ENR 8897 Research Proposal Symposium

Spring 2016

M 10:15AM – 12:40PM
NOTE: TIME/DATES MAY CHANGE

Room: Kottman 245

Prof. Jeremy Bruskotter bruskotter.9@osu.edu

Kottman 379 D, 247-2118

Course Description and Objectives

Catalog description:

A symposium for graduate students to develop and present thesis and dissertation proposals.

Rationale for offering this course:

This course provides instruction on designing and conducting research, and opportunities for critical reviews of student research proposals. Instruction focuses on devising appropriate research questions, grounding questions in existing theory, articulation of hypotheses, and ensuring methods are appropriate for addressing the research question and hypotheses proposed. Students will present their research proposals at the spring School of Environment and Natural Resources Graduate Student Research Proposal Symposium.

Student Performance Objectives:

As a consequence of this course, the participant will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Identify a research question, describe how their question(s) is grounded in existing theory, and articulate a plan (the proposal) for collecting the data needed to address their research question.

2. Prepare and present a scientific research proposal, and engage in scholarly discussion about the proposal.

Methods of Instruction and Course Requirements

This course is divided into three parts. First, students are introduced to concepts critical to formulating a good research proposal (e.g., what is science, what is the relationship between theory and a hypothesis, etc.) and provided with instruction on how to prepare a formal proposal. During the second portion of the course, students will not meet formally in class, but rather, are expected to use class time for the preparation of their proposal. Finally, during the third part of the course students will give and receive formal feedback on the research question, hypotheses and methods of the proposal.

During the first three of meetings, students will (1) read and reflect on the readings before the date on which they will be discussed, and (2) participate in classroom discussions. During the final four of these meetings, students will participate in two writing workshops, a ‘Methods Café’, and a poster presentation and critical review of peer presentations.
In addition, each student will participate in the School’s Graduate Student Research Proposal Symposium during finals week.

**Required Text:**


(Recommended for Environmental Social Science students) Hoover, Kenneth, and Todd Donovan. *The Elements of Social Scientific Thinking 7th ed.* (or later edition would be fine) New York: St Martin’s Press.

Additional readings will be provided for student use via Carmen.

**Grading**

This course is graded S/U. In order to attain a satisfactory grade, students must participate in the seven class meetings and present a satisfactory research proposal at the Graduate Student Research Proposal Symposium. (Note: If you will be absent from a session, notify an instructor before hand, and prepare a 1-page reflection based on the readings from the day you miss.)

**Admission Procedure**

This course is for graduate students, especially those who will be conducting or evaluating scientific research related to environment and natural resources. Prerequisites: none.

**Availability of Accommodations**

If you need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability, you should contact the instructors to arrange an appointment as soon as possible. At the appointment we can discuss the course format, anticipate your needs and explore potential accommodations. We rely on the Office For Disability Services for assistance in verifying the need for accommodations and developing accommodation strategies. If you have not previously contacted the Office for Disability Services, we encourage you to do so.

**Method of Dealing with a Language Barrier**

This course will be conducted in English. The instructors do not have the resources necessary to evaluate non-English work. Students who have difficulty communicating in English are encouraged to seek assistance from sources outside the classroom. Arrangements can be made for enabling students with speech, hearing, or visual impairment to participate in the course, e.g., through assistance of transcribers or readers.
Course Calendar

UNIT 1: INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

Session 1 (11-JAN) – Welcome and Introduction to the Course

*No class on 18-JAN (MLK Holiday)

Session 2 – (25-JAN) Discussion: What is Science?
Hoover and Donovan ch 1-2, Allen and Baker ch 2

Session 3 – (01-FEB) Scientific Theory & Methods
Hoover and Donovan: ch 3-4, Punch ch. 4, McGrath 1981

Session 4 – (08-FEB) Proposal Ideas Workshop
* Bring in a draft of your researchable problem, research question(s), objective(s), and hypotheses
Punch ch. 1-3, 5-7

*No class from February 15, until March 13 [reserved writing time]

UNIT 2: THE RESEARCH PROPOSAL

Session 5 (TBA-Tentative 14-MAR) – Methods Cafe
Guest panel: Faculty and advanced graduate students discuss their research experiences and provide feedback on appropriate methods. Note: Come with methods questions to ask the experts!

Session 6 (TBA-Tentative 04-APR) – Writing Workshop
Bring in your write-up of research design, methods, analysis, expected results, and limitations

Session 7 (TBA-Tentative 11-APR) – Poster Presentation Practice Session
Upload your poster presentation to Carmen dropbox before class

(18-APR) Poster Revisions: Any revisions to your poster based upon feedback are due by Midnight (12:00AM) on April 18th. Please upload final presentations to the dropbox.

Final Session (TUESDAY APRIL 26) SENR Graduate Student Research Proposal Spring Symposium

Academic Misconduct: Submitting plagiarized work to meet academic requirements, including the representation of another’s works or ideas as one’s own; the unacknowledged use and/or paraphrasing of another person’s work; and/or the inappropriate unacknowledged use of another person’s ideas; and/or the falsification, fabrication, or dishonesty in reporting research results, shall be grounds for charges of academic misconduct.