

CENTRE FOR POLITICAL STUDIES
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
MONSOON SEMESTER 2021

M.PHIL. COMPULSORY COURSE: PO 601

COURSE TITLE: **PHILOSOPHY AND METHOD IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES**

INSTRUCTORS: PROF. SHEFALI JHA AND DWAIPAYAN BHATTACHARYYA

Credits 4

Scheme of Evaluation: Mid-term assignments and an End term examination.

Section I: Taught by Professor Shefali Jha

- i) **Debates in the philosophy of social science:**
- a) Positivism and post-positivist philosophy of science
 - b) The idea of social science
 - c) Realism
 - d) Hermeneutics

Readings:

K. Popper, Conjectures and Refutations, pp. 33-59

K. Popper, 'The Logic of the Social Sciences'

T. Kuhn, 'Logic of Discovery or Psychology of Research'

T. Kuhn, 'Reflections on my Critics', in I. Lakatos & A. Musgrave, Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge

P. Feyerabend, 'How to be a good empiricist', in Feyerabend, Knowledge, Science and Relativism

R. Bhaskar, The Possibility of Naturalism

K. Mueller-Vollmer, ed. The Hermeneutics Reader

P. Ricoeur, 'The Model of the Text: Meaningful Action considered as a Text'

P. Ricoeur, Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences

- ii) **Concepts in the philosophy of social science:**
- a) Scientific explanation: laws and causality
 - b) Functional explanation
 - c) Objectivity and Values

Readings:

C.G. Hempel, 'Explanation in Science and in History'

C.G. Hempel, 'Laws and their role in Scientific Explanation'

C. Ragin, 'Heterogeneity and Causal Complexity'

C. Ragin, 'Case-oriented Comparative Methods'

R. Bates, 'From Case Studies to Social Science: A Strategy for Political Research'

G.A. Cohen, Karl Marx's Theory of History - A Defence

H. Longino, 'Cognitive and Non-Cognitive Values in Science: Rethinking the Dichotomy'

Section II: Taught by Professor Dwaipayan Bhattacharyya

Empirical Research Methods and Techniques

1. Identifying research problem
2. Formulation of research questions
3. Research design
4. Operationalizing concepts
5. Quantitative methods
6. Qualitative methods

Readings:

(the readings are subject to change with the drift of discussion and specific issues raised in the class)

Anthony J. Onwuegbuzie and Nancy L. Leech, 'On becoming pragmatic researcher: The importance of combining quantitative and qualitative research methodologies', *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 8:5, 2007:375-387

W Lawrence Neuman, *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*, Pearson, 2015

Alan Bryman, *Social Research Methods*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2012

Adam Gaudry, 'Insurgent research', *Wicazo Sa Review*, 26(1), 2011:113-136

Peter Mair, 'Concepts and concept formation', in Donatella Della Porta and Michael Keating edited, *Approaches and Methodologies in Social Sciences: A Pluralist Perspective*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2012

Ian Shapiro et al, *Problems and Methods in the Study of Politics*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2004

Mats Alvesson and Jorgen Sandberg, *Constructing Research Questions*, Sage, London, 2013

Patrick White, *Developing Research Questions*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2009

David Collier, 'Translating quantitative methods for qualitative researchers: The case of selection bias', *APSR*, 89(2), 1995: 461-466

Alpa Shah, 'Ethnography?', *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory*, 7(1): 45-59

James Ferguson and Akhil Gupta, 'Spatializing state: Toward and ethnography of neoliberal governmentality', *American Ethnologist*, 29(4), 2002: 981-1002.

* Please note that the course topics and readings are intended for a regular semester. Changes in the duration of the semester will be reflected in some modification of the readings.