

New York University
The Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development
Department of Humanities and Social Sciences
Spring 2008

E10.3001.001 Dissertation Proposal Seminar
3 credits

Instructor: Elizabeth Norman PhD, Professor

Time: Wednesday 4:55 - 6:25 PM

Contact info: (212) 998-5412

Location: Kimball Hall

Elizabeth.Norman@nyu.edu

3rd floor conference room

Office hours: By appointment
246 Greene St, Room 508

Course Description:

This course focuses on the development of the doctoral dissertation proposal. Emphasis is placed on understanding and defining the logical relations between elements in a proposal including the problem statement, conceptual/theoretical framework, literature review, research design and methodology. Teaching-learning strategies are designed to promote critical/analytical thinking and scholarly discourse.

Co-requisites: E10.2002 (Statistics for the Behavioral and Social Sciences), E10.2132 (Principles of Empirical Research) and E10.2180 (Approaches to Qualitative Inquiry) or equivalent.

Course Outcomes: Upon successful completion of this course, students will have:

1. Developed a research proposal appropriate for doctoral study that includes a problem statement, research questions and/or hypotheses, significance of the problem, conceptual/theoretical framework, and method.
2. Refined analytical and critical skills/ abilities by reviewing, synthesizing and critiquing literature relevant to candidate's dissertation proposal and proposals presented in seminar.
3. Refined the ability to articulate in a comprehensive and succinct style the components and linkages among the parts of a research proposal.

Teaching/Learning Strategies: Interactive lecture, audio/visuals, student case presentations, and group discussion.

Grading Policy: Pass/fail

Evaluation Methods:

1. Participate in the weekly seminar
2. Complete dissertation proposal-specific assignments. Each assignment will be presented and critiqued in class. Assignments include:
 - A. A detailed timeline to complete a dissertation proposal.
 - a. Approval by the student's dissertation chair. :
 - B. Detailed outlines for Chapters 1 - 3.
 - C. Weekly assignments
 - a. Proposal Introduction
 - b. Research question/hypothesis/definitions.
 - i. Assumptions
 - ii. Delimitations/limitations
 - c. Significance of the study --theoretical and practical impact on the student's discipline, and impact on the larger scholarly community
 - d. Literature review
 - e. Methods
 - i. Researchers stance, if appropriate
 - ii. Access to subjects and archives
 - iii. Completion of the human subjects tutorial-
<http://www.nyu.edu/ucaih/tutorial/>
 - iv. Rationale and psychometrics for measurement tools/interviews.
 - D. Prepare a scheduled 20 minute oral “mini-proposal defense” presentation. No more than 20 PowerPoint slides. Dissertation chairs will be invited to attend.

Recommended Texts:

A dictionary and thesaurus of your choice. The manual of style used by your profession.

Bolker, Joan (1998). Writing Your Dissertation in Fifteen Minutes a Day: A Guide to Starting, Revising, and Finishing Your Doctoral Thesis. New York: Holt.

Booth, W., Colomb, G., & Williams, J. (2003). The Craft of Research. 2nd edition. Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press.

Steinhardt Doctoral Handbook:

<http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/scmsAdmin/uploads/000/650/Doctoral%20Handbook%200708.pdf>

Williams, J. (2006). Style: The Basic of Clarity and Grace. 2nd edition. New York: Longman Publishers.

Recommended Websites:

<http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/dissertation.html>

<http://andromeda.rutgers.edu/~jlynch/Writing/>

"Understanding Plagiarism": <http://education.indiana.edu/~frick/plagiarism/item1.html>

Weekly outline

1. January 23: Introductions and course overview.

- . Overview and logical links of critical elements in the dissertation proposal.
- Preparation of a dissertation proposal timeline.
- Assessing individual student research preparation and skills
- Outlining

2. January 30: Timeline and Outline for Chapter 1 due

- Introductory paragraph including the purpose of the study, research question/hypothesis
- Working with your dissertation committee
- Individual progress reports-evaluation of timelines and outlines.

3. February 6: Introductory paragraph including the purpose of the study, research question/hypothesis due

- Definitions, significance, and conceptual- theoretical frameworks.
- Resources for doctoral students
- Individual progress reports-evaluation of the introductory paragraph (including the purpose of the study, research question/hypothesis)

4. February 13: Definitions, significance, and conceptual- theoretical frameworks due

- Literature reviews. . Standards and criteria for literature reviews--using meta-analysis, electronic databases, and electronic bibliographic software.
- Individual progress reports-evaluation of definitions, significance and conceptual-theoretical framework.

5. February 20: Outline of literature review chapter due

- Literature reviews. Cont'd. Emphasis on synthesizing and gaining a perspective with a literature.
- Individual progress reports-evaluation of outline for literature reviews.

6. February 27: Draft of first pages of literature review due

- Literature reviews. Cont'd. Standards and criteria for literature reviews.
- Individual progress reports-evaluation of literature reviews.

7. March 5: Draft of literature review due

- Literature reviews. Cont'd
- Individual progress reports-evaluation of literature reviews.

8. March 12: Draft of literature review due

- Human subjects application
- Individual progress reports-evaluation of literature reviews.

9. March 19th --Spring break

10. March 26: Human subjects tutorial/draft of application due

- Methodology chapter- human subjects, data collection methods, (research question), measurement tools, statistical tests, qualitative analysis.
- Individual progress reports-evaluation of UCAIHS application.

11. April 2: Outline for methodology chapter due

- Methodology chapter. Cont'd
- Individual progress reports-evaluation of methodology chapter outline.

12. April 9 Draft of methodology pages due

- Individual progress reports-evaluation of methodology chapter.

13. April 16: Student Dissertation Proposal Presentations. (Overview of research questions, hypotheses, significance and conceptual- theoretical frameworks, methods proposed for dissertation).

14. April 23: Student Dissertation Proposal Presentations

15. April 30: Student Dissertation Proposal Presentations

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