

Independent Study Proposal: Interpretive Methodology and Application (**PO 499**)
Department of Political Science and Philosophy
Quinnipiac University | Fall 2021

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Marcos Scauso

Student:

1. Statement of purpose and goals of independent study –

The purpose of this independent study is to learn about the tenets of interpretive methodologies in political science and the ways in which they can be deployed in the production of original knowledge. In preparation for my graduate education, this independent study aims to delve deeper into the different steps of interpretive research and the ways in which diverse scholars use this methodology. This learning process will be accompanied by the development of a 20-page paper, which will continue working on the research that I began with Dr. Scauso over the summer as part of the Quinnipiac University Interdisciplinary Program for Research and Scholarship (QUIP-RS).

2. Description of the subject matter –

Throughout this Independent Study, I seek to learn more about the interpretive methodology that can help me in the development of previous and new research. As several scholars affirm, interpretivism centers our attention on the complexity of meanings and the ways in which our worlds are constructed. Thanks to this focus, interpretivism teaches us different ways to trace meanings in processes of assimilation, dispute, affirmation, and so on. For example, approaches of discourse analysis and genealogy help us to unveil how some meanings become institutionalized while others are erased and silenced. Scholars of interpretive research have also utilized the benefits of this approach to analyze substantial issues of historical and political relevance. For example, several scholars of interpretivism are concerned with issues of epistemic politics, colonial legacies, and institutionalized biases, while also opening doors to the possibility of understanding other alternatives.

Throughout this independent study, I aim to learn more about this methodology and the substantial research that some scholars produce. First, the independent study will begin with methodological readings about interpretivism. Then, the independent study will move on towards an analysis of work that has deployed this methodology to understand colonial legacies and biases in international politics. Both dimensions of this independent study intertwine in my research interest, which is centered in the relationship between voices from the Pacific Islands and the institutionalized norms of international institutions such as the United Nations.

3. Explanation of relevance to interests or major area of study –

The relevance of this Independent study lies in that it represents a unique opportunity to study one of my areas of interest while also advancing my major and developing my research skills. Additionally, Quinnipiac University does not currently offer electives that allow for the intensive study of an interpretive methodological framework. The opportunity to explore interpretivism further would be an extremely fruitful experience for myself as I hope to pursue a Ph.D. in political science after graduation and work within this methodology. Finally, I have asked Dr. Scauso to advise me on my independent study. His established background in interpretivism (Scauso, Schwarz, and Lynch 2018; Scauso 2021b; 2021a; 2020a; 2020b) and participation in conferences such as Interpretive Policy Analysis Conference (2021), European International Studies Association (7th Workshop Series in 2021), International Studies Association (62nd Annual Convention in 2021), and many others, are clear evidence that he is the appropriate mentor for this class.

4. Description of proposed research methodology –

This independent study will build upon the research I began as a part of the QUIP-RS program, culminating in a minimum 20 page paper that makes an original contribution to the field of political science. The research paper centers around indigeneity and international institutions, particularly exploring how meanings travel from Indigenous voices through bodies such as the Pacific Islands Forum and United Nations, and what components of those meanings are lost, assimilated, or incorporated. My work has centered around the various meanings that are intertwined with notions of environmentalism and sustainable development. I am also planning on presenting my work on a panel at the ISA-NE conference this fall. Throughout the independent study, I plan on following an intensive reading schedule, which will be accompanied by bi-weekly meetings with Professor Scauso and the development of my paper. Our meetings will include a discussion of the readings, the questions I might have, and the ways in which they apply to my own work.

5. Bibliography and Schedule –

- **Week # 1: Interpretivism as a methodology**
 - **Schwartz-Shea, Peregrine, and Dvora Yanow. 2012. *Interpretive Research Design: Concepts and Processes*. New York: Routledge.**
 - **Introduction and CH. 1**
 - **Scauso, Marcos. 2020. “Interpretivism: Definitions, Trends, and Emerging Paths.” *Oxford Research Encyclopedia, International Studies*.**
- **Week # 2: Interpretivism as a methodology**
 - **Schwartz-Shea, Peregrine, and Dvora Yanow. 2012. *Interpretive Research Design: Concepts and Processes*. New York: Routledge.**
 - **CH. 2. and CH. 3.**
 - **Meeting with Prof. Scauso on Friday at 10am CAS3-310.**
- **Week #3: Interpretivism as a methodology**

- Schwartz-Shea, Peregrine, and Dvora Yanow. 2012. *Interpretive Research Design: Concepts and Processes*. New York: Routledge.
 - CH. 4
- Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. 1995. *Silencing the Past. Power and the Production of History*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Week #4: Interpretivism as a methodology
 - Schwartz-Shea, Peregrine, and Dvora Yanow. 2012. *Interpretive Research Design: Concepts and Processes*. New York: Routledge.
 - CH. 5
 - Said, Edwards W. 1978. *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Books, A Division of Random House, Inc.
 - Intro. and CH 1.
 - Meeting with Prof. Scauso on Friday at 10am CAS3-310.
- Week #5: Interpretivism as a methodology
 - Schwartz-Shea, Peregrine, and Dvora Yanow. 2012. *Interpretive Research Design: Concepts and Processes*. New York: Routledge.
 - CH. 6
 - Milliken, Jennifer. 1999. "The Study of Discourse in International Relations: A Critique of Research and Methods." *European Journal of International Relations* 5 (2): 225–54.
- Week #6: Interpretivism as a methodology
 - Mignolo, Walter. 2009. "Epistemic Disobedience, Independent Thought and Decolonial Freedom." *Theory, Culture & Society* 26 (7–8): 159–81.
 - George, Jim, and David Campbell. 1990. "Patterns of Dissent and the Celebration of Difference: Critical Social Theory and International Relations." *International Studies Quarterly* 34 (3): 269–93.
 - Meeting with Prof. Scauso on Friday at 10am CAS3-310.
- Week #7: Deploying interpretivism and analyzing Western knowledges
 - Mills, Charles W. 1997. *The Racial Contract*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
 - Intro and CH. 1
- Week #8: Deploying interpretivism and analyzing Western knowledges
 - Mignolo, Walter. 2000. *Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges, and Border Thinking*. Princeton Studies in Culture/Power/History. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.
 - Preface to the 2012 Edition and Introduction
 - Meeting with Prof. Scauso on Friday at 10am CAS3-310.
- Week #9: Deploying interpretivism and analyzing Western knowledges
 - Foucault, Michel. 1970. *The Order of Things, An Archaeology of Human Sciences*. New York: Vintage Books, A Division of Random House, Inc.

- Preface, CH. 1, and CH. 2
- **Week #10: Deploying interpretivism and analyzing Western knowledges**
 - Foucault, Michel. 1970. *The Order of Things, An Archaeology of Human Sciences*. New York: Vintage Books, A Division of Random House, Inc.
 - CH. 3 and CH. 4.
 - Meeting with Prof. Scauso on Friday at 10am CAS3-310.
- **Week #11: Deploying interpretivism and analyzing Western knowledges**
 - Foucault, Michel. 1970. *The Order of Things, An Archaeology of Human Sciences*. New York: Vintage Books, A Division of Random House, Inc.
 - CH. 7 and CH. 9
- **Week #12: Deploying interpretivism and analyzing Western knowledges**
 - Foucault, Michel. 1970. *The Order of Things, An Archaeology of Human Sciences*. New York: Vintage Books, A Division of Random House, Inc.
 - CH. 10
 - Meeting with Prof. Scauso on Friday at 10am CAS3-310.
- **Week #13: Fall Break**
- **Week #14: Deploying interpretivism and analyzing alternatives of intersectionality**
 - Cho, Sumi, Kimberlé W. Crenshaw, and Leslie McCall. 2013. “Toward a Field of Intersectionality Studies, Applications, and Praxis.” *Signs* 38 (4): 785–810. ([Click Here](#))
 - Crenshaw, Kimberlé W. 1991. “Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color.” *Stanford Law Review* 43: 1241–99 ([Click here](#))
 - Meeting with Prof. Scauso on Friday at 10am CAS3-310.
- **Week #15: Deploying interpretivism and analyzing alternatives of decoloniality**
 - Rivera, Silvia Cusicanqui. 2010. “The Notion of ‘Rights’ and the Paradoxes of Postcolonial Modernity: Indigenous Peoples and Women in Bolivia.” *Qui Parle: Critical Humanities and Social Sciences* 18 (2): 29–54. <https://doi.org/10.5250/quiparle.18.2.29>.
 - Scauso, Marcos S. 2021. “Intersectional Decoloniality: Listening to the Other ‘Others.’” *E-International Relations* (blog). June 4, 2021. https://www.e-ir.info/2021/06/04/intersectional-decoloniality-listening-to-the-other-others/?fbclid=IwAR1AIRMETh6q5tiT1EObZmaX0_vVgZYfh0kIj7hQZtbYINBojFovb94NnFQ.
 - Meeting with Prof. Scauso on Friday at 10am CAS3-310.