

**CARLETON UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY**

**COURSE NUMBER /SECTION
FALL 2025-WINTER 2026
ANTH 5100F/ ANTH 6100F
THESIS WRITING SEMINAR**

Instructor: Donna Patrick

Office: Loeb C770

Office Hours: Tuesdays 1:00-2:00 pm or by appointment

Email: donnpatrick@cunet.carleton.ca

Course meets: Alternating Thursdays 11:25-2:35, in-person in the Fall term, and Tuesdays 11:35-2:25 in the Winter term.

Pre-requisites & Precluded Courses:

Available to doctoral candidates and MA students in anthropology currently writing their doctoral dissertations, or MA Theses, or by permission of the instructor.

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the seminar is to support doctoral students in their writing process.

The seminar will meet 12 times during the Fall and Winter terms, approximately once every two weeks. During the first class of each term, we will collaborate on establishing a schedule for students to present draft writing samples for feedback. Students will aim to provide a writing sample at least one week in advance for everyone to read. Each student will present their writing sample (5-10 minutes) and highlight writing-related issues/questions/concerns to discuss with the class. Peer feedback will be in the form of verbal comments from all participants. Thus, your obligation as a seminar participant is to (1) present a writing sample to the class (chapter excerpt and/or full chapter) as per the schedule discussed at the beginning of each term; and (2) to read disseminated writing samples produced by peers and to comment on these in class discussion. There will be opportunities to comment on the work of your peers in writing as well as orally throughout the term.

As time permits, each week we will discuss topics that might include i) contemplating the process of writing; 2) the mechanics of writing, crafting clear sentences and coherent writing, developing a writing style; 3) copy-editing and how to handle revisions.

We will have two workshop presentations in the fall term with support from MacOdrum Library staff and one in the winter term.

READINGS/BOOKS:

There are no required readings for this course. However, academic resources to support the writing process and professional development will be posted on Brightspace for your reference.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND METHODS OF EVALUATION:

This is a zero-credit course, which receives a grade of 'satisfactory' or 'unsatisfactory.' All anthropology PhD students, who are at the thesis writing stage are required to complete two terms of this seminar with a grade of 'satisfactory.' Students must register for the Fall and Winter terms separately. Students are welcome and encouraged to continue to enroll in the seminar for as long as they are working on their thesis, beyond the minimum two term requirement.

There are no graded assignments for this course.

A grade of satisfactory requires:

- attendance of 6 classes each semester for a total of 12 classes (contact instructor if you will miss a class)
- active participation in all class meetings
- informed verbal feedback on peers' work
- presentation (in writing and orally) of at least one draft writing sample/chapter of the dissertation per term for comment by peers and instructor

Please note:

1. Writing samples or chapters should be circulated to class members and the instructor a minimum of 7 days (for a chapter) and 2 days (for an excerpt) prior to our scheduled feedback session.
2. Email your writing sample to everyone in the class. The instructor will also upload the chapter to Brightspace where everyone registered in the class can access it.
3. If a student attends the seminar, but is not at the point of being able to distribute draft writing samples/chapter for commentary by the end of the first term, the student will be asked to withdraw and re-register for the following term as their official 'term one'.

PROPOSED SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS FOR 2025-26:

September 11: Introductory meeting	January 13: (Tuesdays 11:35-2:25)
September 25	January 27
October 9	February 10
October 30	February 24
November 13	March 10
November 27	March 24

Please Note:

We may choose to adjust this schedule as needed.

PEER WRITING GROUP:

Students are encouraged to use the off-weeks, when there is no scheduled meeting, to meet up as a 'writing group,' either virtually or in-person. There is a 3-week periods between classes (October 9-October 30) that might be a suitable time for a peer writing group to meet up. Since our classroom is booked for every week but we only meet six times during the term, you are welcome to use the classroom as a group writing space during those weeks when we are not holding a class meeting. Alternatively, you could arrange a Zoom session during this time block on the off-weeks where those who wish to participate can join a Zoom meeting for a fixed period of time and then either discuss your writing, circulate smaller pieces of writing for comment, or simply sit and write in each other's presence. Making writing social and taking part in a peer writing group can be helpful for breaking the sense of isolation associated with the thesis writing process.