

Research and Writing Seminar Tuesday TUES 02:45_PM-05:45_PM DR0313A

Professor: Victor Asal Email: vasal@albany.edu

Office Hours:

Uptown: Humanities basement 16, Tuesday 1030-1230 or by appointment (ph)442-3112
Downtown Campus: Milne 217: Tuesday 130-230 or by appointment (ph) 591-8729

Mission of the Course (course mission and course objectives taken from David Rousseau 695 syllabus)

This year-long course is required for second year PhD students in Political Science. The primary goal of this course is to actively guide students toward the completion of a major research paper fit for submission to an academic conference or journal. The process of taking a research question from the brainstorming stage through formal presentation of findings is designed to prepare students for developing a dissertation prospectus during their third year in the program. Each student will select a faculty advisor from their subfield to guide the formulation of their research question and the execution of the project.

This seminar is sequenced over two semesters with students receiving two credits in each term (RPOS 695 in the Fall and RPOS 696 in the Spring). By the end of the Fall semester, each student will have selected a topic, produced a literature review, constructed a research design, and commenced on writing the paper. During the Spring semester, students will complete their research, finalize the final paper, and present their findings at an end of semester conference. The Spring semester will emphasize drafting and revising the manuscript. The course will guide you through the ups and downs of the research process.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of this two part course, you should be able to accomplish the following activities:

- Generate and evaluate research topics,
- Develop a systematic literature review in order to identify an interesting research question,
- Construct and innovative research design to explore the research question,
- Evaluate the strengths and weakness of colleagues research designs,
- Draft and revise an article length research project,
- Provide constructive feedback to peers on argumentation and writing, and
- Present the results of research in a conference setting.

Assignments

- 40% Participation
 - The course will be taught in a seminar fashion built around the class working jointly on research and exercises. This means that we will all be dependent on the efforts of others and participation will determine the success of the learning experience. Participation is more than attendance; it includes active and thoughtful participation in all elements of the class. Active and thoughtful participation is dependent on a thorough reading of the material as well as preparation for exercises to be conducted in class. In addition students are expected to prepare comments for each class starting in the third week.
- Work related to the paper
 - one page proposal – not graded – one page write up with clear identification of literature and question you will be answering – and how
 - 20% Literature review
 - 5 page paper – not graded – five page write up with clear identification of literature and question you will be answering – and how
 - 40 % Final paper

Questions Education is about learning. This class is about material you have probably not covered before in this context. If you have questions or things are unclear – ask questions. Ask them in lecture and feel free to call (if I am in my office at 10pm I will answer the phone) or email the instructor whenever to ask for further clarification. This includes any problems you might have about e-reserve or any other technical aspect of the course.

Accommodations: “Reasonable accommodations will be provided for students with documented physical, sensory, systemic, cognitive, learning and psychiatric disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring accommodation in this class, please notify the Director of Disabled Student Services (Campus Center 137, 442-5490). That office will provide the course instructor with verification of your disability, and will recommend appropriate accommodations (<http://www.albany.edu/studentlife/dss/Accommodation.html>).” . If you wish to discuss academic accommodations for this course please also inform the instructor as soon as possible. In addition, the instructor will make every effort to accommodate difficulties arising from religious observance. You are asked to bring any possible conflicts to the instructor's attention as soon as possible. Students should not expect that, if they do poorly on an exam or other assignment, to claim, at that time, the need of an accommodation. This statement is to preclude that problem, and allow people with a need for accommodations to be treated fairly and appropriately.

Plagiarism Please familiarize yourself with the description in the undergraduate bulletin http://www.albany.edu/undergraduate_bulletin/2003-2004/regulations.html if you are involved in plagiarism the penalty will be failure in the course and you will be reported to judicial affairs. **In this one regard there are no second chances.** If you are not sure if something violates standards – ask. If you are not sure whether to cite or not to cite – cite. Every Student is expected to go through the following tutorial <http://library.albany.edu/usered/plagiarism/index.html>

Office hours Office hours are your opportunity to get personalized guidance for assignments as well as help better understanding the course material. Take advantage of it. If office hours are not at a good time for you then please email me your phone number and we will call you to set up a time that works in order to meet.

Ombudsperson “A government official, especially in Scandinavian countries, who investigates citizens' complaints against the government or its functionaries (www.answers.com).” One student will be asked to volunteer to act as an ombudsperson and will meet with me on a regular basis to offer feedback from students in terms of the direction the course is going and bring to my attention any problems with reading, assignments or other material.

Course Calendar 7 full classes

	subject	Reading	Do or doing on that day
1. 8/30	Tech tools How to read an article How to abstract blitz Working with word where do Ideas come from Writing a paper exercise	Either Take a Chance or Take a Shot Lod airport Stories vs. Statistics MAROB codebook Recommended reading How to read	How to read Abstract blitz Demo of word outlining Other Tools
2. 9/6	Writing a paper exercise2 Lit reviews	Asal and Rethemeyer Doing a Literature Review http://www.gwu.edu/~litrev/ Find literature review on annual review of political science and read it http://www.annualreviews.org/	

3. 9/13	Thinking about research and approaches	Research Design Tasks in Case Study Method Argumentation "The Key to a Successful Prospectus " Recommended A Guide to Writing Research Projects	Due: one page proposal due by Friday before class
9/20	No class		
4. 9/27	Different analytical approaches and research design and identifying research topics and presenting	Conducting Field Research on Terrorism Process Tracing in Case Study Research War Termination Landman	Identify Mentor Identify reviewers
10/4	No class		
10/11	No class		
5. 10/18	Presentation of proposals and feedback	Doctoral dissertation Prospectus Presentation of proposals and feedback	Due: Literature review by Friday before class 5 minute ppt presentation Feedback
10/25	No class		
11/1	No class		
11/8	No class		
6. 11/15	Discussion of draft research proposal		5 page paper due by Friday before class 10 minute ppt presentation Feedback
11/22	No class		
11/29	No class		
7. 12/6	Discussion of draft research proposal 2	Questions and discussion of proposals	Final paper due by Friday before class

Provisional Syllabus for 696

Tuesday	Topics
1. 1/24/2012	Presentation of progress
2. 1/31/2012	Writing paper exercise
2/7/2012	No class
2/14/2012	No class
2/21/2012	No class
3. 2/28/2012	Presentation Comments on papers 1-4
4. 3/6/2012	Presentation Comments on papers 5-8
3/13/2012	No class holiday
3/20/2012	No class but required meeting with faculty mentor
3/27/2012	No class
4/3/2012	No class
4/10/2012	No class
5. 4/17/2012	Presentation Comments on papers 1-4
6. 4/24/2012	Presentation Comments on papers 5-8
5/1/2012	No class
5/8/2012	No class
7. 5/15/2012	Presentation of all papers