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MACIS:
Master's Thesis Colloquium

Term: Fall 2017	**Lecturer:** Daniel Bischof
Time: 10.00 – 15.00	**Office:** AFL-H-329
Room: AFL-H-376	**Office Hours:** Tuesdays 9:00 – 10:00 AM (and, by appointment)
ECTS: 4.0	**E-mail:** bischof@ipz.uzh.ch

Course Description:

- **MA Thesis Colloquium**

- **Dates:**
  - 03.10.2017 (Kick-Off: Introduction & Organization)
  - 14.11.2017 (Research Design I: Theory)
  - 20.12.2017 (Research Design II: Data & Methods)
  - Master's Thesis Workshop: *13.02.2018 @ ETH Room tbc*
  - *Note:* Students are strongly encouraged to seek one-on-one feedback during my weekly office hours. Students should have had a personal one-on-one meeting with me by the session "Research Design I" the latest.

- **Language:** English

- **Goals:**
  1. The development of a research design and its successful implementation in a master thesis
  2. Aquire and apply skills on how to organize a research project such as the MA thesis
  3. Aquire and apply skills on how to write academic texts

- **Prerequisites:**
  - **Proposal** (3-5 pages, font 12, 1.5 spaced) for prospective MA theses. This proposal must indicate the research question, outline its relevance, mention the relevant scientific literature, sketch potential theoretical arguments addressing the research question, sketch an empirical research strategy, and indicate the main advisor (preferably also the referee). The MA thesis proposal must be submitted **48 hours** prior to the first meeting of the MA thesis colloquium.

- **Assignments:**
  - **Outline 1** *(Theory)*: short abstract of theoretical framework (up to 2 pages) on 07.11.2017
  - **Presentation 1** *(Theory)*: (10 minutes) of the theoretical framework on 14.11.2017
  - **Outline 2** *(Data & Methods)*: short abstract of data & methods employed (up to 2 pages) on 13.12.2017

- **Presentation 2** *(Data & Methods)*: (10 minutes) of the full research design 20.12.2017

- **Presentation 3** of results during Master Thesis Workshop 18.07.2017

- **Peer-learning**, students form partnerships to assist each other with both research content and personal concerns throughout the colloquium. During a partner's presentation her peer discusses (max. 5 minutes) the presentation and should develop 3 pros, 3 cons & 3 questions for the presenting peer. A peer's goal should be to *a)* help to develop the research of the partner, *b)* initiate discussions during the colloquium. The peer partnership should be mutually beneficial and develop the sharing of skills and knowledge.

- **Attendance and active participation during the colloquium**

Required readings:
I expect all participants to read the following papers/books:

1. Gelman, A. and Imbens, G. (2013). Why Ask Why? Forward Causal Inference and Reverse Causal Questions. *Inconnu*, pages 1–7

2. Graff, G. and Birkenstein, C. (2014). *They Say, I Say – The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing*. W.W. Norton Company, New York

3. Keele, L. (2015). The Statistics of Causal Inference: A View from Political Methodology. *Political Analysis*, 23(3):313–335

4. King, G., Keohane, R. O., and Verba, S. (1995). *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey

5. Whitesides, G. M. (2004). Whitesides' Group: Writing a Paper. *Advanced Materials*, 16(15):1375–1377

Additional readings:
I recommend to buy a copy of the books which are typed in bold font.

- Research design:

  - **Angrist, J. D. and Pischke, J.-S. (2009).** *Mostly Harmless Econometrics: An Empiricist's Companion.* **Princeton University Press, Princeton & Oxford**

  - Dunning, T. (2012). *Natural Experiments in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

  - Gelman, A. and Imbens, G. (2013). Why Ask Why? Forward Causal Inference and Reverse Causal Questions. *Inconnu*, pages 1–7

  - Keele, L. (2015). The Statistics of Causal Inference: A View from Political Methodology. *Political Analysis*, 23(3):313–335

  - Kellstedt, P. M. and Whitten, G. D. (2013). *The Fundamentals of Political Science Research*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

  - **King, G., Keohane, R. O., and Verba, S. (1995).** *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research.* **Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey**

  - Morgan, S. L. and Winship, C. (2007). *Counterfactuals and Causal Inference*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

- How to write in academia (further readings):

- **Graff, G. and Birkenstein, C. (2014).** *They Say, I Say – The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing.* **W.W. Norton Company, New York**
- **Plümper, T. (2008).** *Effizient Schreiben.* **Oldenbourg, München, 2. edition**
- King, G. (2006). Publication, Publication. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 39(1):119–125

- How to organize your research (further readings):
  - Whitesides, G. M. (2004). Whitesides' Group: Writing a Paper. *Advanced Materials*, 16(15):1375–1377

- Refresher in statistics/mathematics (if needed):
  - Moore, W. H. and Siegel, D. A. (2013). *A Mathematics Course for Political & Social Research.* Princeton University Press, Princeton & Oxford

Software Tips:
Progress and output of your research might crucially depend on the software and tools you employ. I personally encourage students to use *a)* a citation software *b)* a LATEX compiler for writing instead of any "word"-type software:

- For citations: Mendeley (free), Endnote (charges)

- For writing, LATEX compiler (all free): MacTeX (Mac), TeXLive + MikTeX (Windows), TeXmaker

- To avoid data loss: from the beginning ensure to save your files in your dropbox and/or create backups of your machine's system

Important Dates:

- Deadline for research proposal . . . **48 hours** before first meeting

- Deadline for abstracts . . . . **7 days** before each meeting

References

Angrist, J. D. and Pischke, J.-S. (2009). *Mostly Harmless Econometrics: An Empiricist's Companion.* Princeton University Press, Princeton & Oxford.

Dunning, T. (2012). *Natural Experiments in the Social Sciences.* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

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