

PSCI 6907
Thesis Proposal Workshop I

Friday, 8:35-11:25

Loeb A 602

Confirm location on Carleton Central

Instructor: Prof. Christina Gabriel
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Office Hours: Wednesday, 10:00 am – 12 noon or by appointment

Course Description & Objectives:

The purpose of this workshop (and its counterpart PSCI 6908) is to assist students in the development and preparation of their PhD thesis proposal. The student experience is also critical to a successful PhD journey, and this seminar will also include some aspects of career development and professionalization.

Over the course of this semester, students will draft several elements of the proposal, specifically research questions, a brief survey of the literature that informs their project, and analytical concepts. In various seminars we will engage in peer review. Students will read and discuss their peers' written drafts.

The workshop is student-led; the instructor will act as a facilitator. Some of the class sessions will include guest speakers who will discuss different features of the proposal. Other speakers will address some of the professional elements associated with pursuing a PhD.

Course Readings:

Loleen Berdahl and Jonathan Malloy 2018. *Work Your Career: Get What You Want From Your Social Sciences and Humanities PhD*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. \$37.95

[This text is available online through MacOdrum Library and the Ares System on Brightspace. You may wish to purchase it for your own use through your preferred bookseller as the number of simultaneous users is limited to one on the library system.]

Other course material is available through the Ares System through Brightspace.

Course 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 attend **ALL** classes and to complete **ALL** of the following elements to achieve a satisfactory grade. All written work is to be submitted through the Brightspace course portal.

- *Regular attendance and active participation in each of the class sessions*

- *A Draft SSHRC Statement. Due date: Tuesday, September 15.*

Each student will submit a draft of the 'Program of Study' portion of a SSHRC Doctoral Fellowship application. The statement must follow SSHRC on-line directions. According to

SSHRC “Describe your proposed program of study in non-technical terms. Avoid jargon and acronyms and ensure that your proposal is written in clear, plain language easily understandable to a multidisciplinary committee”. Additionally SSHRC requests that doctoral students must:

- Clearly state your current level of study (e.g., in the second year of doctoral studies, etc.)
- Indicate what stage you are at in your thesis.
- Provide the name of your doctoral studies supervisor, if known.
- Provide an outline of your thesis proposal, including, for example, the research question, context, objectives, methodology and contribution to the advancement of knowledge.
- Describe what you hope to accomplish during the award tenure, and what will remain to be done before you obtain your degree.

Individual appointments to discuss the statement will be scheduled during the following week – September 21 – 25.

- ***A Draft Conference Abstract for 2027 CPSA Meeting in Vancouver – Due Tuesday, September 22***

Each student will submit a 250-word draft conference abstract. The abstract can be based on your MA research, an appropriate course paper or an aspect of your dissertation project. You will need to carefully review the CPSA “Call for Papers” and then develop your abstract.

- ***Research Questions and Supervisor Options – Tuesday, September 29***

Two-page summary of your research questions/hypotheses. As part of this exercise please include: (i) a brief context for your research; and (ii) identify up to three potential supervisors together with a rationale as to why you think they are suitable. Upload to Brightspace portal.

- ***Key Works that Inform Your Research – Tuesday, October 20***

Maximum five-page review of four key works that help frame your research; Upload to Brightspace portal.

- ***Concepts that Frame Your Research – Tuesday, November 10***

Maximum five-page discussion of between one and three key concepts that you will use to frame your research. Why are these important; what is their intellectual lineage; how do you intend to use them. Upload to Brightspace portal.

Policies on Assignments:

All assignments in this course must be 12 pt. font, double-spaced and have standard one-inch margins. As much as possible they should be free of spelling and grammatical errors. They must include appropriate citations (endnotes or footnotes) and a bibliography.

Note: You need to submit all written elements to pass this course.

Collaboration

Collaboration is **not** permitted for any of the required elements of this course.

Use of AI in this Course

Students may use AI tools for basic word processing and formatting functions, including:

- Grammar and spell checking (e.g., Grammarly, Microsoft Word Editor)

- Basic formatting and design suggestions (e.g., Microsoft Word's formatting tools, PowerPoint Design editor)

The use of AI for purposes other than grammar, spelling, basic word processing and formatting (and especially for generating text for any of the assignments) is prohibited in this course.

This policy ensures that student voices and ideas are prioritized and authentically represented, maintaining the integrity of the work produced by students while allowing basic support to enhance clarity, correctness, layout, and flow of ideas. The goal of adopting a limited use of AI is to help students develop foundational skills in writing and critical thinking by practicing substantive content creation without the support of AI.

As our understanding of the uses of AI and its relationship to student work and academic integrity continue to evolve, students are required to discuss their use of AI in any circumstance not described here with the course instructor to ensure it supports the learning goals for the course

Plagiarism

The University Academic Integrity Policy defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own. This includes 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. Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of ideas or works of others may be drawn from include but are not limited to books, articles, papers, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, artworks, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, material on the internet and/or conversations.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else, including the unauthorized use of generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT)
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, paraphrased material, algorithms, formulae, scientific or mathematical concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment
- using another’s data or research findings without appropriate acknowledgement
- submitting a computer program developed in whole or in part by someone else, with or without modifications, as one’s own
- failing to acknowledge sources with proper citations when using another’s work and/or failing to use quotations marks.”

Plagiarism is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly by the course’s instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty of Global and Public Affairs follows a rigorous process for academic integrity allegations, including reviewing documents and interviewing the student, when an instructor suspects a violation has been committed. Penalties for violations may include a final grade of “F” for the course.

Communication and E-mail Policy

If you have a question that needs a detailed response, please e-mail me to set up an appointment. E-mail will be answered within two business days. I do not check e-mails after work hours or on the weekend. Do not submit any class assignments by e-mail unless you have made an arrangement with me.

Note: All e-mail communication is to be via official Carleton University e-mail accounts not personal emails.

Electronic Devices

Students are to refrain from using their cell phones in class. Wait till the class break.

Note on 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 the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.”

Seminar Topics and Readings

September 11 Introduction

- Class introductions – instructor and students
- Review of course outline
- Discussion: Individual research topics and their link to political science
- Sign up for presentations
- Discussion: Applying for Funding

Reading

Berdahl and Malloy, *Work Your Career*, chapters 1, 5

Guest Speaker: Professor Erin Tolley, Department of Political Science

Work Due: **Tuesday, September 15**
Two-page draft SSHRC grant proposal

September 18 Your PhD: Career Pathways

- Discussion: What to expect and plan for in your PhD; comprehensive exams; choosing supervisor and committee; thesis proposal; combining research and writing; teaching

Guest Speaker: Professor Jon Malloy, Professor Department of Political Science

Reading

Berdahl and Malloy, *Work Your Career*, chapters 3-4,
Peter Hatemi and Rose McDermott. 2022 “Strategies for Picking the Right Advisor” *PS: Political Science* 55:4 pp.793-798

Individual Meetings

Professor will schedule one-on-one meetings to discuss SSHRC statement

Work Due: **Tuesday, September 22,**
Prepare a conference abstract for the 2027 CPSA Conference, consult CPSA website for call

September 25 Your PhD Research and Knowledge Mobilization

- Discussion: How to prepare for conferences. When to publish? Other avenues of knowledge mobilization.

Guest Speaker: Karen Kelly, Manager, Strategic Communications, FGPA

Reading

Berdahl and Malloy, *Work Your Career*, chapters 5, 6,

Work Due: Tuesday, September 29

Two-page summary of your research questions/hypotheses. As part of this exercise please include: (i) a brief context for your research; and (ii) identify up to three potential supervisors together with a rationale as to why you think they are suitable. Upload to Brightspace portal.

October 2 Elements of a Successful Thesis Proposal: Research Questions

Reading

Department of Political Science Thesis Proposal Template

Examples of Thesis Proposals Hailey Walker

Noah Schwartz

Allisson Levesque

Sree Majumder

Guest Speaker Professor Stephen White, Department of Political Science

October 9 Class Cancelled [Make Up Class Week of December 7]

Professor Away at CESA Conference

Work on Literature Review

October 16 Literature Review vs Theoretical Framing

Discussion: Situating your research within the discipline of Political Science

Guest Speaker: Professor William Walters, Department of Political Science

Reading

Jeffrey Knopf 2006. "Doing a Literature Review," *PS: Political Science*, 39:1 pp. 127-132

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

Work Due: Tuesday, October 20

Maximum five-page review of four key works that help frame your research; Upload to Brightspace portal

October 23 Literature Review II

- Student presentation of draft Literature Review section

October 26 - 30 Fall Break - No Scheduled Class & No Office Hours

November 6 Literature Review III

- Student presentation of draft Literature Review section

Work Due: Tuesday, November 10
Maximum five-page discussion of between one and three key concepts that you will use to frame your research. Why are these important; what is their intellectual lineage; how do you intend to use them. Upload to Brightspace portal

November 13 Key Concepts for Analysis I

- Student presentations of draft “key concepts” section

November 20 Key Concepts for Analysis II

- Student presentations of draft “key concepts” section

November 27 Conducting Research I

- Discussion: Interpreting texts and ideas; Archival and content analysis

Guest Speakers Professor Achim Hurrelmann Professor, Department of Political Science
Professor Marc Hanvelt, Professor, Department of Political Science

Adrian Blau 2021. “How (Not) to Use the History of Political Thought for Contemporary Purposes” *American Journal of Political Science* 65:2, pp.359-372

Robert Vitalis 2006. “Archives: The Past is Another Country” in Ellen Perecman and Sara Curran, eds. *A Handbook of Social Science Research: Essays and Bibliographic Sources on Research Design and Methods*. London: Sage.

Clive Seale and Carol Rivas 2025. “Chapter 24 – Content and Text Analysis” in *Researching Society and Culture. Fifth Edition*. London: Sage. Pp. 370-388.

December 4 Conducting Research II

- Discussion: Field Work, Case Studies, Interviews

Guest Speakers: Isaac Odoom, Professor, Department of Political Science
& TBC

Ali Alsaawi, 2014. “A Critical Review of Qualitative Interviews,” *European Journal of Business and Social Sciences* 3:4 pp. 149-156

Brent Flyvberg, 2006. “Five Misunderstandings About Case Study Research” *Qualitative Inquiry* 12:2, pp. 219-245.

Ezgi Irgil, Anne-Kathrin Kreft, Myunghee Lee, Charmaine N Willis, Kelebogile Zvobgo. 2021. “Field Research: A Graduate Student's Guide”, *International Studies Review*, 23:4, December pp. 1495–1517

December 7-10 Make-up Class to be Scheduled

- Wrap Up and General Q & A

Reading

Berdahl and Malloy, *Work Your Career*, chapters 7-9

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/safety/resources/>

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/>

Good2Talk: 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 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 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 term's 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 th floor Library
Academic Advising Centre (7850)	302 Tory
Paul Menton Centre (6608)	501 Nideyìnàn
Career Services (6611)	401 Tory