

**PSCI 6907F**  
**THESIS PROPOSAL WORKSHOP I**  
**Tuesday 8.35am – 11.25am**  
**Loeb A602 (in-person)**  
**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>Monday 2.30pm – 4pm (in person without appointment)</b> <b>Friday 9am – 10am (online by appointment)</b>
<b>Telephone:</b>	<b>613-520-2600 ext 8553</b>
<b>E-Mail:</b>	<b>randall.germain@carleton.ca</b>

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**Course Aims and Objectives**

This course and its counterpart PSCI 6908 are designed to help guide students towards the preparation of their PhD thesis proposal. In this course we have a special focus on the conceptual, theoretical and methodological components of the thesis proposal, but we also consider more broadly different elements of the PhD experience together with some discussion of future career prospects. Students will formulate and produce initial drafts of different elements of their thesis proposal, including the questions which guide their research, the key analytical concepts to be deployed and a brief survey of the literature with which their research engages. We meet in a seminar format, where students will read and discuss their peers' drafts, engage with relevant literature and meet faculty members and other doctoral students from the department. But the main emphasis of the course is on having students develop their own original research ideas. Upon completion of PSCI 6907, students should have a solid working draft of the literature review section of their thesis proposal, and a clear foundation upon which to develop the proposal's remaining elements in PSCI 6908.

**Course Requirements**

This course is evaluated on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis. To obtain a satisfactory grade, students must successfully fulfil all elements of the course, which means you need to attend regularly, be familiar with all required readings, and complete all assignments in a timely manner. All written work is to be submitted via the course portal in Brightspace.

### **Summary of Course Elements**

<b>Course element</b>	<b>Due Dates</b>
Regular attendance and participation	Ongoing
Draft Funding Proposal (2 pages max)	Friday September 12 <sup>th</sup>
Research Questions and Supervisor Options (2 pages max)	Friday September 26 <sup>th</sup>
Literature Review Section (5 pages max)	Friday October 24 <sup>th</sup> <u>or</u> Friday October 31 <sup>st</sup>
Key Concepts and Analysis Section (5 pages max)	Friday November 7 <sup>th</sup> <u>or</u> Friday November 14 <sup>th</sup>

### **Course Texts**

Loleen Berdahl and Jonathan Malloy, *Work Your Career: get what you want from your social sciences or humanities PhD*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2018. CAD 37.95

This text is available online through MacOdrum Library and the Ares portal in Brightspace, but you may also want to purchase it for your own use through your preferred bookseller, as the number of simultaneous users is limited.

## Class Schedule

**September 9**

Week 1

### **Introduction and Course Expectations**

Discussion: your research as political science

- I introduce myself and speak about the course
- You introduce yourself, talk about what brought you to Carleton, and discuss your research in as much detail as you can
- We discuss your research as topics in political science and start you on your grant proposal
- You choose dates to present your work (literature review draft plus key concepts draft)

### *Reading*

Berdahl and Malloy, *Work Your Career*, chs 1-2.

### Work due:

**Friday September 12<sup>th</sup>**

**Maximum two page draft grant proposal; upload to Brightspace portal**

**September 16**

Week 2

### **Funding Your PhD**

Discussion: how to apply for dosh (OGS, SSHRC, Postdoc)

Guest Speakers:

Professor Erin Tolley  
Chris Mouré (Carleton PhD, ABD)

### *Reading*

Berdahl and Malloy, *Work Your Career*, ch. 5.  
Germain 'formula'

**September 23**

Week 3

### **Your PhD: research, yes, but also a pathway to a career**

Discussion: what to expect and plan for in your PhD (coursework; comprehensive exams; choosing your supervisor and committee; thesis proposal; combining research and writing; completing drafts; defending your thesis; teaching, conferences and publishing; job search)

Guest Speakers:

Professor Jonathan Malloy  
Dr Elsa Piersig (PhD 2025)

### Reading

Berdahl and Malloy, *Work Your Career*, chs 3-4, & 6-9.

Peter Hatemi and Rose McDermott, "Strategies for picking the right advisor," *PS: Political Science*, Vol. 55, no. 4 (2022): 793-798.

Germain Timeline from First Draft to Viva

How to Prepare for your Doctoral Defense (by Dr Wesley Petite)

### Work due:

**Friday September 26<sup>th</sup>**

**Maximum two page summary of your research questions/hypotheses. Please include as part of your summary: *i*) a brief context for your research; and *ii*) identify up to three potential supervisors together with a few sentences on why you think they are suitable. Upload to Brightspace portal**

**September 30**

Week 4

**Elements of a Successful Thesis Proposal: research questions**

Discussion: what do useful sets of research questions look like; what role do they play in your thesis; how can they guide your research

Guest Speaker:

Professor Chris Gabriel

### Reading

Department of Political Science Thesis Proposal Template

Examples of Thesis Proposals: Hailey Walker  
Noah Schwartz  
Allisson Lévesque  
Amanda Roberts  
Maggie Fitzgerald

**October 7**

Week 5

**Literature Review I**

Discussion: situating your research in Political Science

Guest Speaker:

Professor Steve White

### Reading

Jeffrey Knopf, "Doing a Literature Review," *PS: Political Science*, Vol, 39, no. 1 (2006): 127-132.

Kevin Haggarty and Aaron Doyle, "Writing", in *57 Ways to Screw Up in Graduate School* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), pp. 89-103.

<b><u>Work due:</u></b>	<b>Friday Oct 10<sup>th</sup></b> <b>Maximum 5 page review of 4 key works that help to frame your research; upload to Brightspace portal</b>
<b>October 14</b> Week 6	<b>Literature Review II</b> Student presentations of draft Literature Review section
<b>October 21</b>	<b>Reading Week (no class)</b>
<b><u>Work due:</u></b>	<b>Friday Oct 24<sup>th</sup></b> <b>Maximum 5 page review of 4 key works that help to frame your research; upload to Brightspace portal</b>
<b>October 28</b> Week 7	<b>Literature Review III</b> Student presentations of draft Literature Review section
<b><u>Work due:</u></b>	<b>Friday Oct 31<sup>st</sup></b> <b>Maximum 5 page discussion of between one and three key concepts that you will use to help frame and analyse your research. Why are they important; what is their intellectual lineage; how do you intend to use them? Upload to Brightspace portal</b>
<b>November 4</b> Week 8	<b>Key Concepts for Analysis I</b> Student presentations of draft 'key concepts' section
<b><u>Work due:</u></b>	<b>Friday Nov 7<sup>th</sup></b> <b>Maximum 5 page discussion of between one and three key concepts that you will use to help frame and analyse your research. Why are they important; what is their intellectual lineage; how do you intend to use them? Upload to Brightspace portal</b>
<b>November 11</b> Week 9	<b>Key Concepts for Analysis II</b> Student presentations of draft 'key concepts' section

**November 18**

Week 10

**Conducting Your Research I**

Discussion: Interpreting texts and ideas  
Archival and documentary analysis

Guest Speakers: Professor Sophie Marcotte-Chénard  
Professor Brian Schmidt

*Reading*

Adrian Blau, "How (Not) to Use the History of Political Thought for Contemporary Purposes," *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 65, no. 2 (2021): 359-372.

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).

Ben Gridley, "Doing Historical and Documentary Research," in C. Seale, ed., *Researching Society and Culture* (London: Sage, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 2020), pp. 263-282.

**November 25**

Week 11

**Conducting Your Research II**

Discussion: Field Work  
Case Studies  
Interviews  
Ethnographic research

Guest Speakers: Professor Isaac Odoom  
Professor Cati Coe

*Reading*

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

Ali Alsaawi, "A Critical Review of Qualitative Interviews," *European Journal of Business and Social Sciences*, Vol. 3, no. 4 (2014): 149-156.

Dawn Murray and Melanie Morgan, "Doing Ethnography or Applying Technique? Reflections from the 'waiting field'," *Qualitative Research*, Vol. 15, no. 2 (2015): 166-182.

**December 2**

Week 12

**Looking Forward to 6908**

Wrap up and general Q&A  
Celebratory beverage (on the Professor)

## **Political Science Course Outline Appendix**

### **REQUESTS FOR ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION**

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

#### **Student Mental Health**

As a university student, you may experience a range of mental health challenges that significantly impact your academic success and overall well-being. If you need help, please speak to someone. There are numerous resources available both on- and off-campus to support you. Here is a list that may be helpful:

**Emergency Resources (on and off campus):** <https://carleton.ca/health/emergencies-and-crisis/emergency-numbers/>

#### **Carleton Resources:**

Mental Health and Wellbeing: <https://carleton.ca/wellness/>

Health & Counselling Services: <https://carleton.ca/health/>

Paul Menton Centre: <https://carleton.ca/pmc/>

Academic Advising Centre (AAC): <https://carleton.ca/academicadvising/>

Centre for Student Academic Support (CSAS): <https://carleton.ca/csas/>

Equity & Inclusivity Communities: <https://carleton.ca/equity/>

#### **Off Campus Resources:**

Distress Centre of Ottawa and Region: (613) 238-3311 or TEXT: 343-306-5550,

<https://www.dcottawa.on.ca/>

Mental Health Crisis Service: (613) 722-6914, 1-866-996-0991, <http://www.crisisline.ca/>

Empower Me: 1-844-741-6389, <https://students.carleton.ca/services/empower-me-counselling-services/>

ood2Talk: 1-866-925-5454, <https://good2talk.ca/>

The Walk-In Counselling Clinic: <https://walkincounselling.com>

**Academic consideration for medical or other extenuating circumstances:** Students must contact the instructor(s) of their absence or inability to complete the academic deliverable within the predetermined timeframe due to medical or other extenuating circumstances. For a range of medical or other extenuating circumstances, students may use the online self-declaration form and where appropriate, the use of medical documentation. This policy regards the accommodation of extenuating circumstances for both short-term and long-term periods and extends to all students enrolled at Carleton University.

Students should also consult the [Course Outline Information on Academic Accommodations](#) for more information. Detailed information about the procedure for requesting academic consideration can be found [here](#).

**Pregnancy:** 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 accommodation regarding a formally-scheduled final exam, please contact Equity and Inclusive Communities (EIC) at [equity@carleton.ca](mailto:equity@carleton.ca) or by calling (613) 520-5622 to speak to an Equity Advisor.

**Religious obligation:** 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 [click here](#).

**Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:** The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or [pmc@carleton.ca](mailto:pmc@carleton.ca) for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, please request your accommodations for this course through the [Ventus Student Portal](#) at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (*if applicable*). Requests made within two weeks will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. For final exams, the deadlines to request accommodations are published in the [University Academic Calendars](#). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally scheduled exam (if applicable).

**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 its 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:

<https://carleton.ca/equity/sexual-assault-support-services>.

**Accommodation for 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 will be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Write to me 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.



## PETITIONS TO DEFER

Students unable to write a final examination because of illness or other circumstances beyond their control may apply within **three working days** to the Registrar's Office for permission to write a deferred examination. The request must be fully supported by the appropriate documentation. Only deferral petitions submitted to the Registrar's Office will be considered. [See Undergraduate Calendar, Article 4.3](#)

## 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). Permissibility of submitting substantially the same piece of work more than once for academic credit. If group or collaborative work is expected or allowed, provide a clear and specific description of how and to what extent you consider collaboration to be acceptable or appropriate, especially in the completion of written assignments.

## WITHDRAWAL WITHOUT ACADEMIC PENALTY

Please reference the [Academic Calendar](#) for each term's official withdrawal dates

## OFFICIAL FINAL EXAMINATION PERIOD

Please reference the [Academic Calendar](#) for each terms Official Exam Period (may include evenings & Saturdays or Sundays)

**For more information on the important dates and deadlines of the academic year, consult the [Carleton Calendar](#).**

## GRADING SYSTEM

The grading system is described in the Undergraduate Calendar section [5.4](#).

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity is an essential element of a productive and successful career as a student. Students are required to familiarize themselves with the university's [Academic Integrity Policy](#).

## 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:

- any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else, including the unauthorized use of generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT);

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else's published or unpublished material, 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 research 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 that cannot be resolved directly by the course's instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts 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 can include a final grade of "F" for the course.

#### **RESOURCES (613-520-2600, phone ext.)**

Department of Political Science (2777)	B640 Loeb
Registrar's Office (3500)	300 Tory
Centre for Student Academic Success (3822)	4 <sup>th</sup> floor Library
Academic Advising Centre (7850)	302 Tory
Paul Menton Centre (6608)	501 Nideyinàn
Career Services (6611)	401 Tory