

As you explore the theories and practices of international affairs you will encounter many approaches to and critiques of the ways governments, intergovernmental agencies, NGOs, communities, and analysts have gone about their work. Underlying all of this is the critical question of how we know what we know, and research methods are essential to how we find an answer.

All students must meet the research Methods Requirement; it cannot be waived. SGPIA's approach to methods is ecumenical: no one set of tools is appropriate for all circumstances. Beyond just fulfilling a requirement we encourage you to think about methods as an essential part of your toolkit in your future career in international affairs. All students should develop methods as one of the principal skills. Those without methods courses in their background should take one of the **Methods Core Courses**. Those who already have training in basic methods should develop new skills in methods by taking one or more of the **Advanced Methods Courses**.

Methods Core Courses

Effective analysis and applied work within international affairs depend on rigorous strategies of critical inquiry and use of evidence. While there is no single set of strategies appropriate to this task, SGPIA considers social science research methods a necessary foundation for critical inquiry. Students without training in methods should choose one of these two core courses:

- [NINT 5005 – Research Design and Data Collection](#): This course provides a general introduction to methodological theory, research design, and data collection strategies with particular emphasis on qualitative interviews and quantitative questionnaires within mixed-method designs. While it touches on other forms of data collection the focus on interviews and questionnaires in field research is oriented toward the production of clear and rigorous research reports.
- [NURP 5013 – Quantitative Methods](#): This course introduces students to basic statistical methods and their application to management, policy and financial decision-making. The course also emphasizes data analysis software.

Advanced Methods Courses

If you already have training in basic methods that is the equivalent of one of the **Methods Core Courses**, you have a range of courses available across the university from which to choose to broaden and deepen your methods skill set. Please confer with your academic advisor. Your advisor can help you choose one or more electives to serve as your Methods requirement. Courses on offer in Spring 2020 include the following:

SGPIA: [GIS for International Crises, Development, and the Environment](#)

Urban Policy, NSPE: [Advanced Quantitative Methods](#)

Media Studies, NSPE: [Designing Methodologies for Studying Media](#)

Media Studies, NSPE: [Media Research Methods](#)