

Concepts and Measurement in Case-Based Research

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9:00am-4:30pm

This course aims to give students an introductory overview of challenges, choices, and ways of justifying those choices, in the use of concepts and measurement in case-based research. The first day introduces classic issues of conceptual contestation, stretching, and ideal-types articulated in both much-cited articles by W. B. Gallie, Giovanni Sartori, and Max Weber, and contemporary extensions of their work. The second day focuses on recent refinements in the social scientific literature on concepts addressing issues such as subtypes, dichotomization, and measurement; it then closes by stepping back to consider whether use of concepts and measurement in case-based research embodies a distinctive culture of qualitative research. Throughout the course the stakes of methodological issues will be substantively explored using examples of key concepts in social science research. The most extensive running example in the course, as in the concepts literature, is “democracy.” We will, moreover, also consider the concepts of “neoliberalism,” “revolution,” and “culture,” as well concepts raised by students.

The course format will combine lecture, discussion, and group exercises. One session each day will be devoted to group exercises to develop the methodological skills of students. On day one students will work in groups to analyze the meaning of a social scientific concept of the group’s choice. Then, on day two, each group will formulate a strategy for measuring its chosen concept.

This course can either be followed as a stand-alone two-day module, or preferably as part of a two-week introduction to case study methods in the WSSR. Students are expected to purchase a copy of *Concepts and Methods in Social Science: The Tradition of Giovanni Sartori*, eds. David Collier and John Gerring (New York: Routledge, 2009), from which extensive selections will be assigned. Full information on the additional readings is also provided below so that students can access these materials themselves.

Day 1. Friday, May 22

Session 1. Classic Issues: Conceptual Contestation and Conceptual Stretching 9.00-10.30

- W. B. Gallie. 1956. "Essentially Contested Concepts." *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 56: 167-98.
- Giovanni Sartori. 2009/1970. "Concept Misformation in Comparative Politics." In *Concepts and Methods in Social Science: The Tradition of Giovanni Sartori*, eds. David Collier and John Gerring. New York: Routledge, 13-43.
- Taylor Boas and Jordan Gans-Morse. 2009. "Neoliberalism: From New Liberal Philosophy to Anti-Liberal Slogan." *Studies in Comparative International Development* 44 (2): 137-61.

Session 2. Concept Analysis: Sartori's Guidelines and Revolution Example 10.45-12.00

- Giovanni Sartori. 2009/1984. "Guidelines for Concept Analysis." In *Concepts and Methods in Social Science: The Tradition of Giovanni Sartori* eds. David Collier and John Gerring. New York: Routledge, 97-150.
- Christoph Kotowski. 2009/1984. "Revolution: Untangling Alternative Meanings." In *Concepts and Methods in Social Science: The Tradition of Giovanni Sartori*, eds. David Collier and John Gerring. New York: Routledge, 203-40.

Session 3. Group Exercise: Concept Analysis 1.30-3.00

Session 4. Ideal Types and Culture 3.15-4.30

- Max Weber. 2004/1904. "The 'Objectivity' of Knowledge in Social Science and Social Policy." In *The Essential Weber*, ed. Sam Whimster. New York: Routledge, 359, 368-404.
- John Gerring and Paul A. Barresi. 2009/2003. "Culture: Joining Minimal Definitions and Ideal Types." In *Concepts and Methods in Social Science: The Tradition of Giovanni Sartori*, eds. David Collier and John Gerring. New York: Routledge, 241-68.

Day 2. Saturday, May 23

Session 1. Conceptual Subtypes and Choices: Democracy Example 9.00-10.30

- David Collier and Steven Levitsky. 2009/1997. "Democracy: Conceptual Hierarchies in Comparative Research." In David Collier and John Gerring, eds. *Concepts and Methods in Social Science: The Tradition of Giovanni Sartori* (New York: Routledge), 269-88.
- David Collier and Robert Adcock. 1999. "Democracy and Dichotomies: A Pragmatic Approach to Choices about Concepts." *Annual Review of Political Science* 2: 537-65.

Session 2. Measurement: Democracy Example 10.45-12.00

- Robert Adcock and David Collier. 2001. "Measurement Validity: A Shared Standard for Qualitative and Quantitative Research." *American Political Science Research* 95 (3): 529-46.
- Michael Coppedge and John Gerring with et al. 2011. "Conceptualizing and Measuring Democracy: A New Approach." *Perspectives on Politics* 9 (2): 247-67.

Session 3. Group Exercise: Measurement 1.30-3.00

Session 4. Concepts and Measurement: Two Cultures? 3.15-4.30

- Gary Goertz and James Mahoney. 2012. *A Tale of Two Cultures: Qualitative and Quantitative Research in the Social Sciences*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP. Chaps. 1, 10-13.