Identification	**Subject (Code, title, credits)**	**PSIR 400: Research Methods** 3 Khazar credits 15 Weeks, 60 hours
	Department	**Political Science and Philosophy**
	Level	Undergraduate
	Term	Autumn 2026
	Instructor	Gulzhan Kulakhmet
	E-mail:	gkulakhmet@khazar.org
	Phone:	(+994 12) 421 10 93 # 213
	Classroom/hours	Neftçilər, 41 Mahsati str., or via Microsoft Teams
	Office hours	TBA
Prerequisites	None	
Language	**English**	
Compulsory/Elective	Compulsory	
Required textbooks and course materials	***Core readings:*** Johnson, Janet Buttolph and H.T. Reynolds with Jason D. Mycoff (2020) *Political Science Research Methods*, 9th edition. Curini, L., Franzese R. (2020) *Research Methods in Political Science & International Relations*. Sage Handbook. Shively P. (2017) *The Craft of Political Research.* Taylor & Francis. Mcnabb, D.E. (2016) *Research methods for political science: quantitative and qualitative approaches*. London And New York: Routledge, Taylor Et Francis Group Barakso, M., Sabet, D.M. and Schaffner, B. (2013) *Understanding Political Science Research Methods*. Routledge. Kellstedt, P.M. & Whitten G.D. (2013) *The Fundamentals of Political Science Research.* Cambridge University Press Campbell, Donald T. and H. Laurence Ross. (1970) The Connecticut Crackdown on Speeding. In Edward R. Tufte, ed. *The Quantitative Analysis of Social Problems.* Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wessley Dawson, K. (2009) Introduction to Research Methods. UK: How to Books Congressional Quarterly Press. **Supplementary readings:** Supplementary materials come from a broad as well as a multi-disciplinary range of academic articles and official documents. Students will be provided with these materials either in electronic form or in hard copies.	
Course outline	The main purpose of this course is to provide a broad introduction into the foundations of the methodologies used in the social sciences. During this course student will be acquainted with such notions as positive statements	

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<tr><td></td><td colspan="3">and negative statements, empiricism, correlation and causation, hypothesis and theory and ethical issues. The objective of this course is also about “de-mystifying” the research project and showing the students that they can also start doing research on the areas they are interested in.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Course objectives</td><td colspan="3">• Help students to understand and make distinction between different concepts as hypotheses and theory, dependent & independent variables.
• To enable students to consider the appropriateness of different methodologies and types of evidence to test alternative hypotheses and build different arguments.
• To help student to come up with valid generalizations about government and politics and make research with a variety of methods including survey research, interviewing, participant observation, case studies, comparative analysis.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Learning outcomes</td><td colspan="3">After the completion of the course, students should:
• The student will acquire knowledge of the basic principles of the scientific method.
• Demonstrate understanding of main concepts in research methods.
• Evaluate the reliability and validity of a research study based on its research design, sampling methods, data collection instrument, and analysis technique.</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="6">Evaluation</td><td>Form</td><td>Dates</td><td>Percentage (%)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Midterm written exam</td><td>8th week</td><td>35</td></tr>
<tr><td>Final written exam</td><td>At the end of the course</td><td>35</td></tr>
<tr><td>In-class essay</td><td>Will be set during the lesson</td><td>8</td></tr>
<tr><td>Presentation</td><td>Will be set individually</td><td>12</td></tr>
<tr><td>Active Participation</td><td>Throughout the semester</td><td>10</td></tr>
<tr><td>Total</td><td></td><td>100</td></tr>
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Policy	**In-class essay**: The in-class essay requires students to write a critical analysis of one research paper provided during the lesson. Students will choose one of two research papers offered by the instructor. The essay should demonstrate students' understanding of the main concepts and principles of research methods by identifying the research question, objectives, and methodology of the selected study. The critique should evaluate the appropriateness of the research design and methods used. Students should discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the study and its methodology. Students should assess the quality and relevance of the data and evidence presented. Where appropriate, students should identify limitations, methodological problems, or potential sources of bias. The essay should be logically organized and supported with clear arguments. Students must complete the essay independently during the class period (one hour to complete the essay). **Exams**: The midterms written exam as well as final written exam (90 minutes) will be based on the 50% of the course-associated content. On both occasions, in clear hand-writing and using acadamic style in the process of outlining thougths, facts and ideas, students will be required to answer to 5 questions (for the midterm exam) and to 5 questions (for the final exam). A fair method of chosing the exam questions will explained in details before the event. The criteria of awarding a particular % for any of the two exams are as follows: "0 – 6 %" - The student fully and thoroughly answers one of the three questions, but does not give any answer to the remaining question; Or the student does not appear to have an ability to establish causal connections between different events; Or the student have no sufficient competence in conceptualisation the phenomenon of integration, or theory building in the area of poltical science; "7 – 12%" - The student attempts to answer all three questions and demonstrate that the basic understanfing of the phenomenon under study as well as concepts existing in the field of political scieince, while causal connections between different events have been understood with non-significant factual errors; "13 – 18%" – The student gives suitable answers to all three questions, showing her/his understanding of the phenomenon-associated politico-

	historic processes, while making attempts to conceptualise those with paradigms of international relations. Small factual errors are noticed. "19 – 24%" – The student gives suitable answers to all three questions, showing her/his above-average understanding of the the phenomenon-associated politico-historic processes, while making successful attempts to conceptualise those with paradigms of international relations. No factual errors are noticed. "25 – 30%" – The student gives thorough answers to all three questions in a well-structured and well-presented academic manner. Very good conceptual thinking is noticed. "31 – 35%" – The student offers her/his comprehensive insight into the fundamental issues related to the three questions, demonstrates outstanding competence in integration studies-focused conceptualisation and theory building in the field. The student's in-depth knowledge of the relevant literature, international vision, socio-cultural understanding and familiarity with the field's tools and techniques are noticed. **General notes**: Students following this course are not simply expected to listen and memorize the lectures but to study the reading materials well, to engage in class discussions and small group-works, and be able to demonstrate and debate his/her viewpoints. Therefore, students are expected to: - attend classes on a regular basis as the classess are conducted in a combined lecture/seminat format where students should take an active part. - read the assigned and suggested materials before coming to class - engage actively in classroom discussions - offer thoughtful and informed classroom presentations and written work Students are required to comply with the attendance policy of Khazar University. Full-time students are expected to attend all classes unless they are on sick leave or have the permission of the instructor (*approved absence*). A student must submit a justifies absence request (either in person or via email) in anticipation of an absence from a particular class. In case if she/he fails to do so, her/his absence will be considered unapproved. Specifically, to be eligible for final grading, a student must not miss more than 25% of class

	hours (*unapproved absences*). Continuing unapproved absences or lack of participation may lead to dismissal from the course. **Academic misconduct** Academic honesty plays an essential part in maintaining the integrity of Khazar University. Students are expected to recognise and uphold high standards of intellectual and academic integrity. The following acts are examples of academic dishonesty, therefore are strictly forbidden and will, if proven, be penalised: - plagiarism, - cheating, - unauthorised collaboration, - falsification, - multiple submissions. Plagiarism is unethical in its nature and, thus, it is considered an offence under the University regulations. Please familiarise yourself with the regulations relating to plagiarism. Plagiarism is copying other people's work without proper attribution. The students committing plagiarism and the students providing materials for plagiarising will automatically receive a zero (0%) for the course. Students must always indicate that they used someone else's words and ideas if they have done so, by using quotation marks and mentioning the source in the text or a footnote. A bibliography must also follow the end of the paper. **Rules of Professional Conduct** The students shall behave in the way to create favorable academic and professional environment during the class hours. Unauthorised discussions and unethical behaviour are strictly prohibited. Classroom behaviour that seriously interferes with either (a) the instructor's ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to benefit from the course-related programme will not be tolerated. When a student's behaviour in a class is so seriously disruptive as to compel immediate action, the instructor has the authority to remove a student from the class on an interim basis, pending an informal hearing on the behaviour. **AI Policy**

	This policy governs the responsible use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) in coursework and research. It applies to undergraduate students and academic researchers, ensuring transparency, integrity, and accountability. GAI may support learning and research by helping organize ideas, checking grammar, or assisting with planning. However, it must never replace original analysis, creativity, or independent thinking. All uses of GAI must be disclosed clearly in assignments, projects, theses, and publications. Example: "ChatGPT (OpenAI, 2025) was used for language editing. All ideas and conclusions are my own." Students may use GAI only as a supportive tool, with a maximum of twenty-five percent of text-based assignments. Its use is strictly prohibited in exams, quizzes, and graded in-class assessments. Researchers may use GAI for structuring, editing, and idea generation, but not for writing entire papers, fabricating references, or producing false data. Accuracy must always be verified. Violations include hidden or unauthorized use, failure to disclose, plagiarism, or data falsification. Penalties may involve warnings, resubmission, grade reduction, or disciplinary action. Instructors and supervisors must specify permitted levels of GAI use in syllabi or research guidelines. GAI is allowed only as a supportive tool. Students remain fully responsible for the originality, accuracy, and integrity of their work.

Schedule

Week	Date	Topics	Readings
1	**15.09.2026**	**Introduction to Research Methods**	Johnson, Janet Buttolph and H.T. Reynolds with Jason D. Mycoff (2020) *Political Science Research Methods* Chapter 1. Pp. 30-62
2	**22.09.2026**	**Empiricism in Political Science**	Johnson, Janet Buttolph and H.T. Reynolds with Jason D. Mycoff (2020) *Political Science Research Methods*. Chapter 2. Pp 66-88
3	**29.09.2026**	**Approaches in the Research** **Literature Review**	Johnson, Janet Buttolph and H.T. Reynolds with Jason D. Mycoff (2020) *Political Science Research Methods*. Chapter 3 Pp.100-131
4	**06.10.2026**	**Research Design and Experiments in**	Kellstedt, P.M. & Whitten G.D. (2013) *The Fundamentals of Political Science Research.* Cambridge University Press. Pp. 70-76

		the Research Methods	Barakso, M., Sabet, D.M. and Schaffner, B. (2013) *Understanding Political Science Research Methods*. Routledge. Chapter 5
5	**13.10.2026**	**Variables**	Johnson, Janet Buttolph and H.T. Reynolds with Jason D. Mycoff (2020) *Political Science Research Methods*. Chapter 4. Pp. 134-167
6	**20.10.2026**	**Population and Sampling**	Johnson, Janet Buttolph and H.T. Reynolds with Jason D. Mycoff (2020) *Political Science Research Methods*. Chapter 5, pp.174-186
7	**27.10.2026**	**Random sampling**	Johnson, Janet Buttolph and H.T. Reynolds with Jason D. Mycoff (2020) *Political Science Research Methods*. Chapter 5, pp. 187-193
8	**03.11.2026**	**Midterm**	
9	**10.11.2026**	**Non-random sampling**	Johnson, Janet Buttolph and H.T. Reynolds with Jason D. Mycoff (2020) *Political Science Research Methods*. Chapter 5, pp. 194-199
10	**17.11.2026**	**Quantitative methods**	Creswell, J. (2014) Research Design. Sage Publications. Chapter 8
11	**24.11.2026**	**Qualitative methods**	Barakso, M., Sabet, D.M. and Schaffner, B. (2013) *Understanding Political Science Research Methods*. Routledge. Pp. 193-204
12	**01.12.2026**	**Data Analysis**	Johnson, Janet Buttolph and H.T. Reynolds with Jason D. Mycoff (2020) *Political Science Research Methods*. Chapter 11
13	**08.12.2026**	**Wilkinson's Research on "How inequality harms the societies" (case study example of comparative research)**	https://www.ted.com/talks/richard_wilkinson_how_economic_inequality_harms_societies?subtitle=en
14	**15.12.2026**	**Ethical issues in Research**	Dawson, K. (2009) Introduction to Research Methods. UK: How to Books. Chapter 13.
15	**22.12.2026**	**Final Remarks and Discussion**	

TBA	**Final exam**	-

Additional readings and assignments will be provided by the instructor for this course. *If neccesary, some minor modifications may be made to this syllabus by the instructor*