

Sociology 99: Senior Thesis Seminar

2017-2018

Instructor: Meghan Zacher, mzacher01@g.harvard.edu

Office hours: By appointment

Course website: <http://socthesis.fas.harvard.edu>

Course description

This course is designed to be a resource to you, our sociology thesis writers, as you progress through the research and writing process. We will meet throughout the fall and the beginning of the spring semesters to provide support, feedback, and tips and tricks. The course also features guest speakers who will share with you their advice, as well as stories of their own research-related setbacks and struggles. Research and writing is our collective challenge; the goal of this course is to aid you in conquering it.

Attendance policy

Attendance for Sociology 99 is mandatory. Your attendance is crucial to the success of your thesis project and it is expected that students attend each class session. The class day and time will be set by the Instructor in the beginning of the semester based on a poll of student schedules and it is expected that you will arrange your schedule around it. Absences will be excused for medical reasons or for religious observance. In these cases you must email the Instructor in advance unless there is a medical emergency, in which case you should contact the Instructor within 24 hours.

Grading

Sociology 99 is graded on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis. To receive a passing grade for the Fall semester, you must submit a chapter of your thesis to your advisor and a progress report to the Undergraduate Office by the dates indicated below. You are also expected to attend and to participate in class.

Deadlines

Prospectus and completed approval form

Friday, September 29th

Chapter due to advisor

Thursday, November 30th

Progress report

Friday, December 8th

Thesis due date

Tuesday, March 6th

For more information: <http://sociology.fas.harvard.edu/pages/writing-senior-thesis>

Schedule

The dates and times of our sessions are tentative and will depend on the types of projects thesis writers are pursuing as well as the schedules of thesis writers and of potential guest speakers. An updated version of the syllabus, including the dates and times of each session, will be posted to the course website as soon as possible.

Week 1: Introduction

September 1 (Friday), 12pm – 1.30pm, WJH 501

- Guest speaker: Rachel Meyer, Associate Director of Undergraduate Studies
- Introduce the thesis process and this class

Week 2: Research questions & the prospectus

September 8 (Friday), 12pm – 2pm, WJH 501

- Workshop research topics and questions
- Discuss the prospectus and go through examples

Week 3: Turning an idea into a qualitative research project

Date and time TBD

- Guest speaker: TBD
- Discuss various qualitative methods and their unique strengths and weaknesses

Week 4: The writing process and time management

Date and time TBD

- Guest speaker: TBD, Bureau of Study Council

Week 5: Workshop on coding and analyzing qualitative data

Date and time TBD

- Guest speaker: TBD
- Discuss and demonstrate methods and software for analyzing qualitative data

Week 6: Writing I

Date and time TBD

- Guest speaker: Charlotte Lloyd, Departmental Writing Fellow, Sociology

➔ **Deadline: Thesis Prospectus & Prospectus Approval Form, Friday, September 29th**
Due in Undergraduate Office by 1 pm
Form must be signed by advisor

Week 7: Group catch-up

Date and time TBD

- Brief project updates
- Discuss the literature review

Week 8: No meeting

Week 9: Graduate student panel

Date and time TBD

- Sociology graduate students discuss their first experiences with independent research
- Time for Q&A

Week 10: Writing II

Date and time TBD

- Guest speaker: Charlotte Lloyd, Departmental Writing Fellow, Sociology

Week 11: No meeting

Week 12: Group catch-up

Date and time TBD

- Brief project updates
- Discuss next steps

Week 13: No meeting (Thanksgiving)

Week 14: No meeting

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➔ Deadline: **Chapter to advisor, Thursday, November 30**
Due to advisor by 1 pm

➔ Deadline: **Progress Report & signed Progress Recommendation, Friday, December 8**
Due in Undergraduate Office by 1 pm
Progress report must be signed by advisor

Late January/Early February: Group catch-up and writing support
Dates and times TBD

➔ Deadline: **Completed thesis due, Tuesday, March 6**
Two bound copies of your completed thesis due in Undergraduate Office by 1 pm