
RESEARCH SEMINAR: EXPLANATORY APPROACHES OF SOCIAL POLICY REFORM

University of Greifswald – Summer term 2018 – Thursday, 8–12 AM, SR Baderstr. 4/5

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Consultation: Wednesday, 1–2 PM (by appointment only)

I. Course description

Modern welfare states exhibit remarkable differences in their provision of social security. These differences can be empirically assessed with the help of macro-quantitative studies. However, there is no single theoretical approach that can explain substantial variation in social security provision within welfare states in general. Thus, the seminar focuses on multiple x-centered explanatory approaches (i.e. socio-economic mechanisms, power resource and partisan theory, institutional explanations, and internationalization) that describe varying degrees of welfare generosity and overall effort in social expenditures.

The aim of the seminar is enable students to conduct an empirical policy analysis and to learn how to write a term paper in comparative politics. Students will be instructed on how to formulate a research question, search and archive literature, explicate theoretical arguments and deduct hypotheses, effectively search for data sources, presenting data in different forms, carrying out empirical analyses, and writing of an empirical study. Term papers should focus on explicating a single causal mechanism that influences welfare policies to a certain degree with the help of statistical analysis.

II. Literature

- Baglione, L. A. (2015). *Writing a research paper in political science: A practical guide to inquiry, structure, and methods*. CQ Press.
- Castles, F. G., Leibfried, S., Lewis, J., Obinger, H., and Pierson, C. (2010). *The Oxford Handbook of the Welfare State*. Oxford University Press.
- Miller, J. E. (2013). *The Chicago guide to writing about multivariate analysis*. University of Chicago Press.

III. Course assessment

Term paper

- Quantitative-empirical analysis is **mandatory**
- Deadline for paper submission is August 31st
- Submission of paper i) via email (with replication files and dataset) **and** ii) printed copy
- Paper must consist of 15–18 pages of continuous text (excluding graphs, tables, and references)
- 12pt font size, with serifs, 1.5 line spacing
- Fully justified text, including hyphenation
- 2.5cm margins on all sides
- Paper can be written either in English or German.

IV. Syllabus

Introduction and planning (April 12th)

Note: This session serves for introductory purposes.

1st session (April 19th)

a) Theory: Dependent variable I – Aggregated social expenditures

Obinger, H., and Wagschal, U. (2012). Social Expenditure and Revenues. In: Castles, F. G., Leibfried, S., Lewis, J., Obinger, H., and Pierson, C. (eds.). *The Oxford Handbook of the Welfare State*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Part V, Chapter 23, pp. 333–352.

Siegel, N. (2007). When (only) money matters: the pros and cons of expenditure analysis, in: Clasen, J., and Siegel, N. (eds.). *Investigating Welfare State Change: The ‘Dependent Variable Problem’ in Comparative Analysis*. Edward Elgar. Part II, Chapter 4, pp. 43–71.

b) Methods: Research question

Baglione, L. A. (2015). *Writing a research paper in political science: A practical guide to inquiry, structure, and methods*. Chapter 2: Getting Started: Finding a Research Question, pp. 15–40.

2nd session (April 26th)

a) Theory: Dependent variable II – Decommodification

Esping-Andersen, Gøsta (1990). *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*. Princeton University Press. Part I, Chapter 2, pp. 35–54.

Scruggs, L. (2007). Welfare State Decommodification in Time and Space, in: Siegel, N., and Clasen, J. (eds.). *Investigating Welfare State Change The ‘Dependent Variable Problem’ in Comparative Analysis*. Edward Elgar. Part III, Chapter 7, pp. 133–166.

b) Methods: Bibliography and arguments

Baglione, L. A. (2015). *Writing a research paper in political science: A practical guide to inquiry, structure, and methods*. Chapter 3: Learning Proper Citation Forms, Finding the Scholarly Debate, and Summarizing and Classifying Arguments: The Annotated Bibliography, pp. 40–74.

3rd session (May 3rd)

a) Theory: Explanatory approach I – Socio-economic influences

Zutavern, J., and Kohli, M. (2012). Needs and Risks in the Welfare State. In: Castles, F. G., Leibfried, S., Lewis, J., Obinger, H., and Pierson, C. (eds.). *The Oxford Handbook of the Welfare State*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Part IV, Chapter 11, pp. 169–182.

Kuitto, K., and Helmdag, J. (2016). Extending the tail end of working lives: How policies shape labour market participation and retirement of older workers. Working paper, available at <http://www.etk.fi/wp-content/uploads/Kuitto-Helmdag-sep2016.pdf>

b) Methods: Writing the literature review

Baglione, L. A. (2015). *Writing a research paper in political science: A practical guide to inquiry, structure, and methods*. Chapter 4: Making Sense of the Scholarly Answers to Your Research Question: Writing the Literature Review, pp. 75–92.

4th session (May 17th)

a) Theory: Explanatory approach II – Power resources

Ebbinghaus, B. (2012). Unions and Employers. In: Castles, F. G., Leibfried, S., Lewis, J., Obinger, H., and Pierson, C. (eds.). *The Oxford Handbook of the Welfare State*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Part IV, Chapter 13, pp. 196–210.

Korpi, W., and Palme, J. (2003). New Politics and Class Politics in the Context of Austerity and Globalization: Welfare State Regress in 18 Countries, 1975–95. *American Political Science Review* 97(3), pp. 425–446. doi:10.2307/2657333

b) Methods: Theory and and deduction of hypotheses

Baglione, L. A. (2015). *Writing a research paper in political science: A practical guide to inquiry, structure, and methods*. Chapter 5: Effectively Distilling Your Argument: The Thesis, Model, and Hypothesis, pp. 93–108.

5th session (May 31st)

a) Theory: Explanatory approach III – Partisanship

Schmidt, M. G. (2012). Parties. In: Castles, F. G., Leibfried, S., Lewis, J., Obinger, H., and Pierson, C. (eds.). *The Oxford Handbook of the Welfare State*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Part IV, Chapter 14, pp. 211–226.

Allan, J. P., and Scruggs, L. (2004). Political partisanship and welfare state reform in advanced industrial societies. *American Journal of Political Science* 48(3), pp. 496–512. doi:10.1111/j.0092-5853.2004.00083.x

b) Methods: Research design

Baglione, L. A. (2015). *Writing a research paper in political science: A practical guide to inquiry, structure, and methods*. Chapter 7: Making Your Plan and Protecting Yourself from Criticism: The Research Design, pp. 121–154.

6th session (June 7th)

a) Theory: Explanatory approach IV – Institutionalism

Immergut, E. M. (2012). Political Institutions. In: Castles, F. G., Leibfried, S., Lewis, J., Obinger, H., and Pierson, C. (eds.). *The Oxford Handbook of the Welfare State*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Part IV, Chapter 15, pp. 227–240.

Jensen, C., and Mortensen, P. B. (2014). Government Responses to Fiscal Austerity: The Effect of Institutional Fragmentation and Partisanship. *Comparative Political Studies* 47(2) pp. 143–170. doi:10.1177/0010414013488536

b) Methods: Finding and importing data from external sources

Comparative Welfare Entitlements Dataset <http://www.cwed2.org>

European Central Bank <https://www.ecb.europa.eu/stats/html/index.en.html>

Eurostat <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/de/data/database>

International Monetary Fund <https://www.imf.org/en/Data>

OECD.Stats <http://stats.oecd.org/>

World Bank <http://data.worldbank.org/>

The Macro Data Guide <http://www.nsd.uib.no/macrodatabguide/>

Stata ados for data import and subsequent evaluation

`panell` (ssc install panell)

`sdmxuse` (ssc install sdmxuse)

7th session (June 14th)

a) Theory: Explanatory approach V – Internationalization

Swank, D. (2012). Globalization. In: Castles, F. G., Leibfried, S., Lewis, J., Obinger, H., and Pierson, C. (eds.). *The Oxford Handbook of the Welfare State*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Part IV, Chapter 22, pp. 318–330.

Brady, D., Beckfield, J., and Seeleib-Kaiser, M. (2005). Economic Globalization and the Welfare State in Affluent Democracies, 1975–2001. *American Sociological Review* 70(6), pp. 921–948.
doi:[10.1177/000312240507000603](https://doi.org/10.1177/000312240507000603)

b) Methods: Presenting data with tables

Miller, J. E. (2013). *The Chicago guide to writing about multivariate analysis*. University of Chicago Press. Part II. Tools, Chapter 6, Creating Effective Tables, pp. 81–119.

Stata ado for creating publication style descriptive tables

`tabout` (ssc install tabout)

8th session (June 21st)

a) Replication of an empirical study I

Allan, J. P., and Scruggs, L. (2004). Political partisanship and welfare state reform in advanced industrial societies. *American Journal of Political Science* 48(3), pp. 496–512. doi:[10.1111/j.0092-5853.2004.00083.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0092-5853.2004.00083.x)

Note: Replication material can be found on Moodle.

b) Methods: Presenting data with graphs

Miller, J. E. (2013). *The Chicago guide to writing about multivariate analysis*. University of Chicago Press. Part II. Tools, Chapter 6, Creating Effective Charts, pp. 120–166.

Visual overview for creating graphs with Stata. Stata Corporation. <http://www.stata.com/support/faqs/graphics/gph/stata-graphs/>

9th session (June 28th)

a) Replication of an empirical study II

Kuitto, K., and Helmdag, J. (2016). Extending the tail end of working lives: How policies shape labour market participation and retirement of older workers. Working paper, available at <http://www.etk.fi/wp-content/uploads/Kuitto-Helmdag-sep2016.pdf>

b) Methods: Basic quantitative comparisons

Miller, J. E. (2013). *The Chicago guide to writing about multivariate analysis*. University of Chicago Press. Part II. Tools, Chapter 8, Basic Types of Quantitative Comparisons, pp. 184–206.

10th session (July 5th)

a) Presentations on research question and design I

Note: In this session you have to present the draft version of your term paper. Presentations should be about 10 minutes and use the [check list for term papers and theses](#) as a guide line. The subsequent discussion should help you in finalizing your term paper.

b) Methods: Quantitative comparisons using multiple regression models

Miller, J. E. (2013). *The Chicago guide to writing about multivariate analysis*. University of Chicago Press. Part II. Tools, Chapter 8, Quantitative Comparisons for Multivariate Models, pp. 207–229.

Regression analysis – Stata Annotated Output. UCLA: Statistical Consulting Group. <https://stats.idre.ucla.edu/stata/output/regression-analysis/>

11th session (July 12th)

a) Presentations on research question and design II

Note: Second session for presentations of term paper drafts.

b) Methods: Making regression tables in Stata

Jann, B. (2007). Estout: Making Regression Tables in Stata. Introductory Examples for esttab. Available at: <http://repec.org/bocode/e/estout/esttab.html>

Stata ado for creating publication style regression tables

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estout (ssc install estout)
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12th session (July 19th)

a) Presentations on data and empirical results

Note: This session serves for discussion of empirical results and their tabular as well as graphical representation. Therefore, you have to append the results to your previous presentation and briefly discuss the main findings. There also should be time to discuss urgent technical issues you are experiencing with Stata.

b) Methods: Diagnostics and post-estimation

Meuleman, B., Loosveldt, G., and Emonds, V. (2015). Regression analysis: Assumptions and diagnostics. *The SAGE Handbook of Regression Analysis and Causal Inference*. 1st edition, Sage. Part II, Chapter 5, pp. 83–110.