This course is designed for students completing the M.A. thesis in the Sociology of Education program in the Department of Applied Statistics, Social Science, and Humanities. Over the course of the semester, students will develop a research question and research design (when applicable), identify the appropriate data and apply for University Committee on Activities Involving Human Subjects (UCAIHS) approval to collect this data (when necessary), identify and become conversant in the relevant literature, and identify and work with a faculty advisor of their choosing. Some students will complete the research and writing of their theses by the end of the term, though this is not a requirement of the course. The course will be run as a workshop and will require significant student participation.

NOTE: If students’ thesis topics involve human subjects, UCAIHS approval or exemption must be obtained before any data collection can begin.

GRADED REQUIREMENTS
Please note, this is a pass/fail course. Assignments and the distribution of requirements are:

• Class Participation: 25% of grade
• Thesis Outline and Working Bibliography: 20% of grade (due on Monday, October 30th at 11:00 a.m.)
• Final Oral Presentation of Project: 20% of grade (Monday, December 11th and Tuesday, December 12th during class)
• Evidence of Complete, Approved Thesis (due date TBD) or Final Thesis Proposal (due by Friday, December 15th at 11:00 a.m.): 35% of grade

COURSE REQUIREMENTS & POLICIES

1. Office hours: I am happy to meet and am available by appointment. I am also regularly accessible by e-mail and by phone. I will make every effort to respond as promptly as possible to all e-mails, and e-mail is always the best way to reach me.

2. Class Attendance and Participation: Class attendance is required for this course. If you must miss or arrive late to a class for any reason, please let me know in advance. I expect that everyone will participate actively in presenting their own project and in giving engaged, respectful, and thoughtful feedback on the work of others.
3. **Class Format:** This class will be conducted as a research and writing workshop. We will use class time to meet as a whole group and to meet in small groups, into which students will be divided at the beginning of the semester. Students will work in small groups to give feedback on the research process and on written drafts. The groups will discuss and develop their own assignments (over e-mail and in class), and students in these groups will be accountable to each other to provide the work they have agreed to produce on any given week. While students meet, I will be available as a resource to the groups. We will talk more about this format on the first day of class. I also will occasionally use class time to conduct one-on-one meetings with individual students, and students will have three required meetings with me over the course of the semester. Regardless of the format on any particular day, students are expected to attend class and to arrive fully prepared for the work of the day. I encourage you to take advantage of the fact that you will have a captive audience for the semester that will get to know your work very well. I also encourage you to learn from providing feedback to others and listening to the feedback that others receive. This kind of work is very important to the academic writing process, for people at all levels and all stages of research. Please take an active role in making sure the small group work is productive for you and your classmates.

4. **Periodic Class Presentations:** In addition to the final presentation, there will be two short, informal class presentations during the semester, designed to help students make progress on their thesis work and receive feedback on their work from other students. This work will not be individually evaluated but will be part of students’ class participation.

5. **Thesis Outline and Working Bibliography:** By **Monday, October 30th** (at 11:00 a.m.) I expect that you will be well on your way to producing a draft of your thesis or your proposal. I will ask that you submit a working outline and bibliography at the beginning of class, and we will discuss the format of this in class. This will allow me to provide individualized, written feedback on your progress and to suggest other resources for your work. Also due with your outline and bibliography is confirmation that you have chosen a thesis advisor. Please ask your advisor to e-mail me by October 30th to confirm that they will be working with you this year. I will not be able to read or grade your outline and bibliography until you have a confirmed advisor.

6. **Final Oral Presentation:** Students will be required, in class on **Monday, December 11th** and **Tuesday, December 12th**, to do a formal, 15-20 minute presentation of thesis work. You will be graded both on the content and the oral presentation of your work.

7. **Evidence of Complete, Approved Thesis:** It will be up to your chosen faculty advisor to read and sign off on your thesis. I will not, therefore, read the complete theses of those students for whom I am not the faculty advisor. If you are graduating in the fall of 2017: As the final requirement for the course, I ask that you submit written evidence (in the form of an e-mail from your thesis advisor to me and in the form of a hard copy of the final draft of your thesis) that your advisor has signed off on your thesis. This will be due to me by a date to be determined once the semester starts. If
your thesis is not approved by this date, but you plan to graduate in the fall of 2017, you will receive an “Incomplete” for this piece of the course, and we will come to an individualized solution for completing the thesis requirement.

8. Thesis Proposal: For students who are not completing their theses and planning to graduate in the fall of 2017, the final project for the seminar will be a 7-10 page (double-spaced, in 12-point font) thesis proposal and work plan, which will serve as the basis for students’ M.A. theses. The proposal will be due on Friday, December 15th at 11:00 a.m. We will talk more, over the course of the semester, about what this proposal entails. The proposal will include a detailed work plan/timeline for the spring semester.

9. Citation Style: Please use APA style for your work. Please consult a manual for citation help. A good online resource can be found here: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/.

10. Deadlines: All deadlines are firm. I will not grant extensions, except in the case of absolute emergency. Assignments also are considered late if they do not meet the time deadline (e.g., an assignment due at 11:00 a.m. is due promptly by 11:00 a.m.).

11. Academic Integrity: All students are responsible for understanding and complying with the NYU Steinhardt Statement on Academic Integrity. A copy is available at http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.

12. Students with Disabilities: Students with physical or learning disabilities are required to register with the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities, 726 Broadway, 2nd Floor, (212-998-4980) and are required to present a letter from the Center to the instructor at the start of the semester in order to be considered for appropriate accommodation. Please see: https://www.nyu.edu/students/communities-and-groups/students-with-disabilities.html.

REQUIRED READINGS

There are 3 required books for this course. The books are available at the campus bookstore. All books also are available on reserve at Bobst Library. These books (in the order in which we will read them) are:


COURSE OUTLINE

September 11: Course Introduction

Introduction: (1) The M.A. Thesis Requirement; (2) Developing a Research Question; (3) Introduction to the IRB; (4) How to Seek and Give Feedback to Colleagues; (5) How to Get the Most out of Small Group Work

Read and discuss in class: “James Baldwin’s Advice on Writing.”
https://www.brainpickings.org/2016/02/08/james-baldwin-advice-on-writing/

September 18: Individual Meetings

Students meet individually with me about their initial project ideas and progress. Each student is only required to come to class for their scheduled meeting with me. Meetings will take place in my office, not our classroom.

September 25: Approaches to Our Work


Whole group: Check in on project and progress.

October 2: Developing a Project & Small Group Work (1)


Suggested group work: Meet for the first time as a group. Discuss initial interests, progress made so far towards a topic, finding an advisor, etc. Make a work plan with each other for the semester (share and give feedback on these). I suggest giving yourself an assignment each time and asking your group members to hold you to this assignment.

October 9: FALL RECESS. NO CLASS.
October 16: Individual Meetings

Students meet individually with me about their work plans for the semester and their progress on their advisor search and outlines. Each student is only required to come to class for their scheduled meeting with me. Meetings will take place in my office, not our classroom.

October 23: Writing a Literature Review & Small Group Work (2)


*Suggested group work:* Draft and share outlines of thesis. Give and receive feedback on these.

October 30: Class Presentation 1

*Class Presentation 1:* Students will present and receive feedback on their thesis outlines. They will talk, as well, about next steps and goals for their work.

November 6: Writing Approaches & Small Group Work (3)


*Suggested group work:* Share literature reviews (in progress) and provide feedback on these. And/or develop and share plans for developing literature reviews and strategies for finding, digesting, and organizing literature.

November 13: Individual Meetings

Students meet individually with me about their next steps and work plans for the rest of the semester and, if relevant, for the year. Each student is only required to come to class for their scheduled meeting with me. Meetings will take place in my office, not our classroom.
November 20: Class Presentation 2

*Class Presentation 2*: Students will present and receive feedback on a book or article that they have read that has been useful to their thesis work. They will summarize the piece and will talk for a bit about why it is important for their work.

November 27: Writing Approaches and Strategies

We will talk – as a whole group – about writing, writing strategies, etc. We’ll do an exercise on writing and share it. I’ll share some additional articles in class.

December 4: “Going Public” & Small Group Work (4)


*Suggested group work*: Discuss upcoming presentations. Make, share, and receive feedback on detailed work plans for the remainder of the thesis work.

December 11: Final Presentations

½ the class presents today (students TBD by sign-up in November)

Tuesday, December 12 (PLEASE NOTE THIS IS A TUESDAY): Final Presentations

½ the class presents today (students TBD by sign-up in November)