

**RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
COURSE OUTLINE**

**Bibliography & Proposal Development Seminar
16:910:659:01
(2) Credits**

**Spring 2017
Doctoral Seminar Room – Annex
Wednesdays: 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm**

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Office hours: By appointment

Course Overview

This two-credit weekly seminar is designed for students who are in the second year of the doctoral program and who are preparing to take the Qualifying Exam (QE) and begin developing the dissertation proposal the following academic year. The course has two overlapping aims: (1) to provide a structured environment in which preparation for the QEs can commence, particularly the construction of the QE bibliographies; and, (2) to introduce students to the structure and content of dissertation proposals and to provide ideas and resources for getting started in developing their own proposals. We will discuss both QE preparation and dissertation proposal ideas from the vantage point of each student's topical area of scholarly interest, focusing on areas in which unique contributions to the literature can be made. To that end, we will spend a fair amount of time critiquing the research literature in students' topical areas, consider potential research ideas and questions, and explore research methodological elements that may or may not be appropriate for these questions.

Doctoral education can be considered a type of apprenticeship where you acquire the skills of a scholar through practice and interaction with experts. Your dissertation chair and committee along with the doctoral faculty (in and outside the School of Social Work) and your peers constitute a learning community where, ideally, you test ideas, debate and discuss, and together learn to effectively confront and communicate about the central issues of the discipline and professional social work practice. Experts — your teachers, advisors and committee members — serve as your guides. Throughout this collaborative process, you build on the work of others and add to knowledge. You learn first to identify a researchable object of study. Then you learn to properly situate the issue within the literature. When research and writing is successful you find yourself in a community of peers and by establishing a reputation, through effective communication, you gain access to jobs and resources. It is hoped that by the end of the semester, each of you will have a sense of how to formulate a research question, narrow it, and situate it within a body of literature. Because this course will be taught as a seminar, you are expected to come prepared for all sessions.

Course Objectives:

By the end of this seminar, the student should:

1. Be able to identify a realistic and focused research topic.
2. Be able to apply research skills to access scholarly information.
3. Be able to evaluate information from scholarly sources to assess their quality and credibility (e.g., reliability, accuracy, authority, timeliness, perspective, bias).
4. Be able to analyze and synthesize scholarly literature.
5. Utilize appropriate citation and referencing skills associated with bibliography development, and dissertation and scholarly writing.
6. Prepare a presentation describing your substantive area of research.
7. Initiate an annotated bibliography on individual substantive area of interest.

Course Requirements:

Your attendance, preparation for, and full participation in class is required. These requirements apply to classes held in our regular classroom, classes held at a library location, and when we have guest speakers. Students should also be prepared to discuss their substantive areas throughout the semester and utilize their understanding of their areas as they complete in-class (e.g., library assignments) and out of class assignments.

In addition to attending to weekly readings, attendance, preparation, and participation, you will be graded on the timely submission of several assignments. The goal of these assignments is to help you to refine and solidify your substantive area of interest for your QEs and to make progress towards identifying a research question for your dissertation. Grades will be assigned on a *pass/fail* basis.

There will be four assignments for this course

The **first assignment** is a one to two paragraph *write-up* and *in-class discussion and presentation* of your substantive area of interest along with: (1) an explanation of why this is an important area of research; (2) how you came to be interested in this subject; and (3) identification of faculty members inside and outside the school of social work who have expertise in this topical area and could serve as primary and secondary members on the dissertation committee. For the faculty members, briefly identify their area of research, their affiliation, and how and why this person might be helpful. *In-class discussion* will take place on **February 15th**, and *write-ups* will be due **Monday, February 13th**. Keep in mind that this is an iterative process and none of these decisions are considered final or set in stone in any way.

The **second assignment** is to find, submit, present, and critique an article from your topical area to the class. Each student will present one article; however, all students will read others' submitted articles and share in the critique process. Article presentations will be spread out over the semester and presentation dates will be selected on the first day of class. So that everyone can read the article and prepare in a timely manner, articles will be submitted (posted to course Sakai site) **at least ONE** week ahead of the presentation date. A written summary of the critique (by the presenting student) is due at the time of the presentation.

The **third assignment** is an annotated bibliography that fleshes out your substantive area of study as preparation for one part of your Qualifying Exams and as preparation to jump into your dissertation proposal. The annotated bibliography will contain a **minimum** of 10 references. These should focus primarily on the background, definition, and evolution of the social problem related to your substantive area.

Your **fourth assignment** is the creation and presentation of a PowerPoint slide show (approx. 15 minutes) providing an overview of your substantive area. The talk will include background about the definition and evolution of the social problem, the importance (prevalence, extent) of the social problem/topic area, theoretical or conceptual perspective for analysis, and what is known about the effectiveness of interventions or policies that have been put in place to address it (if any). The presentation will also include some broad research questions (or several specific ones if individual students have gotten that far) that may potentially be of interest with relevant explanations of why these questions may be important. Students will present their talk to the class. The presentations will take place on the last day of class. Classmates will critique and give advice and suggestions on each students' topic and potential questions.

Required Texts

- *There are no required textbooks for this course.*
- *Other assigned readings will be available on Sakai.*

In previous years, the following book was required, but we do not feel that it is necessary. However, it is short and inexpensive and you might find it useful as you start to write your dissertations.

- Silvia, P. J. (2007). *How to write a lot*. American Psychological Association.

Other potentially useful books for reviewing literature:

- Richard, J., & Pillemer, D. B. (1984). *Summing up*. Harvard University Press.
- Hart, C. (1998). *Doing a literature review: Releasing the social science research imagination*. Sage Publications.

Another potentially useful book for scientific writing:

- Miller, J.E. (2013). *The Chicago guide to writing about multivariate analysis*, second edition. Chicago, Ill: The University of Chicago Press.

And, looking ahead: a good practical book on writing a dissertation:

- Lyons, P., & Doueck, H.J. (2010). *The dissertation: From beginning to end*. New York: Oxford University Press.

BRIEF AND PRELIMINARY COURSE OUTLINE

Week	Date	Tentative Topics	Meeting time/place
1	Jan. 18	Intro	Annex – 2 pm
2	Jan. 25	Library work - meet w/SW Librarian & Data Librarian	Annex - 2pm
3	Feb. 1	Allison Zippay - QE Overview	Annex – 1:15
4	Feb. 8	How to read, critique, and take notes on articles, What is an annotated bibliography?	Annex - 2pm
5	Feb. 15	Assignment 1 Presentation & discussion of broad substantive areas	Annex - 2pm
6	Feb. 22	Reviewing and critiquing sample dissertation proposal & review of structure of annotated bibliography	Annex - 2pm
7	Mar. 1	Library visit - Douglass Library Submit articles 1 & 2	Douglass Campus Library - 3pm
8	Mar. 8	Critiquing 1st & 2nd papers & Sample dissertation proposal #1 Submit articles 3 & 4	Annex - 2pm
MARCH 15, 2016 – SPRING BREAK - NO CLASS			
9	Mar. 22	Critiquing 3rd & 4th paper & Sample dissertation proposal #2	Annex - 2pm
10	Mar. 29	Critiquing 5th paper & sample dissertation proposal #3 Submit article 5	Annex - 2pm
11	Apr. 5	Meet w/QE Faculty: Faculty will visit class	Annex (OR Dean's conf rm) - 2pm
12	Apr. 12	Sample dissertation proposal #4 Substantive area: Getting to a question	Annex - 2pm
13	Apr. 19	Meet w/Student panel & Discuss Statistics QE	Annex - 2pm
14	Apr. 26	Assignment 3: Student Presentations of Substantive Area Lectures	Annex - 2pm
15	May. 3	Bringing it all together: What we have learned Assignment 4: Annotated bibliographies due	Annex- 2 pm

DETAILED COURSE OUTLINE

Week 1: January 18

Topics

- Introduction to course
- Overview of assignments
- Student introductions

No Reading Assignment for this week

Week 2: January 25

Topics

- Library Resources – meet in Annex at **2pm SHARP**
 - Meet w/Karen Hartman – Social Work Librarian
 - Meet w/Ryan Womack – Data librarian

Required reading:

Browse library resources pages

- Dissertations & Theses
<http://libguides.rutgers.edu/dissertations>
- Citation management tools
http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/researchers/citation_management_tools
- Data Research Guide – data by subject (Ryan Womack’s site)
<http://libguides.rutgers.edu/databysubject>
- Library research guides – look at relevant disciplines
<http://libguides.rutgers.edu/>
 - Social Work Phd Guide ***
<http://libguides.rutgers.edu/swphd>
 - Sociology Grad student guide
<http://libguides.rutgers.edu/socgrads>
 - Psychology and Behavioral Sciences
<http://libguides.rutgers.edu/psych>
 - Criminal Justice
<http://libguides.rutgers.edu/criminaljustice>

Week 3: February 1 –Meet at 1:15 SHARP

Topics

- Overview of the Qualifying Exams (QEs)
- Guest speaker - Allison Zippay, Director of the PhD Program

Required Reading:

- Ph.D. Student Handbook (2015): Section 7: The Qualifying Examination (p. 14-18)
<http://socialwork.rutgers.edu/academics/phd/Handbook.aspx>

Week 4: February 8

Topics

- Reading, critiquing, taking notes on, and keeping track of articles

Required Reading:

- Purdue University Online Writing Lab
 - Searching the Web
<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/558/1/>
 - APA Formatting
<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>
 - Conducting Research: Evaluating Sources (look at the different sections)
<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/553/1/>
- Tips on literature searches – handout on Sakai
- Tips on question to answer when reading articles – handout on Sakai

Week 5: February 15

Topics

- Identifying substantive areas of research – narrowing and focusing

Assignment #1 due: Presentation and discussion of students' substantive area write-ups (students will have submitted write-ups by February 13 to **Sakai** site)

Required Reading:

- Classmates' submitted write-ups, come prepared to comment, critique, and discuss

Week 6: February 22

Topics

- Annotated bibliographies – what are they?
- Reviewing sample dissertation proposals

Required reading:

- Purdue University Online Writing Lab – Annotated Bibliographies
<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/614/03/>
- University of North Carolina Writing Center – Annotated Bibliographies
<http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/annotated-bibliographies/>
- Dissertation proposal and dissertation committees sections of PhD Handbook (p. 18 – 25)
<http://socialwork.rutgers.edu/academics/phd/Handbook.aspx>
- Sample annotated bibliographies – on Sakai site
- Sample dissertation proposal - on Sakai site

Week 7: March 1 – Class meets at 2pm at Douglass Library

Topics

- Douglass Library visit

Assignment #2 Heads up: Articles to be presented next week are to be submitted to Sakai

No required readings for this week

Week 8: March 8

Topics

- Critiquing literature: 1st and 2nd submitted articles
- Critiquing dissertation proposals: 1st proposal

Assignment #2 due: Critiques of 1st and 2nd articles due

Assignment #2 Heads up: Articles to be presented next week are to be submitted to Sakai

Required Reading:

- Articles 1 and 2 posted on Sakai
- Sample dissertation proposal #1 posted on Sakai

March 15, 2016 SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS

Week 9: March 22

Topics

- Critiquing literature: 3rd and 4th submitted articles
- Critiquing dissertation proposals: 2nd proposal

Assignment #2 due: Critiques of 3rd and 4th articles due

Assignment #2 Heads up: Articles to be presented next week are to be submitted to Sakai

Required Reading:

- Articles 3 and 4 posted on Sakai
- Sample dissertation proposal #2 posted on Sakai

Week 10: March 29

Topics

- Critiquing literature: Article 5 posted on Saki
- Critiquing dissertation proposals: 3rd proposal

Assignment #2 due: Critique of 5th article due

Required Reading:

- Article 5 posted on Sakai

- Sample dissertation proposal #3 posted on Sakai

Week 11: April 5

Topics

- Meet with faculty about QEs for Foundations, Theory, Research and Policy courses
 - QE Professors will visit class

No Required Reading for this week

Week 12: April 12

Topics

- Review of dissertation proposal (#4)
- Continued discussion of substantive areas: narrowing & focusing

Required Reading:

- Sample dissertation proposal #4

Week 13: April 19

Topics

- Continued discussion of dissertation topics
- Meet w/student panel – advanced students discuss experiences w/QEs, dissertation committees, proposals, etc.
- Discuss statistics QE

Required Reading:

Lyons, P., & Doueck, H.J. (2010). *The dissertation: From beginning to end*. New York: Oxford University Press, Chapters 1 and 2 (pages 1-52), posted on Sakai.

Week 14: April 26

Topics

- Presentation, Discussion & Critique of Substantive Area Lectures

Assignment #3 Due: Student Presentations of Substantive Area Lectures

No Required Reading for this week

Week 15: May 3 – Bringing it all together: What we have learned

Assignment #4 Due: Annotated Bibliographies