

Carleton University  
Department of Political Science  
<https://carleton.ca/polsci/>

**PSCI 6907A**  
**THESIS PROPOSAL WORKSHOP I**  
**Thursday 1135am – 2.25 pm**  
**Please confirm location on Carleton Central**

<b>Instructor:</b>	<b>Randall Germain</b>
<b>Office:</b>	<b>D689 Loeb</b>
<b>Office Hours:</b>	<b>Thursday 2.30-3.30pm</b> <b>Friday 2.30-3.30pm</b> <b>[or by appointment]</b>
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### **Course Aims and objectives**

The main aim of this course is to help guide students towards the preparation of their thesis proposal. It also considers elements of the PhD experience together with some discussion of future career prospects. We will examine different issues and strategies associated with undertaking and executing research in political science, and provide opportunities for students to present early drafts of their ideas about their thesis to their peers.

The course is student-led and organized in a seminar format, which for this semester will be conducted via the Zoom platform. Seminars begin with a round of questions from each student, drawn on the readings for that week's topic. These questions should interrogate the reading material in light of the doctoral research being undertaken by students. Some classes will include guest appearances by faculty members and other doctoral students from the Department of Political Science. However, the main emphasis of the course is on the development of students' original research projects.

### **Course Requirements**

This course will be evaluated on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis. Students will not be assigned letter grades for course work. Rather, students are required to complete all elements of the course to a satisfactory level in order to obtain a passing grade. These include:

- 1) regular attendance and participation in all scheduled class discussions.
- 2) completion of a draft element of your thesis proposal which focuses on the way in which you will set up and conduct your research. It is to be approximately 2000



**Week 3**                      **Your PhD Journey**  
September 24<sup>th</sup>

*Reading*

Berdahl and Malloy, *Work Your Career*, chs 3,6 & 7.

Guest Speakers:        Professor Fiona Robinson  
                                 Rob Currie (PhD student)

**Week 4**                      **Your PhD and Your Career**  
October 1<sup>st</sup>

*Reading*

Berdahl and Malloy, *Work Your Career*, chs 4, 8 & 9.

Guest Speakers:        Professor Jonathan Malloy  
                                 Dr Siobahn Harty (Assistant Secretary, Government Operations  
                                 Sector, Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat)

**Week 5**                      **Elements of a Successful Thesis Proposal**  
October 8<sup>th</sup>                      Discussion: thesis template and ‘Germain formula’

**Week 6**                      **Conducting Your Research: case studies**  
October 15<sup>th</sup>

*Reading*

Della Porta and Keating, *Approaches and Methodologies in the Social Sciences*,  
chs. 11-12.

Irene Bloemraad, “The Promise and Pitfalls of Comparative Research Design in the  
Study of Migration,” *Migration Studies*, Vol. 1, no. 1 (2013): 27-46.

Brent Flyvberg, “Five Misunderstanding About Case Study Research,” *Qualitative  
Inquiry*, Vol. 12, no. 2 (2006): 219-45.

Guest Speaker:        Professor Jeremy Paltiel

**Week 7**                                      **Conducting Your Research: archival research**  
 October 22<sup>nd</sup>

*Reading*

Robert Vitalis, "Archives: the past is another country," in Ellen Perecman and Sara Curran eds, *A Handbook for Social Science Field Research: essays and bibliographic sources on research design and methods* (Sage, 2006). Available online through MacOdrum Library.

Kasper Risbjerg Eskildsen, "Inventing the Archive: testimony and virtue in modern Historiography," *History of the Human Sciences*, Vol. 26, no. 4 (2013): 8-26.

Barbara Orbach, "The View from the Researcher's Desk: historians' perceptions of research and repositories," *The American Archivist*, Vol. 54, no.1 (1991): 28-43.

Guest Speaker:                      Professor Brian Schmidt

**October 29<sup>th</sup> No class – Reading Break**

**Week 8**                                      **Conducting Your Research: interviews as a research method**  
 November 5<sup>th</sup>

*Reading*

William S. Harvey, "Strategies for Conducting Elite Interviews," *Qualitative Research QR*, Vol. 11, no. 4 (2011): 431-441.

Beth L. Leech, "Asking Questions: techniques for semi-structured interviews," *PS Political Science and Politics*, Vol. 35, no. 4 (2002): 665-68.

Laura Woliver, "Ethical Dilemmas in Personal Interviewing," *PS: Political Science and Politics*, Vol. 35, no. 4 (2002): 677-678.

Darren G. Lilleker, "Interviewing the Political Elite: navigating a potential minefield," *Politics*, Vol. 23, no. 3 (2003): 207-14.

Guest Speaker:                      Professor Melissa Haussman

**Week 9**                                      **Conducting Your Research: interpreting texts and ideas**  
 November 12<sup>th</sup>

*Reading*

Ian Ward, "Helping the Dead Speak: Leo Strauss, Quentin Skinner and the Arts of Interpretation in Political Thought," *Polity*, Vol. 41, no. 2 (2009): 235-255.

Adrian Blau, "History of Political Thought as Detective Work," *History of European Ideas*, Vol. 41, no. 8 (2015): 1174-1193.

Guest Speaker:                      Professor Marc Hanvelt

**Week 10**                      **Conducting Your Research: mixed-method techniques**  
November 19<sup>th</sup>

*Reading*

- Della Porta and Keating, *Approaches and Methodologies in the Social Sciences*, chs. 13-14.
- Jack S. Levy, "Qualitative Methods and Cross-Method Dialogue in Political Science," *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 40, no. 2 (2007): 196-214.
- James Mahoney and Gary Goetz, "A Tale of Two Cultures: contrasting quantitative and qualitative research," *Political Analysis*, Vol. 14, no. 3 (2006): 227-249.
- Shauna Shames and Tess Wise, "Gender, Diversity and Methods in Political Science: a theory of selection and survival biases," *PS: Political Science and Politics*, Vol. 50, no. 3 (2017): 811-823.

Guest Speaker:              Professor Steve White

**Week 11**                      **Conducting Your Research: discourse analysis and ethnographic techniques**  
November 26<sup>th</sup>

*Reading*

- Della Porta and Keating, *Approaches and Methodologies in the Social Sciences*, ch. 15.
- Jennifer Milliken, "The Study of Discourse in International Relations: a critique of research and methods," *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 5, no. 2 (1999): 225-254.
- Lorraine Bayard de Volo and Edward Schatz, "From the Inside Out: Ethnographic Methods in Political Research," *PS: Political Science and Politics*, Vol. 37, no. 2, (2004): 267-271.
- Roland Bleiker and Morgan Brigg, "Introduction to the RIS Forum on Autoethnography and International Relations," *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 36, no. 3 (2010): 777-778.
- Mira Sucharov, "Feeling My Way Along the Seam Line of Jerusalem." *Journal of Narrative Politics*, Vol. 3, no.2 (2017): 120-130.

Guest Speaker:              Professor Mira Sucharov

**Week 12**                      **Thesis Proposal Presentations**  
December 3<sup>rd</sup>

*Student Presentations*

**Week 13**                      **Thesis Proposal Presentations**  
December 10<sup>th</sup>

*Student Presentations*

### **Accommodations during COVID**

Due to COVID, instructors will not request or require a doctor's note when students seek accommodation for missed term work or exams due to illness. Instead, students will be asked to complete the self-declaration form available here: [https://carleton.ca/registrar/wp-content/uploads/COVID-19\\_Self-declaration.pdf](https://carleton.ca/registrar/wp-content/uploads/COVID-19_Self-declaration.pdf)

### **Academic Accommodations**

#### Pregnancy

Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details, visit the Equity Services website: [carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf](https://carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf)

#### Religious obligation

Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details, visit the Equity Services website: [carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf](https://carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf)

#### Students with Disabilities

If you have a documented disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) at 613-520-6608 or [pmc@carleton.ca](mailto:pmc@carleton.ca) for a formal evaluation or contact your PMC coordinator to send your instructor your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term. You must also contact the PMC no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with your instructor as soon as possible to ensure accommodation arrangements are made.

#### Survivors of Sexual Violence

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and is survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For

more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: [carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support](http://carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support)

### Student Activities

Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. <https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>

For more information on academic accommodation, please contact the departmental administrator or visit: [students.carleton.ca/course-outline](http://students.carleton.ca/course-outline)

### **Plagiarism**

The University Senate defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.” This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or Conducting findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in "substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs.

Plagiarism is a serious offence which cannot be resolved directly with the course’s instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They may include a mark of zero for the plagiarized work or a final grade of "F" for the course.

More information on the University’s Academic Integrity Policy can be found at: <https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity/>

### Intellectual property

Student or professor materials created for this course (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the author(s). They

are intended for personal use and may not be reproduced or redistributed without prior written consent of the author(s).