

**POLS 6940: Research Design and Methods**

**Credit Weighting:** 0.75

**Pre-/Co-Requisites:**

**Restrictions:** -

**INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION**

**Name:** Edward Koning

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**Office Location:** MCKN 509

**GENERAL DETAILS**

This course offers a graduate-level introduction to research methods in political science, with the exception of methods of data analysis (which will be covered in POLS\*6500 - Quantitative and Qualitative Methods of Data Analysis). Primary attention will be paid to ontology and epistemology, question formulation, theorization, research design and case selection, and methods of data collection. The course will help students develop a research proposal that will assist in their work for their Major Research Paper, MA Thesis, or dissertation research.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

At the end of the course, successful students will be able to:

- Engage philosophical discussions on truth and knowledge
- Understand strengths, weaknesses, and possible pitfalls associated with specific methodological approaches and techniques
- Identify and evaluate methodological choices in the work of others
- Make informed methodological decisions, especially related to research design and methods of data collection

**METHOD OF ASSESSMENT**

The course is a seminar, and will therefore crucially depend on student participation. Every week students are expected to come to class well-prepared. Forty percent of the final grade will be determined by students' participation in class discussion and activities. Another 40 percent will be determined by a research proposal, towards students will work throughout the semester. The remaining 20 percent will be determined by short written assignments.

**REQUIRED READING**

The course material will consist exclusively of academic material. All readings will be accessible online through your University of Guelph account.