

ELMP 9979/9980 NA, Spring 2015
Dissertation Seminar I/II
Wednesday, 5:00-7:10 PM
Jubilee Hall 220

Contact Information

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Office Hours: Monday 4:00-7:00, Wednesday 2:30-4:30, or by appointment

Course Description

This two-semester sequence is designed to assist students in developing a dissertation proposal consisting of three chapters. This includes working to develop a clearly defined research idea, introduction, literature review, theoretical/conceptual framework, and research design. The Dissertation Seminar sequence will also provide networking opportunities with students in a similar place in their graduate studies as well as professional development designed to help students complete the dissertation after leaving the class.

Course Expectations

Attendance and Class Participation: Students in Dissertation Seminar I are expected to attend and participate in each class during the course of the semester. Dissertation Seminar II students must attend weeks with presentations and individual meetings, but all other classes are optional. Students who do not attend class and do not make sufficient progress on their dissertation proposal may not receive a passing grade, so communication with the instructor is critical. However, I recognize that many of your schedules are extremely busy and that a class may be occasionally missed. I ask you to please let me know in advance if you will be unable to attend.

Office Hours: I strongly encourage students to come to my office and meet with me outside the two required consultations. Appointments are not necessary during regular office hours, but are encouraged to avoid a potential wait. I am happy to arrange alternative office hours, either in person or via Skype or Google Hangout, if the regular office hours do not work for you.

Academic Integrity: All students are expected to maintain high standards of academic integrity. All writing must consist of your own ideas, and must include appropriate citations of others' ideas. Your written work may be electronically tested for plagiarized content. As a student in this course, you are responsible for knowing and adhering to the spirit of University and ELMP policies regarding academic integrity and student conduct. Please contact me immediately if there are any questions regarding proper citation and attribution techniques.

Department of ELMP – Cheating and Dishonesty

I. Statement —The Department of ELMP will not tolerate any form of academic dishonesty. Infractions will be appropriately penalized; students should understand that suspension or expulsion from the University is a possible result.

II. Definitions — “Academic Dishonesty” shall be understood to encompass at least the following:

Cheating — whether on tests or on other course assignments, whether by the giving, receiving or taking of information.

Plagiarism — stealing and/or passing off as one’s own the ideas or words of another; using without crediting the source. It includes: (1) copying of text/research/assignments; (2) using someone else’s papers/research/assignments without permission and citation; (3) representing as one’s own work what is really the work of another person. This includes downloading from WEB sources.

III. Penalties:

1. A student determined to be cheating on any test or who plagiarizes on a course assignment will be appropriately penalized at the **discretion of the instructor**. This may include receiving a zero on the assignment or “F” for the course.
2. Notice that a student has cheated or plagiarized will be sent to the department chair. All cases of plagiarism resulting in an “F” for the course will be reported to the Dean. This can result in a recommendation to the Dean for suspension or expulsion from the university.
3. If the chair of the ELMP department finds that a student has been found to have committed acts of academic dishonesty in more than one ELMP course, the student is expelled from the ELMP program after due notice of the discovery. After one year, the department may rescind the expulsion upon the application of the student provided the student evidences a genuine, informed, and vigorous commitment to academic integrity to the satisfaction of the department’s faculty as a whole.
4. All department or instructor actions resulting from suspected violations of this policy will be taken in accordance with the students’ due process rights. Nothing in this policy statement shall be construed to preclude the department from taking appropriate disciplinary action against forms of academic dishonesty not stipulated here.

Services: Disability Support Services offers services to students with disabilities to facilitate their full participation in all campus activities in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. The office provides

documentation review, reasonable accommodations, training groups, resource materials and referrals. For more information, see <http://www.studentaffairs.shu.edu/dss/>

Course Assignments

Dissertation Plan: Students will submit a dissertation plan early in the semester containing information about the following points:

- Career goals: What is your current position, and what position do you desire to obtain after completing your doctoral degree?
- Proposed research topic: What would you like to research in your dissertation?
- Progress already made: How much progress have you made on your proposal?
- Strengths and weaknesses: What do you see as your strengths and weaknesses as a researcher and writer? What can we best do in class to help you make progress?
- Goals for the semester: What do you hope to accomplish on your proposal by the end of the semester?
- Timeline for the dissertation: When do you hope to complete your dissertation and graduate?

Forms will be distributed electronically at the beginning of the semester and must be returned via Blackboard. We will revisit the forms during individual consultations and at the end of the semester.

Weekly Updates: Students in both Dissertation Seminars I and II must submit weekly updates of their progress throughout the semester (except for weeks with scheduled presentations and individual consultations). These updates can range from a few sentences (other obligations kept me from working on my dissertation—which happens some weeks) to a page or two with feedback requested in certain areas. This keeps both me and you updated on your progress, which can help speed your progress through the proposal stage. The updates must be submitted via Blackboard.

Individual Consultations: In lieu of meeting as a class during three weeks of the semester, there will be individual consultations with each student in Dissertation Seminars I and II. Please sign up for a time by Friday evening and send me your draft (in any stage) by Sunday evening so I can read it before meeting on that Wednesday. These individual consultations are crucial components of the class, and an opportunity to get in-depth feedback on your work as you progress. In order to receive a satisfactory grade for the course, any missed consultations must be made up before the end of the semester.

Professional Development Seminar: A new (and long-overdue) addition to the seminar this semester is a week of discussing professional development and career advancement opportunities. We will discuss how to make a resume or curriculum vitae (as well as the difference between the two), the basics of constructing a cover letter, how to prepare for a

campus interview, and how to market yourself to potential employers as a newly minted doctorate. All students must submit a resume or CV by the Sunday before class (April 5 for the April 8 class). Students may submit other documents (i.e. cover letters or presentations) for feedback, if desired.

Presentations: Students in both Dissertation Seminars I and II will be expected to give three presentations during the course of the semester. The first presentation (January 21) will be five minutes in length and is designed to give the class an idea of your proposed research topic. The second presentation (February 25) will be up to ten minutes in length and should focus on the introduction, purpose, and research questions. The final presentation (April 22 for Dissertation Seminar II and April 29 for Dissertation Seminar I) will be 10-15 minutes in length and should touch on all three chapters. There will be a short question and answer period following each presentation.

Any missed presentations should be made up as soon as possible and must be made up by the end of the semester in order to receive a satisfactory course grade. If you know you will be gone for a presentation date, please let me know immediately so we can make arrangements.

Students who will be defending their proposal during the semester are welcome to have a practice presentation in class; they should contact me to set up a date and time.

Guidelines

Writing Guidelines: The quality of writing is important, including clarity, proper formatting and citations, and correct spelling and grammar. Students are encouraged to make an appointment with the Writing Center (<http://www.shu.edu/academics/artsci/writing-center/>) as soon as a draft chapter is complete in order to receive feedback. All assignments and updates should be submitted via Blackboard; please let me know immediately if you encounter any problems uploading papers.

Presentation Guidelines: Learning how to give an effective presentation is one of the most important skills that you can learn in graduate school. The effectiveness of a presentation is strongly correlated with the amount of preparation, so take time to practice your presentation and make sure it is as clear as possible. This will also make sure the presentation fits within the given time limit, as our schedule likely will not allow for overruns of more than a minute or two. I strongly recommend using simple slides with large font sizes that can be easily read in the back of the classroom.

There are three course-specific requirements for presentations. First, all slideshows must be sent to me by noon that day (via Blackboard) so it can be loaded on the computer in advance of class. Second, I request that students not use Prezi for presentations and also avoid special graphics for transitions. (My eyes cannot handle the sudden zooms and transitions of Prezi, and they make some other people dizzy.) Finally, course presentation days are designed to be interactive. Please

come to class on presentation days to provide feedback to other students, as well as to receive feedback on your own work.

For the final presentation, make sure to spend time on all three chapters of the dissertation proposal. Students in the past have spent most of their time on the literature review, which is easy to do given the sheer number of relevant studies for most students' work. Prioritize discussing the key studies in the presentation—other studies can come up in the question and answer period.

Grading Scale: This class is graded as S/U (satisfactory/unsatisfactory) based on submitted materials and progress made toward a defended dissertation proposal. Students must either complete all presentations and individual consultations to receive a satisfactory grade, or they must successfully defend their proposal before the end of the semester.

Course Readings

This class does not have a textbook or a list of assigned readings to be completed outside of class. We will occasionally be reading portions of journal articles and dissertations in class, but I will provide these materials at that time. There are a number of books and articles providing advice for students working on writing dissertations, and I am happy to provide a list upon request.

Students should familiarize themselves with APA style—the required style format for dissertations at Seton Hall. Failure to closely adhere to APA style will result in excessive copy editor fees after the dissertation is approved, so learning APA style is cost-effective. You can purchase an APA handbook online, but most material is readily available online through sites such as Purdue's OWL.

Schedule (subject to change)

January 14 (Dissertation II attendance required)

Introduction to syllabus and course expectations

Discussion of potential research topics

January 21 (Dissertation II attendance required)

First half of class: The dissertation process and approval map

Second half of class: Introductory presentations (5 minutes)

January 28 (Dissertation II attendance optional)

Dissertation plan due for all students

Developing research topics and questions

February 4 (Dissertation II attendance required)

Individual consultations—we will not meet as a class

February 11 (Dissertation II attendance optional)

First half of class: IRB with Dr. Ruzicka

Second half of class: Writing introductions and purpose statements

February 18 (Dissertation II attendance optional)

First half of class: Writing research questions and hypotheses

Second half of class: Writing literature reviews

February 25 (Dissertation II attendance required)

Student presentations—10 minute time limit (depending on final enrollment)

March 4 (Dissertation II attendance required)

Individual consultations—we will not meet as a class

March 11: Spring break (no class)

March 18: No class (out-of-town conference)

March 25 (Dissertation II attendance optional)

Starting the data and methods chapter

April 1 (Dissertation II attendance required)

Individual consultations—we will not meet as a class

April 8 (Dissertation II attendance required)

Professional development and career advancement

Submit your resume/CV (required) and cover letter (optional) by April 5

April 15 (Dissertation II attendance optional)

The road ahead: Moving from the dissertation proposal to a completed dissertation

April 22 (Dissertation II attendance required)

Dissertation Seminar II student presentations—15 minute time limit (depending on final enrollment)

April 29 (Dissertation II attendance required)

Dissertation Seminar I student presentations—15 minute time limit (depending on final enrollment)