

**PSCI 6908W**

Thesis Proposal Workshop

Thursday 8:35 – 11:25

Please confirm location on Carleton Central

**Instructor:** Brian Schmidt

**Office Hours:** Monday 10-12, Thursday 12 - 2

**Office:** Loeb B657

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**Course Aims and Objectives**

The main objective of this course is to provide Ph.D. students with information and guidance on research methods and strategies that will assist them in developing a solid dissertation proposal. The immediate aim is for students to develop a dissertation proposal that they can defend shortly after completing the course. The ultimate aim is to prepare students for the experience of researching and writing a doctoral dissertation.

During the course of the semester, students will produce a short preliminary, and a longer developed, dissertation proposal. Each version of the proposal will be presented to the class so that students can receive valuable feedback from their peers and from the instructor. The workshop is student-led; the instructor will act as a facilitator. In this regard, constructive student participation is a vital element of the course.

**Course Requirements and Evaluation**

The course is evaluated on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis. Students will not be assigned a letter grade for course work. However, students are required to complete ALL of the following requirements in order to achieve a satisfactory grade:

- 1) Regular attendance and participation in workshop sessions.
- 2) A short (10 -15 minute) presentation of your preliminary dissertation proposal.
- 3) Serving as a discussant for the preliminary draft proposal of one of your peers – provide a 5-10 minute oral response to the presentation of the proposal.
- 4) A longer (15-20 minute) presentation of your more detailed and developed thesis proposal.
- 5) Completion of a preliminary draft dissertation proposal (10-12 pages + bibliography, double-spaced, 12pt font) and circulation of this draft (by email) to the entire class and the instructor 48 hours in advance of the first oral presentation in class.

6) Completion of a draft thesis proposal (approximately 15-20 pages). This should also be e-mailed to all workshop participants at least 48 hours prior to when you deliver your second oral presentation.

The preliminary and final draft proposal should include a working title of your dissertation and the following elements (not necessarily in this order and some of these may require additional work and time):

- (a) the topic of the dissertation and why this topic is important
- (b) a statement of your research question(s)
- (c) your argument (or research hypothesis)
- (d) the context of your research question and argument in the relevant literature -- how does your question/argument “fit” within the literature? In what ways does your argument agree or disagree with other relevant approaches/studies? What gap in the literature does your topic/argument fill? How is it original and/or innovative?
- (e) a discussion and defense of your theoretical framework/approach
- (f) an overview and justification of your methodology (How will you substantiate your argument/research hypothesis? What type of evidence will you use and how will you produce it? What methods—interviews, case studies, large N, archival—will you be using and why?)
- (g) a working bibliography

## **Class Schedule**

### **Week One                      Course Introduction** **January 9**

Optional reading: Stephen Van Evera, *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), chs. 3-5.

### **Week Two                      Seminar on Research Ethics** **January 16**

Guest: Research Ethics Coordinator, Carleton University Research Office

Reading: Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans. "Context of an Ethics Framework" and 'Ethics Review, Section H: Review of Research in Other Jurisdictions or Countries'. Available at: <http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/English/policystatement/policystatement.cfm>

|                                   |                                     |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Week Three<br/>January 23</b>  | <b>Proposal Presentation 1</b>      |
| <b>Week Four<br/>January 30</b>   | <b>No class</b>                     |
| <b>Week Five<br/>February 6</b>   | <b>Proposal Presentation 1</b>      |
| <b>Week Six<br/>February 13</b>   | <b>Proposal Presentation 1</b>      |
| <b>Week Seven<br/>February 20</b> | <b>No class – Reading week</b>      |
| <b>Week Eight<br/>February 27</b> | <b>Thesis Proposal Presentation</b> |
| <b>Week Nine<br/>March 5</b>      | <b>Thesis Proposal Presentation</b> |
| <b>Week Ten<br/>March 12</b>      | <b>Thesis Proposal Presentation</b> |
| <b>Week Eleven<br/>March 19</b>   | <b>No class</b>                     |
| <b>Week Twelve<br/>March 26</b>   | <b>No class</b>                     |
| <b>Week Thirteen<br/>April 2</b>  | <b>Thesis Proposal Presentation</b> |

### **Academic Accommodations**

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#### **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:

#### **Pregnancy 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)

**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)

**Academic Accommodations for 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. [carleton.ca/pmc](https://carleton.ca/pmc)

**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: [carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support](https://carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support)

**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 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](https://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 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 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.

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).

### **Submission and Return of Term Work**

Papers must be submitted directly to the instructor according to the instructions in the course outline and will not be date-stamped in the departmental office. Late assignments may be submitted to the drop box in the corridor outside B640 Loeb. Assignments will be retrieved every business day at **4 p.m.**, stamped with that day's date, and then distributed to the instructor. For essays not returned in class please attach a **stamped, self-addressed envelope** if you wish to have your assignment returned by mail. Final exams are intended solely for the purpose of evaluation and will not be returned.

### **Grading**

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor, subject to the approval of the faculty Dean. Final standing in courses will be shown by alphabetical grades. The system of grades used, with corresponding grade points is:

| Percentage | Letter grade | 12-point scale | Percentage | Letter grade | 12-point scale |
|------------|--------------|----------------|------------|--------------|----------------|
| 90-100     | A+           | 12             | 67-69      | C+           | 6              |
| 85-89      | A            | 11             | 63-66      | C            | 5              |
| 80-84      | A-           | 10             | 60-62      | C-           | 4              |
| 77-79      | B+           | 9              | 57-59      | D+           | 3              |
| 73-76      | B            | 8              | 53-56      | D            | 2              |
| 70-72      | B-           | 7              | 50-52      | D-           | 1              |

**Approval of final grades**

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

**Carleton E-mail Accounts**

All email communication to students from the Department of Political Science will be via official Carleton university e-mail accounts and/or cuLearn. As important course and University information is distributed this way, it is the student's responsibility to monitor their Carleton and cuLearn accounts.

**Carleton Political Science Society**

"The Carleton Political Science Society (CPSS) has made its mission to provide a social environment for politically inclined students and faculty. By hosting social events, including Model Parliament, debates, professional development sessions and more, CPSS aims to involve all political science students at Carleton University. Our mandate is to arrange social and academic activities in order to instill a sense of belonging within the Department and the larger University community. Members can benefit through our networking opportunities, academic engagement initiatives and numerous events which aim to complement both academic and social life at Carleton University. To find out more, visit us on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/CarletonPoliticalScienceSociety/> and our website

<https://carletonpss.com/>, or stop by our office in Loeb D688!"

**Official Course Outline**

The course outline posted to the Political Science website is the official course outline.