Department of Human Development

HD4980: Senior Honors Seminar

Prof. Elaine Wethington
Office: G58 MVR
Office hours: Monday, 1:30-2:30; Wednesday, 10-11:30
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Office phone: 607-255-2918 (Audix, for messages)

Class time: 2:30-3:20, Monday

Blackboard website: HD4980 Senior Honors Seminar (you will be automatically enrolled as long as you are registered for the class)

Course Description:
This seminar is designed to provide you with guidance as you design and conduct your honors thesis. The major learning goal of this class is for students to create original research applying principles of the scientific method. The first objective is to ensure that you are completing each phase of your honors thesis in a timely fashion. A second objective is to provide a weekly discussion that addresses issues relevant to all honors theses (e.g., acquiring IRB approval, integrating theory and research, choosing the appropriate methodology and design, scientific writing). In addition, we will gain practice in analyzing data using SPSS, a key skill for completing your thesis. Finally, you will develop your writing skills as you produce drafts of your thesis.

The seminar provides a forum for you to share your progress as well as gather additional feedback from your classmates as you design your study, collect and analyze data, write each draft of your thesis and present your findings. Sharing your experiences also provides the opportunity for others to learn about issues related to the use of different methodologies and the interpretation of results from different analyses.

Although the seminar has an informal format, you are expected to attend each class and complete all the assignments to receive a passing grade in the course. You cannot pass the course (receive an S) if you have more than two unexcused absences in a given semester. (Excuses must be approved in advance.)

You will receive one credit for this course and must take it for two semesters (in both Fall and Spring semesters). You can only take HD 4980 on an S/U basis (a letter grade is not an option for this course). Please note that an “S” grade requires a C- average according to Cornell University rules.

In the second semester, you will be required to present a poster version of your thesis in the spring CURB forum (I believe this will be Thursday, April 26, 2018). You will also be required to present the same poster at a Human Development department senior honors poster forum on April 30, 2018, from 2:30-4:10. Please plan your schedule ahead to attend both of these events, which are required for earning an honors degree.
Be sure also to enroll in HD 4990 with your thesis advisor for both the Fall and Spring semesters. There is a specific course number for each HD faculty member (Marianne Arcangeli in the main HD office can provide you with the CID for your thesis advisor). Your thesis advisor will help you decide on the number of credit hours for HD 4990 based on the amount of time you will dedicate to your thesis each week (1 credit = 3 hours of work per week). **You must add HD4980 and HD4990 by the university add deadline.**

**SPSS: Statistical Package for the Social Sciences**
CISER allows undergraduate students to request thesis accounts to enable you to have access to SPSS from your own computer for the year. Visit the CISER website to request your thesis account: ciser.cornell.edu. Click User Accounts and then on General Computing Account Application. Fill in your information. IMPORTANT: Under type of account, select “For Honors Thesis Work.” Your account should be set up in a few days. Please also register and plan on attending SPSS workshops that will be announced regularly in class and on the Blackboard website. (You will be very glad when you are writing your thesis that you have learned about SPSS.)

**Academic integrity:**
Cornell University asks us to emphasize the material covered in the Academic Integrity Handbook and how it applies to the course. Each student in this course is expected to abide by the Cornell University Code of Academic Integrity. Any work submitted by a student in this course for academic credit will be the student’s own independent and original work and must be composed in the student’s own words.

**Grading for fall semester:**

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<th>25%</th>
<th>Please see the class expectations, above</th>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance and participation</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>See below</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thesis introduction</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>The grade for the introduction and methods will be based on the final version handed in at the end of the semester</td>
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<td>Thesis methods</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Graded on both components, oral and written</td>
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<td>Thesis oral and powerpoint/keynote presentation at the end of the semester</td>
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*****Assignments:** For each assignment, you must document feedback from your thesis advisor (this can be an email to Prof. Wethington that includes advisor comments OR edits to your assignment document that can be identified as having been put there by your advisor). Include this feedback with each assignment. In-class presentations should be given using presentation software (e.g., PowerPoint, Keynote, etc.)
Assignments for the Fall 2017 Semester:

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS: August 28

Assignment:
1) APA Style Tutorial. If you are not already, you should be familiar with the latest APA style. Your thesis will need to be in APA format. To learn APA style, you can refer to the APA style website. For a quick review of APA style, you can visit http://www.apastyle.org/
2) To ensure you understand APA Style, please complete the APA tutorial at http://www.apastyle.org/learn/tutorials/basics-tutorial.aspx
3) Complete IRB Training. All students involved in research projects involving data from human participants are required to take the CITI training through the Cornell Institutional Review Board for Human Participants. This program is online at www.irb.cornell.edu and is under the link “Education and Training” on the left side of the home screen. To complete your CITI training you need to follow these steps: 1. Click on “Education and Training.” It will ask you for your netid, so put that in. 2) Click on the big red Take a Course button. 3) This will take you to the training page. If you do not have IRB Basic Training, take that course immediately. You can do the training over more than one session. After completing, send the completion certificate to ew20@cornell.edu. 4) If you do have the Basic training because you have been working at a lab, send a copy of your training certification to ew20@cornell.edu You can do that from the page that lists the available classes.
4) Complete the assignment due on September 11, see below.

LABOR DAY, no class: September 4

Assignment due for September 11:

Set a Writing Schedule. Create a weekly schedule for your writing. Download or otherwise create a weekly schedule for yourself. On that schedule, cross off the times you cannot write (class, work, sleep, etc.) This will allow you to define more realistically the times you can get writing done. Be prepared to share your writing schedule at next week’s class, September 11.

THE RESEARCH PROBLEM: September 11
Assignment due September 18:
Draft the Problem Statement for Your Thesis. Identify the gap in knowledge that your thesis is responding to (i.e., what is the gap that needs to be filled?). Draft 2-3 sentences that concisely describe the unresolved issue(s) that your thesis addresses. Share your problem statement with your thesis advisor and include his or her feedback when submitting this assignment. Be prepared to share in class at our next meeting (September 18). We will go around the room.
SIGNIFICANCE SECTION: September 18  
Assignment due September 25:  
Draft a significance section that describes and explains the positive effect that successful completion of your thesis will likely have as a result of (a) addressing a critical barrier to progress in the field or (b) changing concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, or services that have driven the field. Share your significance section with your thesis advisor and include feedback when submitting this assignment. Be prepared to share in class at next meeting. We will go around the room.

PURPOSE STATEMENT, PART 1: September 25  
Assignment due October 2:  
Draft your purpose section. A clear purpose statement will explain the goals and specific aims of your thesis. Share your purpose section with your advisor and include feedback when submitting this assignment. Be prepared to share in class at next meeting.

PURPOSE STATEMENT, PART 2: October 2  
Assignment due October 16:  
Put together your revised research question, significance section, and purpose statement into a document (Word preferred) and post it on the class Blackboard website by 10 am October 16. Come to class prepared to talk about how the assignments to develop research question, significance, and purpose statements have had an impact on how your ideas have developed.

FALL BREAK, no class: October 9

HYPOTHESES / RESEARCH QUESTIONS: October 16  
Assignment for October 23:  
Draft your hypotheses/research questions section. A research question is the question that your thesis seeks to answer. A clear hypothesis includes three components: the variables, the population, and the relationship predicted between variables. Share your hypotheses/questions section with your advisor and include feedback when submitting this assignment. Please number your hypotheses. Post your hypothesis section on the class Blackboard website by 10 am October 23. Be prepared to share in class at next meeting.

LITERATURE REVIEW, outline: October 23  
Assignment for October 30:  
Develop an annotated outline of your literature review. Share your literature review outline with your advisor and include feedback when submitting this assignment. Be prepared to share in class at next meeting.

LITERATURE REVIEW, draft: October 30  
Assignment for November 6:  
Write a draft of your literature review. Share your literature review draft with your thesis advisor and include feedback when submitting this assignment.
METHODS: November 6

Assignment:
Write a draft of your Methods section with the information you have available. Write in the past tense and leave blank whatever information you do not yet know. You should have a subsection on Participants, Stimuli/Materials, Apparatus (if applicable), and Procedure. Please share your methods section with your thesis advisor and include feedback when submitting this assignment on Blackboard by 10 am on November 6.

I will assign students randomly to the three presentation days that close the class. If you cannot come the day where you are randomly assigned you are responsible for trading with another student. This presentation is required.

STUDENT PRESENTATIONS OF WORK IN PROGRESS: November 13

STUDENT PRESENTATIONS OF WORK IN PROGRESS: November 20

STUDENT PRESENTATIONS OF WORK IN PROGRESS: November 27

**Date TBA:** Submit a final version of the Introduction and Methods sections of your thesis. This date will be set by the university, according to the university schedule for submission of final papers due in a semester in place of a final exam. This date will be available when the university posts the final exam schedule. It is very likely to be in the first three days of the scheduled examination period.