

WORKSHOP SYLLABUS

POLI 191A: Senior Honors Seminar: Frontiers of Political Science

Fall 2012

Wednesday Noon – 2:50pm, Social Sciences Building 104

Prof: Gerry Mackie, SSRResearchB 322, gmackie@ucsd.edu

Office Hours: Wednesday 3-5

Prof: James Fowler, SSB 392, jhfowler@ucsd.edu, <http://jhfowler.ucsd.edu>

Office Hours: by appointment

Course description

This workshop is designed to prepare students to write their Political Science Honors Thesis. The course provides an introduction to inference in the social sciences and the conduct of original research. By the end of the course, each student will have developed a research design and written one chapter of their thesis.

The format of this workshop is social. Science is a *social* activity, so there will be a large emphasis on soliciting feedback from and providing feedback to your peers. Class time will be devoted primarily to discussions of research methods and design in the context of students' specific projects. As specified in the assignments, written work must be submitted on the dates listed below to faculty advisors and/or peers in this seminar. Students should seek feedback from their advisors on each completed assignment.

Required readings

We've decided to use different texts.

- Wayne C. Booth, Gregory Colomb, and Joseph Williams, *The Craft of Research*, 3rd edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008.
 - It's just been put on reserve, there will be a short delay. An electronic version is available through the UCSD Library:
<http://site.ebrary.com/lib/ucsd/docDetail.action?docID=10288700> Obtain copies from Amazon or other source.
- Philip H. Pollock, *The Essentials of Political Analysis*, 3rd edition. Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2009.
 - On library reserve. Costly text, we're using three chapters.
- online: <http://www.charleslipson.com/How-to-write-a-thesis.htm>

There are also three very useful memos written by Phil Roeder available here:

<http://jhfowler.ucsd.edu/memo2.pdf>

<http://jhfowler.ucsd.edu/memo3.pdf>

<http://jhfowler.ucsd.edu/memo4.pdf>

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.

Tentative Schedule

- Oct 3 **Introduction:** Meet, greet, and brainstorm. Gerry Mackie
- Oct 10 **Library Session.**
 Read *Craft of Research*, chs. 5 and 6.
No Class. Go to Room 274 in Geisel Library at 12:30pm – Annelise Sklar will give a workshop on electronic and library research resources
 Assignment: A one-page summary of thesis questions and hypotheses is due to your advisor
- Oct 17 **Framing Questions** James Fowler
 Read *Craft of Research*, chs. 1 and 3
 Read <http://www.charleslipson.com/How-to-write-a-thesis.htm>
 Assignment: Bring copies of your one-page thesis summary for everyone in the class.
- Oct 24 **Discussion of Your Research Topics** Gerry Mackie
 Read *Craft of Research*, ch. 4
 Students will be assigned to clusters for duration, those with similar interests to discuss one another's work
- Oct 31 **Discussion of Your Research Topics** James Fowler
 Read *The Essentials of Political Analysis*, chs. 1, 3, 4.
 Assignment: Preliminary bibliography and literature review, 2-3 pages, due to your advisor, bring copies to class for your cluster
- Nov 7 **Designing Research and Discussion of Your Research Design** James Fowler
 Read *Craft of Research*, chs. 7, 10.
 A three- to five-page statement of research design is due to your advisor and bring enough copies to distribute in the seminar
- Nov 14 **Discussion of Your Research Designs** Gerry Mackie
 Read *Craft of Research*, ch. 10
- Nov 21 *No Class*

- Nov 28 **Discussion of Your Research Designs** James Fowler
Read *Craft of Research*, chs. 13-14
- Dec 5 **Student Presentations of First Chapters** Gerry Mackie
- Dec 7 A draft of the first chapter is due to your advisor
- Mar 15, 2013 The penultimate draft of the entire thesis is due to your advisor
- Apr 1, 2013 Three bound copies of the completed senior honors thesis (final draft) must be submitted to the Political Science Department office by 3:00 p.m.