

Political Science 191A/ Senior Honors Seminar

Fall 2015

Wednesdays 12:00-2:50 pm, SSB 104

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Description. The two-quarter Senior Honors Seminar provides majors with an opportunity to design and carry out a research project on a topic of their choice, to work closely with individual members of the Political Science faculty, to write an honors thesis, and to graduate with honors in Political Science. Professors Naoi and Schneider will coordinate class meetings; all other members of the departmental faculty (except those on leave) can serve as individual advisors to students in the program. The Seminar will meet in both Fall and Winter Quarters of 2015/16.

The purpose of the weekly meetings is to help students carry out their research. Class time will be devoted primarily to 1) discussion about research topics and research design; and 2) student presentations and critiques as specified in the assignments. You should be prepared to report on your progress during each class session. Written work must be submitted on the dates listed below to *individual faculty advisors, seminar coordinators, and student colleagues in this seminar*. You should seek feedback from your advisors on each completed assignment.

Writing assignments and deadlines.

1. Wednesday, October 7. #1: A one-page summary of proposed thesis topic.
2. Wednesday, October 21. #2: A one-page summary of the proposed argument and contribution of the thesis.
3. Wednesday, November 4. #3: A three- to five-page statement of research design.
4. Wednesday, November 18. #4: A preliminary introduction.
5. Wednesday, December 10 (last day of instruction in the Fall 2015 quarter). #5: A draft of the first chapter.
6. Friday, March 11 (last day of instruction in the Winter 2014 quarter). The penultimate draft of the entire thesis.
7. Monday, March 28 (first day of instruction of the Spring 2014 quarter). *Three* bound copies and *one* electronic copy of the completed senior honors thesis (final draft) must be submitted to Ariane Parkes (aparkes@ucsd.edu) in the Political Science Department office by 2:00 p.m.

Required Readings. To remain in good standing in the course, students must complete reading assignments in advance of the seminar meetings. You may purchase copies in the book store or borrow them from course reserves.

- Wayne C. Booth, Gregory Colomb, and Joseph Williams, *The Craft of Research*, 3rd edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008.
- Online: <http://www.charleslipson.com/How-to-write-a-thesis.htm>

For the library session, please fill out the short questionnaire: <http://goo.gl/forms/icvSZG2Ipt>

Determination of grades. You will receive four grades for the work you complete in the honors seminar:

1. Course grade for the fall quarter. A letter grade will be assigned *by your thesis advisor* on the basis of the work you complete in the fall quarter.
2. Course grade for the winter quarter. A letter grade will be assigned *by your thesis advisor* on the basis of the work you complete in the winter quarter.
3. Thesis grade. The thesis grade will be the average of recommendations of two (possibly three) anonymous readers who are department faculty (*not your thesis advisor*). (If the first two readers differ in their recommendations by more than two-tenths of a grade point [e.g., 3.5 and 3.8], a third reader will be asked to grade the thesis as well.)
4. Departmental honors. The award of departmental honors is by a vote of the entire Political Science faculty. In assigning honors the faculty is guided by the average of your departmental GPA (through the winter quarter) and your thesis grade. There are three levels of honors—highest honors, high honors, and honors. A student may complete the thesis but not receive departmental honors.

Other Useful Resources

- Information about UCSD Political Science Honors: <https://polisci.ucsd.edu/about-our-people/undergrad/honors-program/index.html>
- Writing Center at UCSD: <https://writingcenter.ucsd.edu>
You can make an appointment here on-line and get a personal counseling and feedback on your written work. We encourage everyone to get a feedback on their writing on your Introduction by the end of January.
- Strunk W., Jr. and White, E.B., 2007. *Elements of Style*. Penguin. This little booklet is a must for every writer and is available for free here: <https://faculty.washington.edu/heagerty/Courses/b572/public/StrunkWhite.pdf>

CLASS SCHEDULE AND FALL QUARTER ASSIGNMENTS

September 30. Introduction

- Read <http://www.charleslipson.com/How-to-write-a-thesis.htm>

October 7. Framing Questions and How to Narrow Them Down

- Read Preface, Prologue, Chapters 1 and 3 in Booth, Colomb, and Williams, *The Craft of Research*, 3rd edition.
- **Assignment #1 Due:** One-page summary of your proposed thesis topic, with enough copies for each person in the seminar.

October 14. Discussion of Research Topics I: Developing An Argument

- Read Chapter 4 in Booth, Colomb, and Williams, *The Craft of Research*, 3rd edition.

October 21. Library Session: Primary and Secondary Sources

- NOTE MEETING LOCATION: Geisel Library, Electronic Classroom (Room 274/Classroom 1). Reference librarian Annelise Sklar will give a tutorial on electronic and library research resources. Class will meet at noon (usual time), at the Geisel Library, Room 274/Classroom 1, which is the first room on your left as you are walking from the Circulation Desk towards the Reference Area.
- Read Chapters 5 and 6 in Booth, Colomb, and Williams, *The Craft of Research*, 3rd edition.
- **Assignment #2 Due:** One-page summary of your proposed argument and contribution

October 28. Discussion of Research Design I

- Read Chapters 7 and 10 in Booth, Colomb, and Williams, *The Craft of Research*, 3rd edition.
- Students present their own research/critique others' research.

November 4. Discussion of Research Design II

- Read Chapter 12-14 in Booth, Colomb, and Williams, *The Craft of Research*, 3rd edition.
- Students present their own research/critique one another's research.
- **Assignment #3 Due:** Three-to-five page statement of research design, plus a one-page table of contents for the thesis. These must be signed by your advisor. Bring enough copies to distribute to the seminar.

November 11. No Class – Veterans Day

November 18. Discussion of Introduction and Research Progress

- **Assignment #4 Due:** Preliminary introduction (maximum three pages, single-spaced). Bring enough copies for all members of the seminar.

November 25. No Class – Happy Thanksgiving!

December 3. Presentation of Progress Reports

- In-class reports on preliminary research findings using Powerpoint slides.

December 10 (No class but assignment due electronically)

- **Assignment #5 Due:** Submission of (i) a revised draft of Introduction and (ii) a research memo. A research memo should be between five to ten pages, preferably ten pages, both single-spaced (it can be longer, if you made a great progress). The memo summarizes your preliminary findings using appropriate tables and figures and documentation of sources. You will need to submit them to your thesis advisor, seminar coordinators, and fellow students.