

**ELMP 9980 NA, Fall 2018  
Dissertation Seminar II  
Monday, 5:00-7:10 PM**

**Syllabus Version 2.0—last updated September 7, 2018**

**Contact Information**

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Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 2-4:30 or by appointment

**Course Description**

This second course of a 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 finishing the course sequence.

**Course Expectations**

**Attendance and Class Participation:** Students are expected to attend and participate in each class to the greatest extent possible during the course of the semester, particularly as the class will not meet every week. 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 me 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, and we can bring you in via Blackboard Collaborate if that is possible.

**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 Requirements

**Dissertation Plan:** Students will submit a dissertation plan before the second class of 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 are due via Blackboard by **noon on September 10** so we can discuss them alongside the initial presentation. We will revisit the forms during individual consultations and at the end of the semester.

**Workshop Days:** Four class meetings during the semester (two partial classes early in the semester and two full classes late in the semester) are designated as workshop days. Two of the first classes are thematic—one focusing on the IRB process and one focusing on writing a data and methods section, while the other classes are on any part of the dissertation. Please submit updates via the discussion board feature on Blackboard by midnight on the Friday night before each class meeting so everyone can read each other's updates. Please count on taking some time before these classes to perform this important function, as feedback from your peers is invaluable.

**Research Presentations:** Students are expected to give two presentations on their own research during the course of the semester. The first presentation (September 10) will be 5-10 minutes in length and is designed to give the class an idea of your proposed research topic and your plan for the semester. The second presentation (December 3 or 10) will be 15-20 minutes in length and should be a rough draft of your full proposal presentation. There will be a short question and answer period following the first presentation, and an extended discussion following the final presentation.

Students who will be defending their proposal during the semester are strongly encouraged to have a practice presentation in class; they should contact me to set up a date and time. Students who defend their proposal during the semester are exempt from the final presentation (and are not required to attend class the rest of the semester in order to receive a satisfactory grade), but I

strongly encourage these students to continue attending and remaining part of the course community.

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.

**Professional Development Seminar:** One additional component of the seminar this semester (on November 26) 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 doctoral recipient. All students must submit a resume or CV via Blackboard by **Wednesday, November 21 at 11:59 PM**. Students may submit other documents (i.e., cover letters or presentations) for feedback, if desired.

**Final Submission:** The final assignment for this class is to submit the current draft of your dissertation proposal as of the end of the semester, which should include substantial progress on the data and methods section as well as full drafts of the introduction and literature review. In addition to the current proposal, you should submit a 1-2 page reflective summary of your progress during the semester. Go back to your dissertation plan form and assess your progress. What went well? What did not? And what is your updated timeline for completing the dissertation? Please submit these documents by **Wednesday, December 12 at 5 PM**.

### **Course Recommendations**

In addition to the required components of the course, I have several other recommendations based on my prior experiences with the course and in mentoring dissertations.

**Dissertation Support Groups:** Moving from coursework to the dissertation process is difficult for many students; not only are you now fully responsible for choosing your path forward, but the only contact many of you will have with your peers is through this class. Therefore, I strongly recommend that you form dissertation support groups based on factors such as topics of interest, dissertation mentors, or ease of scheduling. These groups are a great way to hold each other accountable for writing and can also be used to get feedback on drafts in a less formal way.

**Individual Meetings:** I strongly encourage students to meet with me at least twice during the course of the semester. Appointments are not necessary during regular office hours, but are strongly encouraged to avoid a potential wait (particularly as my travel schedule this fall is substantial). 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.

**Mentor Meetings:** Everyone in this course should already have a dissertation mentor selected and approved (if not, contact me as soon as possible). As it can be awkward getting feedback from both me and your mentor that may diverge in cases, please keep your mentor apprised of your progress in the course (and prioritize their feedback over mine). I encourage students to check in with their mentor at least once a month during the course of the semester, even if draft chapters are not yet ready to share.

### Course 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 prepared on presentation days to provide feedback to your peers.

**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 suggestions 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)**

August 27: Course introduction

September 3: Labor Day (no class)

September 10: Student presentations (dissertation plans due at noon)

September 17: The IRB process and workshop time

September 24: Writing day (no class) [change from initial syllabus]

October 1: Writing day (no class)

October 8: Fall break (no class)

October 15: Data/methods section and workshop time

October 22: Writing day (no class)

October 29: Workshop day

November 5: Writing day (no class)

November 12: Writing day (no class)

November 19: Workshop day

November 26: Professional development seminar (submit resume/CV)

December 3: Final presentations (plus holiday party!)

December 10: Final presentations

December 12: Draft proposal and reflective memo due