

Sociology H190B.001
Senior Honors Thesis and Seminar
Spring 2013 – Tuesdays, 12noon-2pm, 180 Barrows

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This is the second semester of the two-semester sequence in which each student will complete a senior honors thesis. During this semester students will conduct the research as proposed in the Fall term, analyze the data, and draft a report of that research which serves as the thesis. Two sections of H190 are offered. Sometimes the two sections will meet together.

Requirements

Some requirements should go without saying. Attendance is one such requirement. Attendance at all classes is required and failure to meet this requirement will be reflected in the final grade for the course. Vocal participation is also required in this seminar.

Grading

All major works (books, bridges, buildings) are constructed in sections over lengthy periods of time. The thesis will be no different. To aid your efforts the seminar is organized such that you will draft the final document in stages. Each written assignment moves the thesis forward. On-time completion of those assignments is essential. Thus, late work will not be accepted.

You will notice that assignments are not expressed in terms of pages or sources read. In real research such superficial guidelines are not helpful—imagine someone telling Einstein they need a formula for how matter and energy in the universe are related, but it should include only four symbols (including the equal sign)! One reason page, symbol, and source counts are not helpful is that they make some researchers continue on past the point at which they have made their point [think $E=((mc^2)\times 1)$], yet give other researchers the false security that comes with believing that because they have reached the guideline they have done their job [think $E=mc$]. Both messages are unhelpful; the examples show how hewing to such superficial guidelines can lead one into inelegance or even error. Thus, it will help you succeed in this class and, more important, in research, if you shift as soon as possible from the “how many pages?” or “how many sources?” way of thinking about assignments to the “how clear is my argument?”, “how grounded is my position?”, and “how will this help me complete my effort to understand this part of the social world?” way of thinking about assignments.

You received an In-Progress (IP) grade for successful completion of the work in the Fall term. A final letter grade will be awarded at the end of the spring semester.

Deadlines

No late work will be accepted.

Required Reading

The reading for this course will be connected to the substance, theory, and methods of your projects.

Calendar of Written Assignments, Spring 2013

Assignment	Due Date
Writing Assignment #1	Jan 29
Writing Assignment #2	Feb 19
Writing Assignment #3	Mar 12
Writing Assignment #4 – Complete Draft of Thesis	Apr 9
Thesis	May 7

Week 1, January 22 – Semester Planning and Progress Update

Discussion of the themes and organization of the seminar this term; presentation of researcher progress during the winter break.

Week 2, January 29 – Progress Update

Writing assignment #1 due:

- 1) a summary of what you have accomplished so far (and specifically over the break), how you intend to proceed during the spring semester, and the major problems (practical and intellectual) that you anticipate in the next phase of your work
- 2) a research and writing schedule for the semester with specific target dates
- 3) proposed organization and outline of the thesis
- 4) a complete current bibliography showing what you have read and what you still intend to read for the thesis

Week 3, February 5 – Knotty General Empirical Issues

Discussion of analytic difficulties and potential solutions

Week 4, February 12 – Writing Strategies and Style

Discussion of issues relating to writing style and organization

Week 5, February 19 – Individual Consultations

Sign up in advance for individual meetings

Writing Assignment #2 due:

- 1) Draft of results section of your thesis
- 2) Draft discussion section of thesis highlighting sociological implications of your findings
- 3) Updated outline of the thesis

Week 6, February 26 – Strategies for Organizing Empirical Evidence

JOINT Meeting with grad students

Week 7, March 5 – Troubleshooting

Seminar meeting to discuss issues relating to the thesis design and content

Week 8, March 12 – Sociological Significance

Prepare and give a 3-5 minute statement on the sociological significance of your findings

Writing Assignment #3 due:

- 1) Second draft of results section of your thesis
- 2) Second draft discussion section of thesis highlighting sociological implications of your findings
- 3) Updated outline of the thesis

Week 9, March 19 – Study Presentation Session 1

Formal Presentation of Projects, 30 minutes, followed by comments and discussion – 2 per week

PSA Meeting MARCH 21-24, RENO/SPARKS, NEVADA

Week 10, April 2 – Study Presentation Session 2

Formal Presentation of Projects, 30 minutes, followed by comments and discussion – 2 per week

Week 11, April 9 – Study Presentation Session 3

Writing Assignment # 4 due – Complete draft of Thesis due

Formal Presentation of Projects, 30 minutes, followed by comments and discussion – 2 per week

Week 12, April 16 – Study Presentation Session 4

Formal Presentation of Projects, 30 minutes, followed by comments and discussion – 2 per week

Week 13, April 23 – Study Presentation Session 5

Formal Presentation of Projects, 30 minutes, followed by comments and discussion – 2 per week

Week 14, April 30 – Final Questions/Issues Before Final Thesis Delivery

RRR, Week 15, May 7 – Final Thesis Due