

PSIR 480.7 Applied Research in Political Science

Spring 2023

Course and Contact Information

Instructor: Dr. Fatih Erol

Class Hours: Thursday 02:00 PM to 04:00 PM

Class Location: IIBF 404

Virtual Class Location: <https://kocun.zoom.us/j/94707385486> with the passcode: 806596

Office Hours: Wednesday 03:00 PM to 05:00 PM, or by appointment (on Zoom)

Office Location: IIBF 404

Instructor Email: fatih.erol@yeditepe.edu.tr

Course Description

This course aims to provide the opportunity to apply the substantive nature of research in political science (or social sciences, defined in broader terms). I designed the course in a way for you to write a research paper (or a policy paper, if you prefer that one) in place of an undergraduate thesis. The subject of the paper is up to you and I recommend thinking out of the ordinary to create a genuine, interesting work. Below you will find more information about the details of the course and my expectations.

Pre-requisites

1. It is quite important that you have taken the **RSCH 410 Scientific Research Methods** course and have received a minimum grade of BB to be able to complete a good thesis.
2. I strongly recommend focusing on topics about which you have taken **junior or senior level substantive classes**. You will have significant ease to clarify your mind about what you can or cannot do and what you want to do.

- Alternatively, you can select a topic from my own list of future research questions (about political attitudes and behavior) that require theoretical and methodological advancement in order to write the strongest paper possible. This list covers some of the mainstream issues such as representative democracy, parties and party systems, elections and electoral systems, party competition, party system challenges, party families and positions and issue salience, responsiveness and congruence, political elites, election turnout, economic voting, issue voting, party identification, and political polarization.
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Expectations

One undergraduate thesis (more like a research paper) fulfilling the following requirements:

1. Proposing an innovative research question
2. Delivering a thorough, synthesized, and concise literature review on the research question
3. Positing one or two hypothesis/hypotheses
4. Discussing the operationalization process of the concepts in the proposed hypotheses
5. Presenting a detailed discussion of the research methodology (including all specific items to be used in operationalization)
6. Offering an overview of the data (based on availability)
7. Sharing a basic analysis of the available (or collected) data
8. Laying out your evaluation of the results and considerations for future studies

It is essential that you allocate enough time to write your paper and **you engage in an analytical analysis in your paper rather than a historical evaluation, or a literature review, or a repetition of earlier studies or anything that is obviously known**. In that regard, your paper will need to engage with an interesting research question and propose genuine hypotheses which will be then tested via scientific tools. To that end, I expect each student to generate an analytical analysis of a research topic. As a baseline, just to mimic in your papers, you can take a look at my recent publications: [Erol \(2022\)](#), [Ksiazkiewicz & Erol \(2022a\)](#), and [Ksiazkiewicz & Erol \(2022b\)](#).

Format: The final paper is supposed to be 25-30 pages in length (approximately 9.000 words). Times New Roman font; 12 pt; double-spaced; 1 cm. margins on each side of the page.

Grading Scale

Grades	AA	BA	BB	CB	CC	DC	DD	FF
	4.00	3.50	3.00	2.50	2.00	1.50	1.00	0.00
Range	100-90	89-85	84-80	79-75	74-70	69-60	59-50	49-0

Course Stages

We will meet in each week to clarify the details of your research interests. You are expected to progress through the following stages and complete all tasks listed under the stages until the indicated deadline. It is essential that we complete each stage on time which will make things a lot easier for us toward the end of the course. If you fail to fulfill the requirements, you will have major problems in completing a successful work.

YUlearn

This class uses YUlearn. Go to your YUlearn account and access with your Yeditepe username and password. You will be asked to submit your assignments via this platform throughout the semester.

Following are the stages planned for this course. Each section lists the items to be completed at that phase. Abbreviations used: **R**: READ; **T**: THINK; **W**: WRITE

1. **Submit the first draft paper (version 1) by March 9, 2023, 9:00 PM (Grade: 20 points)**
 - Clarify your research question – **W**
 - Define five important reasons as to why studying this research question is important for the literature – **W**
 - Create a list of readings (a literature review list) for your thesis – **W**
 - Choose your Theory – **R**
 - Formalize your Hypotheses – **T**
 - Learn the historical background of your research topic, especially if it is a case study analysis – **R**
 - Let me know if you are going to conduct a data analysis by using statistical software (such as *R*).
2. **Submit the second draft paper (version 2) by April 13, 2023, 9:00 PM (Grade: 20 points)**

- Explain your theory – **W**
 - Clarify your variables in your hypotheses - **W**
 - Operationalization of your concepts in your hypotheses - **W**
 - Begin to write your literature review. Synthesize and paraphrase! Write and explain others' arguments in your own words and cite them! **Do not copy the work of others!** – **W**
 - Cite by using the APA 7th referencing style and create your references accordingly (see [here](#)).
 - I would highly suggest you using a software management tool named [Zotero](#) while writing out your paper to ease citations and referencing (please watch this 12-minute long guide [here](#))
 - Learn more about the historical or contextual background of your cases or hypotheses – **R**
 - **This draft will only include the subsections listed up until this point. So, nothing on research methodology.**
3. **Submit the third draft paper (version 3) by May 11, 2023, 9:00 PM (Grade: 20 points)**
- Explain your research methodology. It would be wise to check back your notes or readings from the Research Methods class – **W**
 - Work on the analysis of your hypotheses – **W**
 - If you plan to use any kind of statistical analysis, then it is good to keep in touch with me to make sure that you are on the right track.
 - Read your paper from the beginning until the end to make sure that the flow is reasonable.
 - **Send me the preliminary third draft of your paper (version 3) by April 26, 2023, 9:00 PM to get a go ahead for completing your work.** That will make sure that you will get a passing grade.
 - If you do not submit your draft paper on time or if you do not submit one, do not expect a passing grade!
 - This draft will only include the subsections listed up until this point. You do not need to complete your analysis section but I expect that anything before that should be more or less completed.
 - Begin revising the paper according to my feedback and comments!
4. **By the end of the course; submit the final paper (version 4 - final) by June 8, 2023, 9:00 PM (Grade: 30 points)**
- Make sure that your changes reply to my comments and expectations
 - Complete revising your paper and send me (submit it through the YULearn system) **the final version of your paper by the deadline**

In-class Meetings (Grade: 10 points)

It is essential that you come to these in-class meetings where we will talk about the progress in your research. These meetings will also be useful to learn from each other as you may have similar questions.

1. Weekly Meeting on February 23, 2023 (Thursday) at 02:00 PM in IIBF 404
 2. Weekly Meeting on March 2, 2023 (Thursday) at 02:00 PM in IIBF 404
 3. Weekly Meeting on March 9, 2023 (Thursday) at 02:00 PM in IIBF 404
 4. Weekly Meeting on March 16, 2023 (Thursday) at 02:00 PM in IIBF 404
 5. Weekly Meeting on March 23, 2023 (Thursday) at 02:00 PM in IIBF 404
 6. Weekly Meeting on March 30, 2023 (Thursday) at 02:00 PM in IIBF 404
 7. Weekly Meeting on April 6, 2023 (Thursday) at 02:00 PM in IIBF 404
 8. Weekly Meeting on April 13, 2023 (Thursday) at 02:00 PM in IIBF 404
 9. Weekly Meeting on April 27, 2023 (Thursday) at 02:00 PM in IIBF 404
 10. Weekly Meeting on May 4, 2023 (Thursday) at 02:00 PM in IIBF 404
 11. Weekly Meeting on May 11, 2023 (Thursday) at 02:00 PM in IIBF 404
 12. Weekly Meeting on May 18, 2023 (Thursday) at 02:00 PM in IIBF 404
 13. Weekly Meeting on May 25, 2023 (Thursday) at 02:00 PM in IIBF 404
 14. Weekly Meeting on June 1, 2023 (Thursday) at 02:00 PM in IIBF 404
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Important Recommendations

1. **Read (journals, articles, books, newsletters, etc.)** as much as you can to learn more about your research interest.
2. **Write as much as you can** for all parts of your undergraduate thesis. Throughout the course I will only accept and evaluate your *written* work. No idea could come to life or realize itself without some kind of written foundation. It is therefore essential that you write for all parts of your work.
3. **Plagiarism:** Academic misconduct will not be tolerated. Any student who chooses to cheat or plagiarize on his or her exams or projects will receive an FF in the course and be turned over to Student Affairs.

4. **Keep in touch with me through email. BUT**, do not send unnecessary or repetitive emails on minor issues. It would be better if you make an appointment to meet with me in person rather than haphazardly emailing to me.
 5. **Communication:** It is important that you give me an email address that you frequently check. I will use the YULearn system to make announcements and send informative emails.
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Detailed Description of the Final Paper

The paper needs to propose a research question, provide a literature review on the research question, posit one or two research hypothesis/hypotheses, discuss the operationalization process of the concepts in the proposed hypotheses, provide a detailed discussion of the research methodology (including all specific items to be used in operationalization), offer an overview of the data (based on availability), and, if preferred, provide a basic analysis of the available (or collected) data.

In your paper, whatever your topic of interest is:

- Provide an **introduction (1-2 pages)** outlining your research question.
- Present the **theory (1-2 pages)** and a relevant **literature review (5-8 pages)**.
 - **FYI:** I will be using **Turn-It-In** to evaluate your paper. Make sure that you paraphrase the material taken from other works and cite accordingly.
- State and discuss your **research hypotheses (1-2 pages)**.
- Explain your **research design and methodology (3-5 pages)**.
 - In great detail, **explain your design** (experiment, survey research, content analysis, case study, interview, or anything else).
 - * *Remember:* You could select two designs to create a stronger methodological foundation.
 - Discuss the **advantages and disadvantages of using that particular research design**.
 - If you are going to use an **already collected data**, in this section, you should explain your data and **how it was collected**.
- State and justify your **operationalization of the variables (2-3 pages)**.
 - Variable Construction: **Operationalization** (Conceptual and Operational Definitions).

- **Measurement of each variable.**
- For those who are going to use already-collected data, you should clearly explain which variable you will use from the available data.
- Explain how you could determine the **validity and reliability** of your indicators **(1-2 pages)**.
- Discuss the **data collection method** that you plan to employ **(1-2 pages)**.
 - Discuss your proposed **sampling methodology** of the observations.
 - Present the potential **data sources** for your project (1-2 pages).
 - *Optional:* If you are using already collected-data, you could conduct your statistical analyses or provide a discussion as to which ones you would use.
- Present a **discussion of your potential findings** and implications of your findings, including contribution to the literature **(2-3 pages)**.
 - If you are going to analyze any type of data, discuss your findings in detail with tables and figures.
- Include an **abstract** of 150 words (max.) at the beginning of your paper.
- Include your **references** at the end of the paper.
- Include **any figures or tables** that you presented in your paper.

Format: Times New Roman font; 12 points; double-spaced; 1 cm. margins on each side of the page; use the APA 7th Citation and Reference style.