This course will primarily operate as a writer’s workshop, in which you will take turns making your writing available to the other members, so we can offer you advice, criticism, insights, encouragement, etc.

The goal of this course is to start writing your dissertation proposal and to have a completed draft of your proposal by semester’s end.

**Specific Goals:**
- To clearly state your research problem
- To determine the components for your ‘literature review’ and write a draft review
- To present a rational and theoretical base for conducting the study
- To review and consider useful methods of data collection, sampling, measurement and analysis, specific to your project and field or subfield of study
- To develop an overall plan and reasonable timeline for your dissertation
- To write a proposal worthy of submitting to your committee
- To assess and eventually incorporate different writing strategies and approaches for your scholarly output(s).

**REQUIRED READINGS**
- Other materials will be made available on Blackboard or in class.
EXPECTATIONS & GRADING

Your grade will be based on meeting the course requirements and in no way reflects the quality of your research topic.

Class Participation = 20%
Your participation grade is based on presence, punctuality, quantity, and, most importantly, quality of in-class participation. You are expected to come to class prepared to intelligently and critically discuss readings, classmates’ writings, etc.

Towards a Proposal = 80%*
For this semester, you should conceive of the dissertation proposal as a problem that can be divided into discrete and manageable parts. Each of you will submit four different pieces of writing for the full seminar’s consideration (in bold). You will also submit other pieces of writing to me only (not in bold).

• Pre-Proposal
• Statement of Problem
• Literature Review
• Theory and Methods
• Outline
• Overall Plan
• Complete Proposal

See grade breakdown and description below.

* You may supplement part of your grade by writing and submitting a book review or grant/fellowship application, above and beyond the requirements above. In this case, your proposal parts would account for 70% of your grade.

Grant, Fellowship Application = 10%*
* Subject to individual approval, you may wish to submit a grant, fellowship or conference proposal/submission in class. Deadlines TBD.

Book Review = 10%*
Write a critical review of a book of your choice that you think best reflects the kind of book/dissertation you wish to write (topic, methodological approach, theoretical framework, sub-field, writing style, narrowness/breadth of scope, etc.). Submit review for publication in a scholarly journal.
• 1,000 – 2,000 words
• Due Date: No later than Nov. 2
1. **Pre-Proposal: 5%. 1 page ONLY.**
   What is the subject of your study? Why it is important? What theoretical framework will you employ? What methodologies will you engage? What contributions will you make?

2. **Statement of Problem: 10%. Approximately 6-8 pages.**
   What is the subject of your study? Why is it important? How will this study contribute to your field of study? What makes it original? How will you approach the problem theoretically? What methodologies will you engage?

3. **Literature Review: 10%. Approximately 10-15 pages.**
   What theories help you conceive your problem? What scholarly literature supports this study? How have others successfully and/or inadequately addressed the problem raised in your study? What holes are left that you plan to fill? How can you refine and clarify the statement of the problem through the literature in the field? What theoretical questions does your project and the literature point us to? Who are you in conversation with?

4. **Theory and Methods: 10%. Approximately 10-15 pages.**
   What theories help you conceive your problem? How do they provide warrants for your study? What methodological strategies will you employ to collect and analyze your data? What special skills, training, or tools will you need to employ to do your research? Where and how will you be collecting data?

5. **Outline: Approximately 2-6 pages.**
   Detailed outline of your chapters.

6. **Overall Plan: 10%. Approximately 6-8 pages.**
   How will you organize this project? How will you organize your chapters? How can you ask the largest possible questions of your data, and yet make this project doable?

7. **Complete Proposal: 30%. Approximately 50-60 pages.**
   Due December 14 at 12pm.

   The complete proposal should address and include the following:
   1. Title Page (see Doctoral Handbook. Same format as dissertation)
   2. Table of Contents
   3. Title
   4. Statement of Problem
   5. Statement of Sub-Problems
   6. Definitions
   7. Delimitations / Limitations
   8. Need for Study
   9. Discussion of Related Literature
   10. Discussion of Method as related to each sub-problem
GRADING POLICIES

- Students with special needs, either with physical and/or learning disabilities, or religious observances, must come talk to me at the beginning of the semester in order to assure any special needs: extra time for papers; access to materials, etc. Moreover, any student who needs an accommodation due to a chronic, psychological, visual, mobility and/or learning disability, or is Deaf or Hard of Hearing should register with the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at 212 998-4980, 240 Greene Street, http://www.nyu.edu/csd
- Late papers and assignments will be graded down. You MUST notify me in advance if you are going to miss a class or a deadline.
- You are expected to abide by NYU’s and Steinhardt’s standards of Academic Integrity. Cheating or plagiarizing the work of another will result in an automatic F. Additionally, departmental and university policy permits harsher actions.

A (4.0) = Excellent. Outstanding work in all respects. Work demonstrates comprehensive understanding and presents thoughtful and creative interpretations, well-focused and original insights, well-reasoned commentary and analysis.

B (3.0) = Good. Work demonstrates complete and accurate understanding of course materials, presents a reasonable degree of insight and broad level of analysis. Work reflects competence but stays at a general or predictable level of understanding.

C (2.0) = Adequate. Work demonstrates adequate understanding but remains superficial, incomplete, vague or expresses some important errors or weaknesses. Work may lack concrete, specific examples and illustrations; writing may be vague or hard to follow.

D (1.0) = Unsatisfactory. Work demonstrates a lack of understanding and fails to express basic aspects of the course. Participation was inadequate or superficial.

F (0) = Failed. Work was not submitted or completed according to parameters (page length, topical focus, types of sources), or completely failed to express the most basic and elementary aspects of the course.
Readings are to be completed by the day listed. Come to class prepared to discuss the readings, classmates’ writings and all other assigned materials.

All written assignments are due by **6pm Sunday** so that all participants have the time to read and consider your work prior to our Tuesday seminar.

We will determine our writing schedule on the first day of class, so that each of you knows your deadlines heading into the semester.

---

**Sep 7**  
**Introduction and Overview**

**Sep 14**  
**Review Existing Proposals and Getting Started**  
DD Chapters 1, 2, 11, 12  
MCC Proposals (choose any 3): Melissa Aronczyk, Kari Hensley, Alice Marwick, Scott Selberg

**Sep 21**  
**Pre-Proposal**  
Przeworski & Salomon “On the Art of Writing Proposals”  
DD Chapters 3, 4

**Sep 28**  
**Pre-Proposal**

**Oct 5**  
**Pre-Proposal**  
(* will need to re-schedule)

**Oct 12**  
**Statement of Problem**  
DD Chapter 6

**Oct 19**  
**Statement of Problem**

**Oct 26**  
**Statement of Problem**

**Nov 2**  
**Literature Review**  
DD Chapter 5  
Nov 9  Literature Review

Nov 16  Theory and Methods
DD Chapter 7, re-read Chapter 6

Nov 23  Theory and Methods

Nov 30  Overall Plan
DD Chapter 9
Re-read: Przeworski & Salomon “On the Art of Writing Proposals”

Dec 7  Overall Plan

Dec 14  Final Proposal DUE in my mailbox by 12pm
if you prefer to email a copy, please attach it as a pdf only

Helpful Questions:
In my dissertation I want to argue that…
The way to make this argument is to…
I am a good person to do this project because…
I'll feel I am done addressing it when…
In trying to answer this question, some of the things that could 'go wrong' include…
This project matters because…
This project is also about the larger issues of…
What about this has not been done yet?
Which aspects are doable and worth doing?
Where might this project go?
How will I position myself as a (media) scholar?