Doctoral Seminar
RI/SP002 | Autumn | 6 ECTS
Tuesdays 16:15 to 18:00 (P3-506)

> **PROFESSOR**

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> **ASSISTANT**

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Course Description

The aim of this seminar is to engage IRPS PhD students in the process of specifying a research problem. To this end, the doctoral seminar comprises two main activities: It broaches overarching issues, vocabularies and tools pertinent to formulating research problems and it connects these to the context of the IRPS department and so to the ongoing research of departmental faculty. In addition to this, a range of (optional) sessions offered in conjunction with the Doctoral Seminar and introduced by advanced PhD students of the department, will provide an opportunity to reflect on the 'Phd Process in Practice'. As a whole the doctoral seminar affords the participants the opportunity to reflect on and specify their own research interests in light of these three aspects of the PhD process. At the end of the seminar the students will have acquired an understanding of what is involved in formulating a PhD problem and they will have made substantial progress in specifying their own research problem / question. To this end, participants will be asked to construct an 'archive of PhD problem formulation notes' connecting the seminar with their own research interests and the final assignment will be a 'Sketch of a PhD Problem'. These two assignments make up the bulk of the assessment for the doctoral seminar. It is supplemented by two in-class presentations (a presentation of an overarching issue and a commentary on an ongoing departmental research project). A PhD research problem is the foundation for elaborating a research design. The doctoral seminar lays the foundations for the Research Design course that follows it.

Assignments and Grading

The seminar will be graded based on the following manner.

- Participation 10%:
  Preparation, presence and active engagement throughout the course is expected. Please let us know if for some reason you are prevented from fulfilling this expecation.

- Comments 15%
  Seminar participants will be given the opportunity to comment on one of the faculty lectures. They comments should strive to comment on and ask questions about out how the faculty arrived at their research problem, how they situated it and what the broader justification was. The questioning should reflect a carful reading of the material submitted and a relation of this material to the broader challenge of formulating research problems.

- Presentation 15%
  Seminar participants will make a presentation that opens the discussion around one of the the overarching issues covered in the DS. The presentation should strive to:
  o Introduce the arguments in the readings
  o Point out their implications for the formulation of a PhD problem
  o Provide a critical reflection on how you (in the class) could work with this to formulate your own research problem.
  Presentation must **not exceed 15 minutes**. **If you wish to use a pptx upload it the evening before the presentation.**

- Archive of 'PhD Problem Formulation Notes' 30%
  Each participant will write 3 'PhD reflection notes'. These notes:
  o relate to either the faculty presentations or the overarching issues discussed in class
  o connect an argument made in the readings and why/how you find it helpful for formulating *a* PhD question
  o include at least two precise citations with page number and quotation marks from the readings for the session.
  o Are no more than **900 words long**, include a word count, full student name and a title.
  These notes must be uploaded to the moodle no later than the Saturday following the seminar at 11:00.

- Sketch of a PhD Problem 30%
  The aim of this assignment is to reflexively practice formuating research/PhD problems. To this end you should *pose, situate* and *justify* a research question and reflection on how you did this, what you did not do and what the implications of this. Doing this lays the groundwork for devising a 'research design' (as you will be doing in the sequel to this course: the course on research design). It may be important to note that this is an exercise.

  NB: It is an exercise. You are not expected to arrive at the formuation of the research problem you will work on in the PhD. The point is to present an argument *about* what would make for a good research question.

  This assignment should therefore should answer the following questions and for each you should state:
  o What question would you like to pose in your PhD research?
    ▪ What puzzle, dilemma, paradox, lacuna or shortcoming does this question allow you to adress?
  o How does this situate your PhD research?
    ▪ What practices, theories and empirical observations will you be building on and adding to?
  o Why is it important (and therefore justified) to explore this question?
    ▪ What kind of emprical, theoretical, and practical contribution(s) will you make by answering this question?

Please follow the instructions:
Written assignments: To be fair to those who do their work within the alloted time, 0.25 will be substracted from the assignment grade at the beginning of each 12 hr period[AP1]- post the deadline.
Oral assignments: Time limits are there to make space of the discussion. You will be cut off after the time alotted.
Participation: Eeach unexcused absences will lower the participation grade.

Course Overview

Date	Seminar Theme	PhD Process in Practice (optional)
21 Sept	Introduction	
28 Sept	The Wealth and Variety of IRPS	
5 Oct	Faculty lecture 1 Christiana	Student led Groups (Study, Reading, Writing, Film etc) Asees and ChinMan
12 Oct	Raising Questions	Student led Politics Ximena and Eliza
19 Oct	Faculty lecture 2 Ravi	Courses/ Phd Schools Victor and Bugra
26 Oct	Situating Contributions	Supervision Tanushree and Alice
2 Nov	Faculty Lecture 3 Annabelle	TA, RA and institute jobs Juliette and Pedro
9 Nov	Reflecting on Impact	Fieldwork and Grants Janine and Marie
16 Nov	Faculty Lecture 4 Michelle	Academic Exchanges Laura and Raphael
23 Nov	Facing Reality	Internships/consultancies Andrea and Carl
30 Nov	Faculty Lecture 5 Sung Min	Conferencing, abstracts Vanessa and Miguel
7 Dec	Round table on pluralist research approaches: Liliana, James, Cedric, Lisa, Keith, David	Job talks Michelle Weitzel and Christiana Perreira
14 Dec	Conclusion: Assignment outlines	
21 Dec	No class	

Readings:
All required readings will be available on the Moodle page of the course prior to the class.

Syllabus

Please read the readings marked * Other readings are optional.

21 Sept   Introduction

On the significance of problematizing, i.e. identifying research questions.

* Eco, Umberto. (2015) *How to Write a Thesis*. MIT Press (pp. 7-8)
* Stengers, Isabelle. (2019) 'Putting Problematization to the Test of Our Present'. *Theory, Culture & Society* 38 (2):71-92.

Bourdieu, Pierre, Chamboredon, Jean-Claude, Passeron, Jean-Claude, and Krais, Beate. (1991) *The Craft of Sociology: Epistemological Preliminaries (Original Edition 1968)*. Berlin and New York: De Guyter, pp.
Latour, Bruno. (2005) *Re-Assembling the Social. An Introduction to Actor Network Theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. (interlude in the form of a dialogue with a PhD student)

28 Sept The Wealth and Variety of IRPS (and of contemporary knowledge

On the inescapable need to relate to the multiplicity of criteria for evaluating research and so for evaluating 'good' research qustions when formulating a PhD problem.

*Sylvester, Christine. (2013) 'Experiencing the End of International Relations'. *European Journal of International Relations* 19 (3):609-26.
* Habermas, Jürgen. (1972) Knowledge and Human Interests: A General Perspective. In *Knowledge and Human Interests*, edited by Jürgen Habermas, pp. 301-47.

Blaney, David L, and Tickner, Arlene B. (2017) 'Worlding, Ontological Politics and the Possibility of a Decolonial IR'. *Millennium* 45 (3):293-311.
Guzzini, Stefano. (2013) 'The Ends of International Relations Theory: Stages of Reflexivity and Modes of Theorizing'. *European Journal of International Relations* 19 (3):521-41.
Zinnes, Dina A. (1980) 'Three Puzzles in Search of a Researcher: Presidential Address'. *International Studies Quarterly* 24 (3):315-42. https://doi.org/10.2307/2600250.

5 Oct   Faculty lecture 1 //Christiana

Readings TBA

12 Oct Raising Questions

*Abbott, Andrew. (2004) *Methods of Discovery: Heuristics for the Social Sciences*. New York and London: W.W. Norton and Company: chap. 3 (80-110 but also *passim*).
* Hollis, Martin. (1994) *The Philosophy of Social Science: An Introduction* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bleiker, Roland. (2015) 'Pluralist Methods for Visual Global Politics'. *Millennium* 43 (3):872-90.
Bliesemann de Guevara, Berit, Refaie, Elisabeth El, Furnari, Ellen, Gameiro, Sofia, Julian, Rachel, and Payson, Alida. (2021) 'Drawing out Experiential Conflict Knowledge in Myanmar: Arts-Based Methods in Qualitative Research with Conflict-Affected Communities'. *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development*. Online First.
Czarniawska-Joerges, Barbara, and De Monthoux, P. (2005) *Good Novels, Better Management: Reading Organizational Realities in Fiction*. Routledge.
Harman, Sophie. (2019) *Seeing Politics: Film, Visual Method, and International Relations*. McGill-Queen's Press-MQUP.
Jackson, Patrick Thaddeus. (2016) The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implicati*ons for the Study of World Politics*. Routledge: chapter 7
Law, John. (2004) After Method, Mess in Social Science Research. London: Routledge.
Moses, Jonathon Wayne, and Knutsen, Torbjorn L. (2019) *Ways of Knowing: Competing Methodologies in Social and Political Research*. Macmillan International Higher Education.
Nowotny, Helga. (2000) 'Transgressive Competence: The Narrative of Expertise'. *European Journal of Social Theory* 3 (1):5-21.
Sil, Rudra, and Katzenstein, Peter. (2010) 'Analytic Eclecticism in the Study of World Politics: Reconfiguring Problems and Mechanisms across Research Traditions'. *Perspectives on Politics* 8 (2):411-31.
Wendt, Alexander. (2015) *Quantum Mind and Social Science : Unifying Physical and Social Ontology*. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press. http://newcatalog.library.cornell.edu/catalog/8924316.

19 Oct Faculty lecture 2 Annabelle
Readings TBA

26 Oct Situating Questions
On the import of recognizing the situatedness of any research problem and its connections to it. We will discuss this by talking about the connections between the concepts we use to formulate problems and explore them (and the limits this necessarily imposes).

* Lukes, Steven. (1974) *Power: A Radical View*. London: Macmillan.
* Stoler, Ann Laura. (2016) *Duress: Imperial Durabilities in Our Times*. Durham: Duke University Press: chapter 1 (on concept work).

Collier, David, and Gerring, John. (2009) 'Concepts and Method in Social Science: The Tradition of Giovanni Sartori (Introduction)'. *Concepts & Method in Social Science: The Tradition of Giovanni Sartori, 1st Edition,(Eds.) David Collier, John Gerring, London: Routledge*:1-10.
Berenskoetter, Felix. (2017) 'Approaches to Concept Analysis'. *Millennium* 45 (2):151-73.
Bevir, Mark, and Kedar, Asaf. (2008) 'Concept Formation in Political Science: An Anti-Naturalist Critique of Qualitative Methodology'. *Perspectives on Politics*:503-17.
Connolly, William E. (1993) *The Terms of Political Discourse*. Princeton University Press.
Gallie, Walter Bryce. (2019) *Essentially Contested Concepts*. Cornell University Press.
Gerring, John. (2011) *Social Science Methodology: A Unified Framework*. Cambridge University Press: Chapter 5 (Concepts)
Guzzini, Stefano. (2016) Power. In Concepts in World Politics edited by Felix Berenskoetter, pp. 23-40: Sage.
Hirschman, Albert O. (1970) 'The Search for Paradigms as a Hindrance to Understanding'. *World Politics* 22 (3):329-43.
———. (1986) Against Parsimony. Three Easy Ways of Complicating Some Categories of Economic Discourse. In *Rival Views of Market Society and Other Recent Essays*, pp. 142-61. Cambridge, MA: Harvard university Press.
Ish-Shalom, Piki. (2021) *Concepts at Work: On the Linguistic Infrastructure of World Politics*. University of Michigan Press.
King, Gary, Keohane, Robert O, and Verba, Sidney. (2004) 'The Importance of Research Design'. *Rethinking social inquiry: Diverse tools, shared standards*:181-92.
Palonen, Kari. (1999) 'Rhetorical and Temporal Perspectives on Conceptual Change'. *Redescriptions: Political Thought, Conceptual History and Feminist Theory* 3 (1):41-59.
Richter, Melvin. (2005) 'More Than a Two-Way Traffic: Analyzing, Translating, and Comparing Political Concepts from Other Cultures'. *Contributions to the History of Concepts* 1 (1):7-20.

2 Nov Faculty Lecture 3 Ravi
Readings TBA

9 Nov 'Impact' and 'Style'
On the import of thinking through the 'so what?' when formulating a research problem and so of specifying the broader significance of the research project and kind of 'impact' it is likely to have. This choice matters not least because of its significance for the kind of 'style' adopted in the project.

* Bastow, Simon, Dunleavy, Patrick, and Tinkler, Jane. (2014) *The Impact of the Social Sciences. How Academics and Their Research Makes a Difference*. Los Angeles et al.: Sage. (chapter / section on different forms of impact).
* Harman, Sophie, Patarin-Jossec, Julie, Hansen, Susan, and Grady, John. (2021) 'On Film as a Method, Gender and Health Politics: Conversation with Sophie Harman'. *Visual Studies* 36 (1):3-10.

Austin, Jonathan Luke, and Leander, Anna. (2021) 'Designing-with/in World Politics. Manifestos for an International Political Design'. *Political Anthropological Research on International Social Sciences* 2 (1):83-154.
Abbott, Andrew. (2007) 'Against Narrative: A Preface to Lyrical Sociology'. *Sociological Theory* 25 (1):67-100.
Callahan, William A. (2020) *Sensible Politics: Visualizing International Relations*. Oxford University Press.
Fassin, Didier. (2017) The Public Afterlife of Ethnography. In *If Truth Be Told. The Politics of Public Ethnography*, edited by Didier Fassin, pp. 311-44. Durham: Duke University Press.
Hacking, Ian. (1992) ''Style'for Historians and Philosophers'. *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science Part A* 23 (1):1-20.
———. (2012) ''Language, Truth and Reason'30 Years Later'. *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science Part A* 43 (4): 599-609.
Koskenniemi, Martti. (1999) 'Letter to the Editors of the Symposium on Legal Method'. *The American Journal of International Law* 93 (2):351-61.

Taussig, Michael. (2010) 'The Corn-Wolf: Writing Apotropaic Texts'. *Critical Inquiry* 37 (1):26-33.

16 Nov Faculty Lecture 4 Michelle Weizel
Readings TBA

23 Nov Facing Reality
On the significance reflexively engaging with the formulation of research problems to ensure that they are feasible and that working with them has a real prospect of generating the results aimed for.

* Bourdieu, Pierre. (2000) *Pascalian Meditations*. Cambridge: Polity, radical doubt.
* Cohn, Carol. (1987) 'Sex and Death in the Rational World of Defense Intellectuals'. *Signs* 12 (4):687-718.

   ** Sabaratnam, Meera. (2017) 'Decolonising the Curriculum: What's All the Fuss About?'. *Study at SOAS Blog*. https://study.soas.ac.uk/decolonising-curriculum-whats-the-fuss/.
   ** 'A Letter on Justice and Open Debate' https://harpers.org/a-letter-on-justice-and-open-debate/

Alejandro, Audrey. (2021) 'Reflexive Discourse Analysis: A Methodology for the Practice of Reflexivity'. *European Journal of International Relations* 27 (1):150-74.
Bourdieu, Pierre et al. (1999) *The Weight of the World: Social Suffering in Contemporary Society*. Stanford: Stanford University Press (chapter on understanding, 608-617 espl).
Czarniawska, Barbara. (2007) *Shadowing and Other Techniques for Doing Fieldwork in Modern Societies*. Copenhagen: CBS Press (chapter on fieldwork with Warsaw mayor and the impossibility of doing it).
Hamati-Ataya, Inanna. (2013) 'Reflectivity, Reflexivity, Reflexivism: IR's 'Reflexive Turn' — and Beyond'. *European Journal of International Relations* 19 (4):669-94.
Haraway, Donna. (1997) *Modest_Witness@Second_Millennium.Femaleman©_Meets_Oncomouse™*. New York: Routledge: 23-39.
Savage, Mike. (2013) 'The 'Social Life of Methods': A Critical Introduction'. *Theory, Culture & Society* 30 (4):3-21.

30 NovFaculty Lecture 5 Sung Min
Readings TBA

7 Dec   Round table on problem forumation in IRPS: Liliana, James, Cedric, Lisa, Keith
Readings TBA

Ask how they see interdisciplinary research

14 Dec Conclusion: Discussion of assignment outlines

21 Dec No class