



PhD training program Research School Political History

Module 3 Research Design: Methods & Techniques in Political History

Date: 12 December 2025 | **Time:** 12:15 – 16:15

Location: Spinhuis (Oudezijds Achterburgwal 185, Amsterdam). Room 2.18

Credits: 1 ECTS

Registration deadline: 28 November 2025

Submit assignment by: 4 December 2025, noon (12 AM)

Please send your assignment to bureau@onderzoekschoolpolitiegeschiedenis.nl

Please register by sending an email to:

bureau@onderzoekschoolpolitiegeschiedenis.nl

Speakers

Dr. Joris Gijsenbergh – Senior researcher at the Electoral Council of the Netherlands (Kiesraad)

Prof. dr. Dirk Jan Wolfram – University of Groningen

Please find the full program and course description below

Schedule

12:15	Lunch
12:45 – 13:15	Introduction; brief presentation of all PhD-projects; discussion on the reading material
13:15 – 15:45	Group sessions on methodological bottlenecks (including 14.30-14.45 Coffee/tea break)
15:45 – 16:15	Plenary discussion on the outcomes of the group discussion and closure

Course description

This module is dedicated to research methods: the trajectory from historiographical debate through research question to an effective research strategy. In this interactive tutorial, the central questions are: what is the use of historical methodology, what is your methodological approach, how does your topic legitimize your research methods, and what are the major methodological challenges of your research project?

In the tutorial Methods & Techniques, PhD candidates reflect on the abovementioned questions, present their most urgent methodological bottleneck, and try to find the best strategy to solve their problems together with other PhD candidates and senior researchers Joris Gijzenbergh and Dirk Jan Wolffram. During the tutorial, we will discuss your choices and your bottlenecks both plenary and in small groups. In this way we can learn from each other and inspire each other.

Readings

You will receive the readings after registering.

- The Introduction (pp 1-11) in Simon Gunn and Lucy Faire (eds), *Research Methods for History* (2nd edition, Edinburgh, 2016). This volume offers contributions on a range of research methods that may inspire you as well.
- Introduction/methodological chapter of a recent PhD-dissertation of your own choice related to the topic of your PhD-research project.

Assignments

In order to prepare for the module, we ask you to:

1. Read the required literature.

2. Prepare a statement of circa 750 words on your methodological approach and its challenges. Include your research question, a reflection on the readings of Gunn/Faire (on the necessity of precise methodology) regarding your research project, as well as your most urgent methodological bottleneck. Add the title of a recent PhD-dissertation of your own choice, related to the topic of your PhD-research project. Read the Introduction/methodological chapter of this PhD-dissertation as reference and/or source of inspiration. In your statement, reflect on why the methodology of the chosen work inspires you. Or, alternatively, what you want to do differently. Please mail your statement before **December 4, 2024, noon (12 AM)** to bureau@onderzoekschoolpolitiekegeschiedenis.nl
3. In this tutorial, the emphasis is on the group session. We will compose groups prior to the Tutorial, participants read the texts of the group members and prepare the discussion by reflecting on the nature of the similarities and differences in each other's methodological approaches and relate these to the readings of Gunn/Faire. We would like to emphasize that the group discussions take place in an atmosphere of openness and confidentiality.