

IPSA Antalya Summer School 2024
Case Study and Process Tracing
Tentative Course Syllabus

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
 - Its strengths and limits
- Types of process tracing
 - Theory-testing
 - Theory-building
 - Explaining (the variation in) outcomes.

4th Day (Thursday):

- Counterfactual logic of causal inference in case study and 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:

- Thomas, G. (2021). *How To Do Your Case Study*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Beach, D., & Pedersen, R. B. (2019). *Process-tracing methods: Foundations and guidelines*. University of Michigan Press.
- Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case Study Research and Applications: Design and Methods*. Sixth ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Gerring, J. (2017). *Case study research: Principles and practices*. Cambridge university press.
- Beach, D., & Pedersen, R. B. (2016). *Causal case study methods: Foundations and guidelines for comparing, matching, and tracing*. University of Michigan Press.
- Morgan, S. L., & Winship, C. (2015). *Counterfactuals and causal inference*. Cambridge University Press.
- Bennett, A., & Checkel, J. T. (Eds.). (2015). *Process Tracing: From Metaphor to Analytic Tool*. Cambridge University Press.
- Brady, H. E., & Collier, D. (Eds.). (2010). *Rethinking social inquiry: Diverse tools, shared standards*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Ragin, C. C. (2009). *Redesigning Social Inquiry*. University of Chicago Press.
- George, A. L., & Bennett, A. (2005). *Case studies and theory development in the social sciences*. MIT Press.
- Stake, R. E. (1995) *The Art of Case Study Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- King, G., Keohane, R. O., & Verba, S. (1994). *Designing Social Inquiry*. Princeton university press.

Journal Articles:

- Trampusch, Christine and Bruno Palier. (2016). "Between X and Y: How Process Tracing Contributes to Opening the Black Box of Causality." *New Political Economy* 21(5):437-54
- Rohlfing, Ingo. 2014. "Comparative Hypothesis Testing via Process Tracing." *Sociological Methods & Research* 43 (4):606-642.
- Hall, Peter A. 2013. "Tracing the Progress of Process Tracing." *European Political*

Science 12:20-30

- Mahoney, James. 2012. "The Logic of Process Tracing Tests in the Social Sciences." *Sociological Methods & Research* 41(4):570-97.
- Mahoney, James. 2010. "After KKV: The New Methodology of Qualitative Research." *World Politics* 62(1): 120-147.
- Gerring, John. 2010. "Causal Mechanisms: Yes But..." *Comparative Political Studies* 43(11): 1499-1526.
- Durand, R., & Vaara, E. (2009). Causation, counterfactuals, and competitive advantage. *Strategic Management Journal*, 30(12), 1245-1264.
- Seawright, J. and John Gerring. (2008). "Case Selection Techniques in Case Study Research: A menu of Qualitative and Quantitative Options." *Political Research Quarterly* 61(2): 294-308
- Tansey, O. (2007). "Process Tracing and Elite Interviewing: A Case for Non-Probability Sampling." *PS: Political Science and Politics* 40(4):765-72.
- King, G., & Zeng, L. (2007). When can history be our guide? The pitfalls of counterfactual inference. *International Studies Quarterly*, 51(1), 183-210.
- Capoccia, G., & Kelemen, R. D. (2007). The study of critical junctures: Theory, narrative, and counterfactuals in historical institutionalism. *World politics*, 59(3), 341-369.
- Bennett, A. and Colin Elman. (2006). "Qualitative Research: Recent Developments in Case Study Methods." *Annual Review of Political Science* 9:455-476.
- Checkel, J. T. (2006). "Tracing Causal Mechanisms." *International Studies Review* 8(2): 362-370.
- King, G., & Zeng, L. (2006). The dangers of extreme counterfactuals. *Political analysis*, 14(2), 131-159.
- Mills, Melinda, Gerhard G. van de Bunt and Jeanne de Bruijn. 2006. "Comparative Research: Persistent Problems and Promising Solutions." *International Sociology* 21(5): 619-631.
- Flyvbjerg, B. (2006). "Five Misunderstandings about Case-Study Research." *Qualitative Inquiry* 12(2): 219-245.
- Gerring, J. (2004). "What is a Case Study and What is it Good For?" *American Political Science Review* 98 (2): 341-354.
- Tilly, C. (2001). "Mechanisms in Political Processes." *Annual Review of Political Science* 4(1): 21-41.