

**PSCI 6908W**  
**Thesis Proposal Workshop**  
Friday 8:35 – 11:25  
Please confirm location on Carleton Central

Instructor: Hans-Martin Jaeger  
Office: B 657 Loeb  
Office Hours: Monday 12:00 – 16:00  
Thursday 12:00 – 14:00  
or by appointment  
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**Course Objectives and Organization**

The immediate purpose of this course is to assist PhD students in developing their dissertation proposals. More broadly, the course is also meant to contribute to fostering a sense of intellectual community among graduate students in the Political Science Department (or at least within your PhD cohort) beyond informal interactions with peers and faculty.

Over the course of the semester, students will produce a shorter preliminary and a longer more developed version of their dissertation proposal. Each version of the proposal (and the underlying research project) will be presented to the class so that students can receive feedback from their peers and from the instructor. The workshop is student-led; the instructor will act as a facilitator.

**Course Evaluation and Requirements**

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 to achieve a satisfactory grade:

1. Regular attendance and active participation in workshop sessions (based on reading the draft proposals of other students in advance of their presentation in class; posing questions and commenting on the draft proposals after the presentation).
2. 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.

The preliminary draft proposal should include a working title for your dissertation and the name of your (prospective) supervisor as well as the following elements (not necessarily in this order):

- (a) the topic of the dissertation and why this topic is important
- (b) a preliminary statement of your research question(s)
- (c) your tentative argument (or research hypothesis) about this (these) question(s)
- (d) a preliminary contextualization of your research question and your argument in the relevant literature(s) (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 does it fill? How is it original and/or innovative?)
- (e) a preliminary discussion of your theoretical framework/approach
- (f) a preliminary discussion of your methodology (How will you go about substantiating your argument? What lines of inquiry will be pursued? What aspects of the topic and/or cases and/or data will be investigated? What methods will be used?)
- (g) an identification of particular areas of your proposal that need further development and a reflection on challenges related to your research project (if any)
- (h) an indicative bibliography

3. A 10-15-minute class presentation discussing your preliminary draft proposal.
4. Acting as a discussant for the preliminary draft proposal of one of your peers by providing a 5-minute oral response to the presentation of the proposal.
5. Completion of a full draft dissertation proposal (ca. 20 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 second oral presentation in class.

The full draft proposal should include revised and more developed versions of the elements listed under 2. above as well as a preliminary chapter outline (table of contents with tentative chapter titles).

6. A 15-minute class presentation discussing your full draft proposal.

## Class Schedule

- Jan. 6            **Introduction: Writing a dissertation proposal (... and a dissertation)  
& Setting of schedule for class presentations**
- Optional reading:  
Van Evera, Stephen (1997) *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science*.  
Ithaca: Cornell University Press, chs. 3-5.
- Jan. 13           **Research ethics**
- Guest: Representative from Carleton University Research Ethics Board
- Reading:  
CIHR, NSERC, and SSHRC (2010) *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical  
Conduct for Research Involving Humans*, December 2010. Available at  
[http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/pdf/eng/tcps2/TCPS\\_2\\_FINAL\\_Web.pdf](http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/pdf/eng/tcps2/TCPS_2_FINAL_Web.pdf).
- Jan. 20           **First presentation**
- Jan. 27           **First presentation**
- Feb. 3            **First presentation**
- Feb. 10           **First presentation**
- Feb. 17           No class – Start preparing full draft proposal and second presentation
- Feb. 24           Winter break
- Mar. 3            **Second presentation**
- Mar. 10           **Second presentation**
- Mar. 17           **Second presentation**
- Mar. 24           **Second presentation**
- Mar. 31           **Second presentation**
- Apr. 7            No class

## Academic Accommodations

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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, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your **Letter of Accommodation** 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*). 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*).

**For Religious Observance:** Students requesting accommodation for religious observances should apply in writing to their instructor 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. Instructors and students may contact an Equity Services Advisor for assistance ([www.carleton.ca/equity](http://www.carleton.ca/equity)).

**For Pregnancy:** Pregnant students requiring academic accommodations are encouraged to contact an Equity Advisor in Equity Services to complete a *letter of accommodation*. Then, make an appointment to discuss your needs with the instructor at least two weeks prior to the first academic event in which it is anticipated the accommodation will be required.

**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. Holding social events, debates, and panel discussions, 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 numerous opportunities which will complement both academic and social life at Carleton University. To find out more, visit <https://www.facebook.com/groups/politicalsciencesociety/> or come to our office in Loeb D688.

**Official Course Outline:** The course outline posted to the Political Science website is the official course outline.