Course Instructor:
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Course Description:
This advanced-level course explores the logic and practice of case study method, with a particular focus on process tracing in qualitative case studies. Thus, it aims to introduce graduate students the foundational premises of how to test and refine causal mechanisms at work in historical processes in order to construct valid, historically-grounded causal arguments in their research projects. In a nutshell, process tracing is particularly useful in enabling the researcher to make causal inferences in historical analysis, by revealing out the variation in sequence and combination of paths and mechanisms that influence the variation in outcomes of interest. In the first part of the course, we will discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the case study method, and elaborate various types of case studies and case selection techniques. In the second part, we will deal with the inferential logic of process tracing via an examination of theory-testing and theory-building practices, with a special emphasis on the counterfactual logic of social scientific thinking. After completing this course, it is aimed that, the students will i) acquire the relevant skills to read, understand and evaluate the academic literature that employs case study and process tracing methods; ii) design and conduct a good quality research based upon case study and process tracing, alongside with learning how to cope with possible methodological difficulties and causal inferential problems they may encounter in their research projects.

Course Format and Schedule:
This is a five-day long, intensive and highly interactive advanced-level course. From Monday to Friday, we will have four-hour long meetings, each divided into morning and afternoon sessions. For the first four days, the instructor will deliver lectures in the mornings, while the class discussion over assigned readings will take place in the afternoons. Friday sessions are organized as workshop meetings, in which the research projects of those students who would like to get a detailed feedback on their work will be thoroughly discussed. Students can present either a research proposal, a research design or an ongoing research project.

1st Day (Monday):
- Key concepts: observation, case, case study.
- Strengths and pitfalls of case studies

2nd Day (Tuesday):
- Designing a case study
  - Single vs. comparative case study
  - Case selection techniques
- Data collection
3rd Day (Wednesday):
- Defining Process Tracing
  o Its strengths and limits
- Types of process tracing
  o Theory-testing
  o Theory-building
  o Explaining (the variation in) outcomes.

4th Day (Thursday):
- Counterfactual logic of causal inference in process tracing.

5th Day (Friday):
- Some examples of best practice
- Exercises
- Workshop for Student Projects

Readings:
Below is a short selected list of recommended readings.

Books:

*Journal Articles and Book Chapters:*

• Dion, Douglas. 1998. “Evidence and Inference in the Comparative Case Study.” 
  *Comparative Politics* 30(2):127-145.