

English 6002: Proseminar (Fall 2018/Winter 2019)

Research, Profession, Pedagogy

Instructor: Professor Julie Murray

Location: DT 1808

Time: Mondays, 11:30am-2:30pm; meets fortnightly, see schedule for dates

Description: The general goal of this year-long course for second-year PhD candidates is to foster the pragmatic skills and knowledge necessary for succeeding as a teacher and researcher at the doctoral level. In the Fall Term, while students are preparing for their comprehensive exams, the seminar schedule will be largely focused on comprehensive examination study strategies. In the Winter Term, while students are working on their doctoral research project, the course will focus on the scholarly practices integral to writing a doctoral research project and a dissertation; this will include discussions of how to write an article geared for publication in a scholarly journal, how to write a conference paper, and how to submit and present papers to these scholarly venues. As we explore these and other practical matters related to conducting and disseminating research, the Winter Term will operate as a fortnightly workshop for the doctoral research project itself, providing a space where students will share and provide feedback on each other's work-in-progress. Throughout both terms, under the broad category of professional matters, an examination of the history of the university English department will be a springboard to an investigation of current issues and trends within academia.

PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE

Your grade will in part be determined by your weekly participation. Be prepared to discuss any and all assigned readings in detail. The grade for this class is Pass or Fail. **A perfect attendance record is mandatory.** If you must miss a class due to medical or personal reasons, please be sure to inform me well ahead of time; for other reasons, follow the guidelines below.

ACCOMMODATION

For Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course are encouraged to contact the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (500 University Centre) to complete the necessary forms. After registering with the Centre, make an appointment to meet with me at least **two weeks before the first in-class assignment** in order to discuss your needs.

For Religious Observance

Students requesting academic accommodation on the basis of religious observance should make a formal, written request to their instructors for alternate dates and/or means of satisfying academic requirements. Such requests should be made during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist, but no later than two weeks before the compulsory academic event. Accommodation is to be worked out directly and on an individual basis between the

student and the instructor(s) involved. Instructors will make accommodations in a way that avoids academic disadvantage to the student.

Students or instructors who have questions or want to confirm accommodation eligibility of a religious event or practice may refer to the Equity Services website for a list of holy days and Carleton's Academic Accommodation policies, or may contact an Equity Services Advisor in the Equity Services Department for assistance.

For Pregnancy

Pregnant students requiring academic accommodations are encouraged to contact an Equity Advisor in Equity Services to complete a *letter of accommodation*. The student must then make an appointment to discuss her needs with the instructor at least two weeks prior to the first academic event in which it is anticipated the accommodation will be required.

READINGS (available in 1812A DT)

Belcher, Wendy Laura. *Writing Your Journal Article in 12 Weeks: A Guide to Academic Publishing and Success*. Los Angeles: Sage, 2009. Print.

Berdahl, Loleen, and Jonathan Malloy, *Work Your Career: Get What You Want from Your Social Sciences or Humanities Phd*. Toronto: U of Toronto Press, 2018. Print.

Booth, Wayne, Gregory G. Colomb, Joseph M. Williams, et. al., *The Craft of Research, 4th ed.* Chicago: U of Chicago Press, 2016. Print.

Semenza, Gregory Colón, *Graduate Study for the 21st Century: How to Build an Academic Career in the Humanities*, Second Edition, New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010. Print.

All readings will be available on ARES and from Priya Kumar in the main office.

FALL TERM

Sept. 17 – SSHRC & OGS Proposal Workshop

Topics:

- Finishing the PhD (milestones, timelines, extension policy)
- How to Write a Successful Grant Application

Readings:

Berdahl and Malloy, *Work Your Career* (Chapter 5: "Establish Your Funding Track Record")

Preparation for class:

Come to class with a first draft of your OGS and SSHRC proposal to workshop with the class.

Oct. 1 – Studying for Comprehensive Exams

Topics:

- Preparing for Comps: Expectations and Tips

Preparation for class:

- 1) Bring your comps list.

- 2) Bring a few samples of the notes you have taken on some of the material on your list, as well as any other study techniques you have been using.
- 3) Bring the PhD Handbook for 2018-19 (we will review the grading rubric and tips listed in the Appendices).

Oct. 15 – Comps Preparation

Readings:

Semenza, *Graduate Study for the 21st Century: How to Build an Academic Career in the Humanities*, (Chapter 3 “Organization and Time Management,” and Chapter 7 “Exams”)

Preparation for class:

- 1) Try writing an answer to a sample question (use questions from old exams which are available in main office, or talk to me). Write under exam-like conditions (timed, no books or notes, etc). Bring sample answer to class and share with group what you think you could have done better, what you would do differently in the real exam, what you think you did well, etc.

Nov. – Comps Preparation: No Classes

Please consult me at any point this month if you have questions regarding the exam.

Dec. 3 – Conferences / Steps Towards the Doctoral Research Project (DRP)/ Looking Ahead: “Work Your Career”

Readings:

Semenza (Chapter 9, “Attending Conferences,”); Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, Joseph M. Williams, et. al., *The Craft of Research*, (“From Topics to Questions”, “From Questions to a Problem”, and “Engaging Sources.”)

Berdahl and Malloy, *Work Your Career* (Chapter 3, “Work Your Program,” and Chapter 4, “Go Beyond Your Program”)

WINTER TERM

Jan. 14 – DRP Topic Development

Readings:

“Doctoral Research Project,” *2018-19 PhD Guidebook*

Preparation for class:

Write up a rough/conversational 500-word progress report on the current state of your DRP Proposal to share with the group (these should be circulated by email to everyone 24 hours prior to class) that addresses the following:

- What is the general topic of your DRP?
- Do you see the project as originating in/being driven by: a set of theoretical questions? your interest in a specific primary text or author? a particular historical problematic? a particular literary debate?
- Which primary texts do you plan to focus on, and why?
- Do you already have an inkling of what it is you want to say or claim in the DRP (either about your primary text[s] or the debates or questions that are animating your research? If so, what? If

not, do you have a sense of what kind of research you will have to do in the coming month in order to develop a fuller or more specific thesis statement?

- In general, what kind of research have you already done/do you still need to do in order to draft your proposal?
- Which scholarly community do you see as being the *primary* audience for your DRP? Is there more than one?
- Do you have a working-title?

Jan. 28 – What makes an article “publishable”?

Topics:

- Writing a Paper for Publication

Preparation for class:

- 1) Select an essay you have written that you feel might be a candidate for publication, then: (a) write a one-page outline (not an abstract) of the article; (b) in a sentence or two, explain what type of argument it has and state its contribution to knowledge (if you don’t know, speculate about how you might establish such a contribution); (c) make handouts of (a) and (b) to share with the group or circulate via email to everyone before class; (d) make a list of some concrete things you would need to do in order to improve your article.
- 2) Compile a list of journals to which you might submit the article, along with their requirements and contact info. (Talk to your supervisor to help you prepare the list.)
- 3) Compile a list of journals in your field to which you can imagine submitting your DRP once it is complete.

Readings:

Wendy Belcher, *Writing Your Journal Article in 12 Weeks* (“Week 2: Starting Your Article”; “Week 3: Advancing Your Argument”; “Week 4; Selecting a Journal”)
Berdahl and Malloy, *Work Your Career* (Chapter 6, “Build A Strategic Publishing Portfolio”)

Feb. 11 – DRP Proposal Workshop

Topics:

- Getting and Giving Feedback
- Discussion of Model Articles
- DRP Proposal Workshop Session

Preparation for class:

- 1) Find a model article for your DRP, carefully analyze its argument structure, style, and approach. Make some notes on its strengths and weaknesses to present to the group, as well as a reflection on how much of a “model” this article might be for your own paper.
- 2) Bring a draft of your DRP Proposal to workshop with the group (these should be circulated by email to everyone 24 hours prior to the class).

Readings:

Belcher 62-63 (“Reading a Model Article”); 67-96 (“Advancing your Argument”); 221-32 (“Giving, Getting, and Using Others’ Feedback”)

Feb. 25 – DRP: “Lit Review” and “Entry Point” / Work Habits

Topics:

- Discussion of productive work habits

- Reviewing the Related Literature (discussion, with particular attention to section on “Identifying your relationship to the related literature” [150-54])
- Work-shopping Lit Reviews and Entry Points

Preparation for class:

- 1) Find the 4 most important/relevant articles/book chapters that most directly relate to (one of) your DRP’s primary text(s) or concerns and (if possible) to your DRP’s topic (eg. If your DRP was going to be a new Marxist analysis of *Frankenstein* drawing upon Hardt and Negri’s *Empire* and *Multitude*, you would probably want to identify the four most well-known/influential/different Marxist analyses of *Frankenstein* so that you could establish your “entry point” relative to pertinent debates within the field.)
- 2) Write 500 words summarizing the articles and identifying the key differences between them. You should identify not just what each one argues, but also, what their underlying assumptions are and why their conclusions about the primary text differ.
- 3) Find a point of entry for your own essay in relation to this constellation of readings and write an additional 500 words that organizes the previous comparison into a pithy lead-in to the articulation of a possible thesis or claim for your own essay.

Readings:

Wendy Belcher “Reviewing Related Literature,” *How To Write Your Journal Article in 12 Weeks* (139-68)

Mar. 11 –DRP: Structure and Evidence / Course Syllabi

Topics:

- Creating Course Syllabi
- Work-shopping a section of analysis

Preparation for class:

- 1) Write 250 words of analysis of one of your primary texts and make copies of this to share with the group.
- 2) Come up with a title and brief paragraph description/list of texts for an undergraduate course you could teach based on the topic of your DRP, and make copies to share with the group. The purpose of this is two-fold: to get you to think about how to turn research materials into teaching materials, and to go from the fine-grained close analysis of a primary text, to the sweeping wide-angle view of a course that situates your topic in a larger field.

Readings

Wendy Belcher, “Strengthening Your Structure” and “Presenting Your Evidence,” *How To Write Your Journal Article in 12 Weeks* (171-200)

TBA – Joint Session with Cultural Mediations PhDs on Dissertation Writing

Preparation for Class:

- 1) Write a 500 word reflection on what kinds of questions or avenues your DRP is opening up so far that might be things you would explore in your dissertation. A bulleted list would be fine here too.

Readings:

Two short readings that will be circulated via email by Will Etchard and Mitchell Frank
 Joan Bolker, "Getting Started Writing." In *Writing Your Dissertation in Fifteen Minutes a Day*.
 Robert L. Peters, "The Thesis: Writing It." In *Getting What You Came For: The Smart Student's Guide to Earning a Masters or Ph.D.*