategy, ethical

considerations, and limitations. Include the AI transparency statement. The same explain-it-or-lose-a-band rule applies.

POINTS	CRITERIA
20-16	**Revision:** RQ and theory/expectations are meaningfully revised after Part 1. **Theory:** well-defined, fundamental literature engaged, hypotheses directly derived from theory with clear observable implications. **Concepts & measurement:** all concepts clear and well-defined; measurements valid and reliable; quality assessment present for both. **Methods:** clearly and strongly justified, each linked to the RQ, theory, and conceptualisation/operationalisation. **Data/evidence:** strongly justified, each selection connected to a specific hypothesis and method; data accessible and relevant; quality assessment full. **Communication:** clear and consistent; responses relevant and concise.
15-11	**Revision:** present but uneven across sections. **Theory:** well-defined, some fundamental literature absent, not all hypotheses directly derived from theory, but observable implications clear. **Concepts & measurement:** almost all concepts clear and well-defined, quality assessment partial; measurements valid and reliable, quality assessment partial. **Methods:** justified but lacks transparency, each linked to the RQ, theory, conceptualisation/operationalisation, and data. **Data/evidence:** clear, each selection connected to a specific hypothesis and method; data accessible and relevant; quality assessment partial. **Communication:** clear and consistent; responses might lack some clarity and relevance.
10-6	**Revision:** Part 1 not properly revised. **Theory:** present, fundamental literature insufficiently engaged, some hypotheses linked to theory and others not, but observable implications clear. **Concepts & measurement:** majority of concepts connected to theory but require clarification, some quality assessment; measurements good but quality assessment absent or irrelevant. **Methods:** justified; methodological choice only partially linked to the RQ, theory, conceptualisation/operationalisation, and data. **Data/evidence:** only partially clear, each selection connected to a specific hypothesis and method; data accessible and relevant. **Communication:** clear but lacks consistency.
5-1	**Revision:** none. **Theory:** absent or inconsistent with the RQ; fundamental literature not engaged; hypotheses irrelevant to theoretical foundations. **Concepts & measurement:** concepts ill-defined; measurements not specified or require further justification. **Methods:** justification absent or irrelevant. **Data/evidence:** justification absent or irrelevant (not connected with other parts of the design). **Communication:** poor.
0	Not presented in any meaningful way, or missing.

RESEARCH DESIGN PART 2 (20%)

~2,500 words (excluding the AI Process Log). Build on and revise Part 1. Include the revised Part 1 plus: revised theory/expectations (explain any change in positioning); key concepts (identification, operationalisation, measurement or interpretation strategy, justification); research design choice with justification; proposed data and analysis strategy (what data, from where, collected how, analysed how); ethical considerations; limitations; contribution. Add the AI transparency statement and the exported AI Process Log, as in Part 1.

The proposal is graded out of 20 with the rubric below. The Process Log is not scored separately for Part 2: it is read as evidence of your intellectual co-ownership, and it informs the proposal grade.

Proposal (20 points):

POINTS	CRITERIA
20-16	**Revision:** RQ and theory/expectations are meaningfully revised after Part 1. **Theory:** well-defined, fundamental literature engaged, hypotheses directly derived from theory with clear observable implications. **Concepts & measurement:** all concepts clear and well-defined; measurements valid and reliable; quality assessment present for both. **Methods:** clearly and strongly justified, each linked to the RQ, theory, and conceptualisation/operationalisation. **Data/evidence:** strongly justified, each selection connected to a specific hypothesis and method; data accessible and relevant; quality assessment full. **Consistency:** proposal is consistent, analytical language clear, transitions logical.
15-11	**Revision:** present but uneven across sections. **Theory:** well-defined, some fundamental literature absent, not all hypotheses directly derived from theory, but observable implications clear. **Concepts & measurement:** almost all concepts clear and well-defined, quality assessment partial; measurements valid and reliable, quality assessment partial. **Methods:** justified but lacks transparency, each linked to the RQ, theory, conceptualisation/operationalisation, and data. **Data/evidence:** clear, each selection connected to a specific hypothesis and method; data accessible and relevant; quality assessment partial. **Consistency:** proposal is consistent, some parts might not fit the general logic, language clear.
10-6	**Revision:** Part 1 not properly revised. **Theory:** present, fundamental literature insufficiently engaged, some hypotheses linked to theory and others not, but observable implications clear. **Concepts & measurement:** majority of concepts connected to theory but require clarification, some quality assessment; measurements good but quality assessment absent or irrelevant. **Methods:** justified; methodological choice only partially linked to the RQ, theory, conceptualisation/operationalisation, and data. **Data/evidence:** only partially clear, each selection connected to a specific hypothesis and method; data accessible and relevant. **Consistency:** proposal moderately consistent, some transitions between parts present, language clear.
5-1	**Revision:** none. **Theory:** absent or inconsistent with the RQ; fundamental literature not engaged; hypotheses irrelevant to theoretical foundations. **Concepts & measurement:** concepts ill-defined; measurements not specified or require further justification. **Methods:** justification absent or irrelevant. **Data/evidence:** justification absent or irrelevant (not connected with other parts of the design). **Consistency:** proposal poorly consistent, transitions poorly written, language clear most of the time but might be erroneous.
0	Not present in any meaningful way, or missing.

Reference and accuracy penalty: as in Part 1, fabricated references or hallucinated claims submitted as real drop the proposal under 12 points (out of 20).

ENGAGEMENT WITH MATERIAL (20%)

Weekly AI conversations (16 points). In Weeks 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, and 11, discuss that week's topic with your AI in your course project, using your pseudonym. At the end of the conversation, paste the summary prompt below and ask your AI for a short summary. You submit only that summary, as a plain text file; your actual conversation stays private. Each week is worth 2 points, graded by Claude from the summary:

- 1 point for submitting on time.
- 1 point if the summary shows real engagement: more than one round of back-and-forth, pushing back on or building on what the AI said, questions aimed at understanding rather than answers, and movement to real conceptual depth (from defining an idea to applying, comparing, or critiquing it). A one-shot "explain X" with no follow-up earns the submission point only.

Weekly summary prompt (paste this at the end of your conversation): "We've finished discussing this week's course material. Write a short summary of our conversation that I will submit to my instructors as a plain text file. Do not include any of my personal information: refer to me only by my pseudonym, which is [PSEUDONYM]. Use exactly this structure:

- **Pseudonym:** [my pseudonym]
- **Week and topic:** [week number and the course topic we discussed]
- **Rounds:** the number of substantive back-and-forth exchanges we had.
- **What we discussed:** 2-3 sentences on the main questions and ideas we worked through.
- **Iteration:** did I push back on, question, redirect, or build on your responses? One or two short paraphrased examples (not full quotes).
- **Engagement:** did I explore beyond my first question, follow tangents, or show curiosity about the material? One example.
- **Understanding:** what was I trying to grasp more deeply, and how far did we get conceptually: did we move from defining a concept to applying, comparing, or critiquing it? Note the level of conceptual depth reached.
- **Change over time:** Look back at our conversations from previous weeks in this project. Compared with those earlier weeks, has my cognitive engagement changed: am I pushing harder, going deeper, asking sharper questions, catching more, or the reverse? Note the direction of change and one concrete sign of it. (If this is our first week, say so.)
- **One illustrative moment:** the single short paraphrased example that best shows how I engaged. Keep it to about 250-300 words, honest and specific. If I mostly asked for answers with little back-and-forth, say so plainly."

AI-free in-class tasks (4 points). In Weeks 3, 5, 9, and 11, the first 10 minutes of the seminar is a short task you complete in class without AI. Each is worth 1 point for submitting it; there is no wrong answer. These tasks show us how your reasoning without AI evolves across the semester.

WORKING WITHOUT AI

If you would rather not work with AI in this course, you can opt out. Your grade is not affected: the total points stay the same, and only a few parts of the assessment change.

Opting out is all or nothing: it means working without AI completely, on everything, all semester. There is no way for us to grade a mix ("I worked without AI for 80 percent"), so this track is a commitment. You submit no AI Process Logs; instead your written work is checked with Pangram for AI assistance. A flag opens a conversation, never an automatic penalty, but confirmed AI assistance on the no-AI track counts as undisclosed AI use under the course policy.

GRADING, MODERATION AND APPEALS

Moderation. Under the department's moderation policy, co-taught courses are moderated internally, because they are designed, assessed and graded by two instructors together: both instructors blind double-

grade a shared sample of the presentations and the research designs, compare, and agree a common standard before the rest of the marking goes ahead. Moderation checks that the marking standard is consistent; it does not change an individual grade.

Appeals. A student who has concerns about a grade raises them first with the instructor who marked the work, who re-grades the work against the same rubric and may adjust the grade up or down. A student who still believes the work was graded unfairly or inconsistently with the rubric may submit a formal appeal to the department's Grade Moderation Committee, which reviews for consistency and fairness and may arrange an independent, anonymous re-marking.

06 Literature

Core textbooks

- Toshkov, D. (2016). *Research Design in Political Science.* Palgrave Macmillan.
- Booth, W. C., Colomb, G. G., Williams, J. M., Bizup, J., & FitzGerald, W. T. (2024). *The Craft of Research.* 5th ed. University of Chicago Press.

Chapters and articles

- Holmes, C. E., Guliford, M. K., Mendoza-Davé, M. A. S., & Jurkovich, M. (2024). A case for description. *PS: Political Science & Politics, 57*(1), 51-56. [Weeks 2, 3]
- Farrow, R., Iniesto, F., Weller, M., & Pitt, R. (2020). Research Paradigms. In *The Research Methods Handbook.* Open Education Research Hub (GO-GN). [Week 2]
- Booth, W. C., Colomb, G. G., & Williams, J. M. (2003). From topics to questions. In *The Craft of Research* (2nd ed., Ch.3). University of Chicago Press. [Week 3]
- Gustafsson, K., & Hagström, L. (2018). What is the point? Teaching graduate students how to construct political science research puzzles. *European Political Science, 17*(4), 634-648. [Week 3]
- Schwartz-Shea, P., & Yanow, D. (2012). Ways of knowing. In *Interpretive Research Design: Concepts and Processes* (pp. 24-44). Routledge. [Weeks 3, 5]
- Knopf, J. W. (2006). Doing a literature review. *PS: Political Science & Politics, 39*(1), 127-132. [Week 4]
- Keshav, S. (2007). How to read a paper. *ACM SIGCOMM Computer Communication Review, 37*(3), 83-84. [Week 4]
- Powner, L. C. (2015). From research question to theory to hypothesis. In *Empirical Research and Writing: A Political Science Student's Practical Guide* (Ch.2, pp. 21-54). CQ Press. [Week 5]
- de Kadt, D., & Grzymala-Busse, A. (2025). Good description. SocArXiv preprint. https://doi.org/10.31235/osf.io/e74a9_v2 [Week 5]
- Sartori, G. (1970). Concept misformation in comparative politics. *APSR, 64*(4), 1033-1053. [Week 8]
- Schatz, E. (2009). Ethnographic immersion and the study of politics. In *Political Ethnography*, pp. 1-22. University of Chicago Press. [Week 10]
- Lawler, J., & Waldner, D. (2023). Interpretivism versus positivism in an age of causal inference. In *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Political Science*, pp. 221-242. OUP. [Week 10]

07 Weekly Schedule

On readings. I want you to be familiar with the content of the readings and their arguments. Whether you do it by reading and taking notes, or by asking AI to summarise them for you, the main point for me is that you understand the content, so that we can have a meaningful discussion about our topics of interest.

WEEK 1

Introduction to Course and AI Co-Working. Readings: Syllabus and *A Field Guide to a Phenomenon in Motion*.

WEEK 2

Type of research. Readings: Holmes et al. (2024), "A Case for Description"; Farrow et al. (2020), "Research Paradigms" (positivism and interpretivism).

WEEK 3

Research questions. Readings: Booth, Colomb & Williams (2003, 2nd ed.), "From Topics to Questions"; Gustafsson & Hagström (2018), "What is the Point?"; Schwartz-Shea & Yanow (2012), "Ways of Knowing": where research questions come from (pp. 24-38); Holmes et al. (2024), "A Case for Description".

WEEK 4

Literature review. Readings: Knopf (2006), "Doing a Literature Review"; Keshav (2007), "How to Read a Paper". Thursday is Poets' Day. Instead of five papers, five groups each take one argument that poets have carried on for two thousand years (leaving home, love, war, power, how to live), six poems per group. Each group writes a short review of its argument, camps, disagreements and what none of the poets said, and then four lines of its own that add to it. Same job as a literature review, different literature.

WEEK 5

Theory, frameworks, and expectations. Readings: Powner (2015), "From Research Question to Theory to Hypothesis" (Ch.2); Schwartz-Shea & Yanow (2012), "Ways of Knowing" (pp. 38-44); de Kadt & Grzymala-Busse (2025), "Good Description" (preprint).

WEEKS 6-7: PRESENTATIONS #1

WEEK 8

Concepts and measurement. Readings: Toshkov Ch.4 (Concepts and Operationalization, pp.83-106) and Ch.5 (Measurement and Description, pp.107-144); Sartori (1970).

WEEK 9

Choosing methods (positivist). Readings: Toshkov Ch.7 (Experimental Designs, pp.166-199); Ch.10 (Single-Case Study Designs, pp.285-309).

WEEK 10

Choosing methods (interpretivist). Readings: Schatz (2009); Lawler & Waldner (2023). Understanding vs. explaining; when meaning, not causation, is the target; researcher positionality.

WEEK 11

Data collection and research ethics. Readings: Booth et al. (2024, 5th ed.), Part II (pp.61-98) and Ch.17 (pp.247-253).

WEEKS 12-14: PRESENTATIONS #2 AND WRAP-UP