Dissertation Preparation and Research (3 credits)
Spring 2022 Syllabus
Course Number 18:820:700:01

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Tuesdays, 9:00-11:45; Nelson Hall D340

Description: This course offers group guidance, supervision, and support for students at every stage in the dissertation process. In addition to support related to writing clearly and APA style, the course will include brief presentations on selected topics related to student dissertation needs and goals (e.g., conducting a literature review, power analysis, research design and methodology, writing research questions). Assignments are dissertation specific (e.g., mock proposal presentation, draft of literature review completed) and include weekly goal setting, discussion of progress in meeting goals, and troubleshooting barriers to meeting goals in a supportive environment.

Required Text


Selected articles and resources are uploaded in Canvas.

Tentative Weekly Schedule (Topics will be added or adjusted as needed)

Week 1 - January 18, 2022: Reviewing Course Goals, Expectations, and Syllabus

Reviewing where students are in the dissertation process. Planning for the semester and goal setting - how to best accomplish your dissertation goals using lessons from research on goal theory. Establishing assignments, timelines, and due dates.

Readings/Resources:
Week 2 - January 25, 2022: Getting Started with Your Dissertation

Student review of dissertation progress and new goal setting. GSAPP procedures, process, and expectations for conducting a dissertation. Including securing a chair, focusing your topic, and elements of the dissertation proposal and process.

Readings/Resources:
GSAPP Dissertation Manual:

GSAPP Dissertation FAQs:

Week 3 - February 1, 2022: Prewriting Strategies

Guest Speaker: Stacey Blackwell (Senior Director, Rutgers Learning Centers)
Prewriting strategies to enhance the writing process and address personal writing challenges.

Week 4 - February 8, 2022: Scientific Writing Structure and Mechanics

Student review of dissertation progress and new goal setting. Students present what they learned from chair interviews. Reviewing online tools to evaluate your writing. Identifying personal strengths and areas for growth in your writing related to structure and mechanics. Identify one research paper written at GSAPP or a draft of your dissertation that you will upload to Grammarly and Turn It In during class.

Readings/Resources:
Checking writing mechanics: https://www.grammarly.com/

Checking originality and citation mistakes: https://canvas.rutgers.edu/external-apps/turnitin/.

Week 5 - February 15, 2022: Conducting and Writing the Literature Review

Student review of dissertation progress and new goal setting. Goals and structure of the literature review. Identifying research problems and gaps in the literature, searching for literature, and keeping the literature organized. Using a rubric to guide the literature review.
Readings/Resources:
Writing the introduction: http://users.clas.ufl.edu/msscha/psych/report_intro.html

Endnote software to organize literature: https://software.rutgers.edu

Searching the literature: https://www.apa.org/science/about/psa/2016/09/literature-search-tips

Refining search results: https://frame-credocourseware-com.proxy.libraries.rutgers.edu/courses/course-v1:Rutgers+IL-MOD+2018/xblock/block-v1:Rutgers+IL-

Week 6 - February 22, 2022: Generating Research Questions and Hypotheses

Student review of dissertation progress and new goal setting. Writing research questions and hypotheses.

Readings/Resources:

Week 7 - March 1, 2022: Mastering APA Style

Student review of dissertation progress and new goal setting. Mastering APA style.

Readings/Resources:

APA Style: https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html

APA Style Guides and Resources: https://apastyle.apa.org/


Week 8 - March 8, 2022: Structuring and Writing the Method
Key elements of a method section. Research methods and designs – quantitative methods applied to dissertation

Readings/Resources:

March 15th - RU Spring Break

Week 9 - March 22, 2022: Conducting a Survey Study

Student review of dissertation progress and new goal setting. Survey studies, order effects in surveys, developing a questionnaire or survey. Qualitative and mixed methods applied to dissertation.

Readings/Resources:


Seven tips for good survey questions: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lq_fhTuY1hw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lq_fhTuY1hw)

Bias in surveys: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RwMrUf5W4U](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RwMrUf5W4U)

Week 10 - March 29, 2022: Conducting and Writing the Power Analysis

Student review of dissertation progress and new goal setting. Conducting and writing your power analysis
Readings/Resources:


Week 11 - April 5, 2022: Writing Results and Discussion

Student review of dissertation progress and new goal setting. Writing analyses, results, and discussion. Creating tables and figures for your dissertation study

Readings/Resources:


Writing the discussion: http://users.clas.ufl.edu/msscha/psych/report_discussion.html

Week 12 - April 12, 2022: Data Analysis and Missing Data

Student review of dissertation progress and new goal setting. SPSS refresher, using excel to create figures, dealing with missing data. Running descriptives and preparing data for analysis.

Readings/Resources:

Creating APA Figures in Excel: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V0DXqtMtHfA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V0DXqtMtHfA)

SPSS Primer/Tutorial: [http://www.mcours.net/cours/pdf/leilclic1/leilclic204.pdf](http://www.mcours.net/cours/pdf/leilclic1/leilclic204.pdf)

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**Week 13 - April 19, 2022: The Dissertation Oral Proposal and Defense**


**Readings/Resources:**

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**Week 14: April 26, 2022: Mock Proposals and IRB Procedures**


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**Week 15: May 3, 2022: Mock Proposals and Planning for Continued Dissertation Progress**

Student review of dissertation progress and new goal setting. Summer planning/commitment for dissertation progress. Student mock proposal/defense.

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**Other Resources**

**Academic Writing Resources**
- Improving academic writing style: [https://writing.wisc.edu/handbook/Academic](https://writing.wisc.edu/handbook/Academic)
- Bank of phrases to use in academic writing: [http://www.phrasebank.manchester.ac.uk/](http://www.phrasebank.manchester.ac.uk/)
• Books to support writing a dissertation:
  https://writing.wisc.edu/handbook/assignments/dissbooks/

Dissertation Writing Texts
To planning, writing, and defending your dissertation. Corwin Press.

Oxford University Press.
https://www.google.com/books/edition/The_Dissertation/WhwTDAAAOBgJ?hl=

Goal Setting Resources
Harkin, B. et al. (2016). Does monitoring goal progress promote goal attainment? A meta-
https://doi.org/10.1037/bul0000025

https://doi.org/10.1016/j.orgdyn.2006.08.008

GSAPP Dissertation Resources
• GSAPP Dissertation Procedures: https://gsapp.rutgers.edu/current-
  students/dissertation-material

Order Effects
Garbarski, D., Schaeffer, N. C., & Dykema, J. (2015). The effects of response option order and
question order on self-rated health. Quality of Life Research, 24, 1443-1453.
https://doi.org/10.1007/s11136-014-0861-y

Power and Sampling

Maxwell, S. E. (2000) Sample size and multiple regression analysis, Psychological Methods, 5,
434-458. https://doi.org/10.1037/1082-989X.5.4.434

Productivity Tools:
The real reason you procrastinate podcast: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yls_zfHF8Cg

Free tools to help scientists write better: https://www.annaclemens.com/blog/16-free-tools-
scientists-write-better-more-productively
Publishing Your Dissertation

Seven steps to publishing in a scientific journal. https://www.elsevier.com/connect/7-steps-to-publishing-in-a-scientific-journal

Qualitative Research Methods


Research Design, Methods, and Analyses


Rutgers Dissertation Repository
- Finding dissertations: https://rucore.libraries.rutgers.edu/etd/

Writing Your Literature Review
- An Overview for Graduate Students: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t2d7y_r65HU
- Tips for Writing a Literature Review: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rUNOBFponjc
- Writing the Literature Review: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=70n2-gAp7J0

Classroom Culture

*Respect for Diversity and Commitment to Intersectionality:* I would like to acknowledge that we are all individuals with multiple sociocultural identities that intersect and shape our worldview
through the lens of privilege and oppression. As your instructor I am committed to minimizing systemic forces of oppression within the classroom such as ableism, classism, racism, sexism, transphobia, and heterosexism in efforts to create a safe learning environment for all of us.

It is also my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that students bring to this class is viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated, and I ask that you join me in this commitment to foster respect for one another, enhance solidarity, and build community.

**COVID-19 Protocols at Rutgers:** To protect the health and well-being of all members of the University community, masks must be worn by all persons on campus when in the presence of others (within six feet) and in buildings in non-private enclosed settings (e.g., common workspaces, workstations, meeting rooms, classrooms, etc.). Masks must be worn during class meetings; any student not wearing a mask will be asked to leave. Masks should conform to CDC guidelines and should completely cover the nose and mouth: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html

Each day before you arrive on campus or leave your residence hall, you must complete the brief survey on the My Campus Pass symptom checker self-screening app.

Because of the mask requirement, food is not allowed during in-person class meetings at GSAPP.

**Statement on Disabilities:** Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all University's educational programs. To receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus’s disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations to share with me. To begin, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form.

**Names and Pronouns:** Class rosters are provided with student’s legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

**Person-First Language:** Please refer to the APA Publication Manual (7th Edition, Section 5.4) for guidelines related to using person first or identify first language when writing and speaking about individuals with disabilities and/or special needs (https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/bias-free-language/disability)
Statement on Academic Integrity: The University’s academic integrity policy, to which this class will adhere, can be reviewed at: http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-at-rutgers/. All suspected infractions of academic integrity will be referred to the GSAPP Deans Office who will consult with the Rutgers Office of Student Conduct regarding disciplinary action.

Grading Policies: APA Style (7th Edition) is required for all written assignments. https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_style_introduction.html Please be particularly attentive to APA style guidelines related to point of view, word choice, bias, citations, quotations, and editorializing.

Written assignments are due at the beginning of class. Please write in a formal (rather than colloquial) manner. Review all written assignments to correct/address grammatical errors. In the case of documented emergency, deadlines may be adjusted at the discretion of the instructor. Course grading follows criteria established by Rutgers University:

A = 90 – 100
B+ = 85 – 89
B = 80 – 84
C = 70 – 79
F = 0 – 59