SECOND-YEAR RESEARCH PAPER SEMINAR
(Tuesday, 9:40 a.m. – 12:40 p.m. via Zoom)

Instructor: Dr. Karen A. Hegtvedt
Office: Tarbutton Hall, Room 227
Hours: By appointment
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Course Objectives

“Research is formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose.”
--Zora Neale Hurston

“The function of sociology, as of every science, is to reveal that which is hidden.”
--Pierre Bourdieu

As sociologists, we are given license to poke and pry with a purpose. In doing so, we may reveal that which is hidden, thereby creating new knowledge. The intent of the second-year paper (2YP) is to formalize the poking and prying that you have begun in one of your initial research investigations. No longer are you simply a consumer of knowledge; rather, with this endeavor you become a producer of it.

This seminar focuses on assisting you in completing your second-year research paper. Towards that end, the seminar covers issues inherent in packaging the research that you have undertaken for others to consume. We focus on the conceptual and pragmatic issues associated with empirical research. These fundamental issues include: identification of the contribution of a research project; construction of literature reviews and theoretical argument; translation of theoretically driven research questions into empirical projects; the design and implementation of empirical studies; presentation of results; and discussion of implications.

To illustrate these issues, students share their own research projects. As we discuss the previously noted fundamental issues, students will present corresponding components of their own projects. The goal of doing so is to ensure that students make substantial progress on their 2YP. Throughout the course, students will receive feedback from classmates and the instructor on components of their research to ensure an ongoing dialogue about each project. By the end of the semester, students will be familiar with the research endeavor, have grappled with issues relevant to their projects, and finalizing their second-year research paper. In addition, students will gain experience in constructively critiquing others’ work.

Course Resources

Course Website

All course materials (announcements, syllabus, readings, etc.) will be available via the Canvas website for this course. Students will use this website to post their materials (i.e., assignments) for discussion and may use it for communicating with each other.
Your Advisors

As you work on your 2YP, it is critically important to keep your advisors in the loop. Their expertise on your chosen topic will certainly exceed mine. While I can direct you in shaping the contribution of your paper, the structure of your literature review, the cogency of your theoretical argument, the completeness of your methodology, the clarity of your results presentation, and the completeness of your discussion, rely on your advisors for substantive issues and advice. Have them read components of your paper as they are completed (and commented on by members of this class). Feedback from advisors certainly should be incorporated into the final paper as well. I will also liaise with advisors as necessary to ensure that you are making necessary progress.

Jones Program in Ethics

This course will touch upon several aspects of issues related to the responsible conduct of research. The Laney Graduate School’s Jones Program in Ethics (JPE) is an integral part of the curriculum of doctoral programs at Emory. Both required elements of the program and unique events can be found on the JPE website. The syllabus highlights parts of the course relevant to the JPE curriculum.

Emory Writing Center

The mission of the Emory Writing Center is to support the development of writers of all levels, across all disciplines. A representative of the Writing Center will visit the class early in the semester to talk about writing research papers. If you feel the need for help with your writing as you are developing sections of your paper, please take advantage of the resources of the Writing Center. Students in the past have found their assistance very helpful.

Accessibility

Students with accessibility needs should contact us at the beginning of the semester and we will discuss necessary arrangements. The Emory Office of Accessibility Services (404-727-9877) can provide further information.

ASA Style Guide

Although I recognize that you may be submitting your manuscripts to outlets other than those published by the American Sociological Association, as sociologists you should all be familiar with the ASA style. The “Guide” is a small book (Style Guide, sixth edition) available for purchase. You can, however, get Quick Tips for ASA Style.

Pandemic Allowances:

While our experience in the “classroom” may be different from pre-pandemic semesters, I am hopeful that our online classroom community can thrive regardless of the delivery method. All sessions will be synchronous, but we will build in breaks, as necessary, to prevent Zoom
fatigue. Each class session will unfold as if we are meeting in-person in Tarbutton 206. (I even have pictures of the seminar room, should you want to use one as a backdrop to pretend that we are all in the same room together!) I recognize that your situation regarding health, housing, or other matters may affect your ability to participate in class. Please contact the appropriate Emory student support organizations at the first sign of illness (see Emory coronavirus FAQ) or other problems and then reach out to me as soon as feasible. It is easier for me to address your needs if I know about them as soon as they arise. My goal is to do what I can to help you succeed in this course despite the constraints of the pandemic.

Course Requirements

1. Attendance

You are, of course, expected to attend (Zoom) class regularly. I know that Zoom meetings can be enervating and empathize with the desire to switch off the webcam on your computers. Please refrain from doing so, given the size of this class! Talking to black boxes with white names emblazoned on them or simply still-life pictures of your smiling faces will detract from the sense of community this course engenders. (Please contact me privately if your circumstances are such that you do not have the technical capacity to use your webcam).

If you should foresee missing a class session due to illness, please notify me so that we do not delay the start of class waiting for you. Missing more than two class sessions may jeopardize your grade for the class.

2. Participation

Active participation requires adequate preparation. Students must read the assigned materials before class and develop their own assessment of the material. Such careful preparation ensures greater quality in class discussion. The weekly reading material will often include the work of classmates, as described below. Class discussion should be both informed and respectful.

3. Readings

Given that this is neither a methodology nor a theory course, the readings are geared toward helping students as they complete their own research. As a result, the readings fall into three broad categories: 1) reflection pieces on different aspects of graduate training and research; 2) empirical articles from which we will focus on specific aspects or sections; and 3) sections of your own research papers. Additionally, as this is a “how to” class in some respects, online guides summarize much writing on the topics we will cover. As noted in some sections below, the University of Southern California library has put together useful materials for writing in the social sciences: http://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide/purpose.

3. Presentations

For most class sessions, students will present some draft section of his or her research paper in class: introduction, literature review, methods, findings, discussion and conclusion.
4. Critiques

Other students will serve as reviewers for their peers’ presentations and paper sections. In the course of class discussion, students can raise questions, explore ideas, and express misgivings. The goal is to provide constructive criticism that ensures improvement of paper. While most of the critiques will be delivered orally, sometimes reviewers will be asked to offer written critiques (e.g., in the form of marginalia on a paper or a list of summary comments). We will determine which critiques should be in writing. Composing written critiques helps to learn skills necessary for reviewing journal submissions.

5. Presentations and Final Paper

As part of the 2YP requirements, each student must present their 2nd year paper projects to the department. These are typically 20-minute presentations (with discussion). With COVID restrictions, these presentations will unfold via Zoom or will be scheduled for September 2021, by which time in-person instruction is likely to have resumed. As a class, we will further discuss when and how presentations will unfold. (Practice, preliminary presentations will unfold the last day of our Zoom sessions.)

Students will need to submit a nearly complete version of their papers by Tuesday, May 11, midnight via the Canvas course website. Although this paper may not be the final version of the paper you will submit to fulfill the graduate program’s research paper requirement, it should be a version that incorporates the feedback received throughout the semester and thereby represents significant movement towards completion of this requirement.

6. Assignments and Grading

The table below outlines the due dates for all assignments. Know, however, that I consider flexibility as a hallmark of this course, especially given its size. Thus, as necessary, we might adjust some of the due dates of the assignments as the semester progresses.

All final grades will take the form of either “Satisfactory” or “Unsatisfactory.” If students meet the above requirements responsibly, they will receive “Satisfactory.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary of Assignments</th>
<th>Tentative Due Dates</th>
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<td>“Mentor text” for research paper</td>
<td>February 1/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outline of research paper</td>
<td>February 8/9</td>
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Course Outline

Most weeks, students will present assignments pertaining to materials covered in a previous week. For each date below, I describe the content of the class session and note the related assignment (and due date) for a subsequent session. For example, we discuss writing of an “introduction,” then students write their introductions, which the class reviews one or two weeks later.

January 26:
Overview of the Course, Synopses of Research Papers, Academic Writing

Presentation: Overview of intended research projects
Assignment: Select a key published article/chapter to guide the creation of a manuscript from your research project. A “mentor text” serves as model to emulate in crafting your own empirical manuscript within your substantive domain. (Feb. 1)

“Research Paper Requirement” section of the Department of Sociology’s Graduate Handbook.

February 2:
The Graduate Experience and Research Paper Outline
(JPE: Collaboration, Mentoring)

Presentation: “Mentor text” guiding your research paper
Assignment: Outline of research paper (Feb. 8)


February 9:
**Exploring Your Data and “Eleven Sentences”**

*Presentations: Outline of research paper*
*Assignment: Play with your data and write “Eleven sentences” to guide composition of your argument (Feb. 15)*


February 16:
**Writing an Introduction and Framing the Paper**

*Presentations: What you learned from your data and “Eleven sentences”*
*Assignment: Composition of introduction to research paper (Feb. 22)*

http://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide/introduction


February 23:
**Building an Argument I: Literature Review**

*Presentations: Introduction to research paper*
*Assignment: Composition of background sections and argument (March 8)*


Correll 2004 (up to “Status Beliefs”)

Lareau 1987 (up to “Research Methodology”)

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March 2:
**Building an Argument II: Theorizing and Hypotheses**

Presentations: None; discuss progress on background sections
Assignment: Composition of background sections and argument (March 8)

Correll 2004 (up to “The Experiment”)


March 9:
**Describing Data Collection**

Presentations: Background sections
Assignment: Composition of methods section of research paper (March 22)

http://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide/methodology

http://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide/qualitative
Lareau 1987 (“Research Methodology”)

http://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide/quantitative

Correll 2004 (“The Experiment” up to “Results and Discussion”)

Khanna 2004 (“Data and Methods”)


March 16:
**Rest day (no class!!)**

March 23:
**Considering the Art of Writing**

Guest Presentation: Writing Center Fellow
Presentations: Methods sections
(Anticipated Assignment: Composing preliminary quantitative/qualitative findings [April 5])


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**March 30:**

**Tackling Analysis** (JPE: Data Practices)

*Presentations: Methods sections*

*Assignment: Composing preliminary quantitative/qualitative findings* (April 5)


**Quantitative**

Correll 2004 (“Results and Discussion”)

Khanna 2004 (“Findings” up to “The Influence of Reflected Appraisals…”)


**Qualitative**

Lareau 1987 (“Teachers’ Requests for Parental Involvement” to the “Discussion”)

Khanna 2004 (“Influence of Reflected Appraisals…” to “Discussion and Conclusions”)


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**April 6:**

**Submitting for Publication and Responding to Reviews** (JPE: Authorship & Peer Review)

*Presentations: Results for quantitative and qualitative studies*

*Guest Presentations: The paper submission process and experience*


**April 13:**
*Heading into the Discussion*

Presentations: Results for quantitative and qualitative studies  
Assignment: Composition of the discussion/conclusion sections of research paper (April 19)

Lareau 1987 (“Discussion” to end)  
Correll 2004 (“Summary” to end)  
Khanna 2004 (“Discussion and Conclusions”)


**April 20:**
*Putting Together Research Presentations*

Presentations: Discussion sections  
Assignment: Revisions of discussion/conclusion sections for preliminary full draft and preliminary slides for ASA style meeting presentation (April 26)


[http://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide/oralpresentation](http://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide/oralpresentation)

**April 27:**
*Workshopping Presentations, Finalizing Papers*

Discussion: Preliminary paper drafts and ASA style meeting presentations

**TBD**
*Presenting Your Research and Moving Forward*

Department presentations: ASA style meeting presentations with discussion

Final papers are due Tuesday, May 11 at midnight (per instructions)