

Doctoral Research and Professional Development Seminar
Sociology 725, 2022-2023
Professor Marisa Young

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Office Hours: By Request
Class Meetings: Thursdays, 5:30-7:30PM
Classroom: KTH 712

This is the second part of the Professional Development course that will help students through the PhD program in Sociology. The goal is to help support students' skill building efforts around proposal writing, reviewing, and understanding relevant literatures, producing academic presentations, and writing / reviewing journal articles. A secondary goal is to help you develop an identity as a professional sociologist. The course is designed to help you meet some of the milestones of the program, including grant application submissions, and dissertation proposal requirements, while offering professional opportunities to prepare and practice conference presentations. In the second part of the term, we will gather for in-person writing sessions, share our work with one another, and provide constructive feedback.

Learning Objectives

1. Provide **practical information** about sociology and academic life.
2. Create a comfortable forum to ask questions and make comments.
3. Build a writing workshop in which you **write your dissertation proposal**.
4. Consider the craft of writing, including evidentiary based statements, effective summarization of materials, and practical strategies for **writing more efficiently**.
5. Learn practical skills to become a helpful reviewer to your colleagues, and for the broader sociology discipline.
6. Practice **clear and concise communication about your ideas** and research in both formal and informal contexts.
7. Establish a community of scholars that **support each other** throughout graduate school and beyond.

Readings are Based on Your Discretion

I am not assigning any required reading. That said, if I come across applicable articles I will share them –this also includes social media posts I feel are relevant.

Recommended Readings

Becker, Howard. 2008. Writing for Social Scientists: How to Start and Finish Your Thesis, Book, or Article. 2nd Edition. The University of Chicago Press.

American Sociological Association. 2019. ASA Style Guide, 6th edition. ASA bookstore: www.asanet.org.

Requirements

1. **Be there.** Show up for each of our class meetings. Unless otherwise noted, the only preparation I expect is that you ask yourself what you would like to know about each topic before and during course meetings. I know we are in a “virtual” environment. I will try to make my best to keep it interesting :D
2. **Be interactive.** Participate in our discussions—please! Make it a goal to speak at least once in each meeting. If all of you have your camera off, and don’t converse, it’s hard for me to evaluate you.
3. **Be yourself.** I do not want you to just “learn about” the professional world of sociology. Instead, you need to start taking on the role of a professional sociologist. To do so, you will need to make some accommodation to the professional world but at the same time keep your heart -- capitalizing on your own assets and ideas.

Evaluation

This is a required pass/fail course for all PhD students in sociology. Your course grade will be determined solely by your participation. If you attend and participate regularly you will pass the course.

*Note

I have borrowed this syllabus from Dr. Tina Fetner (with permission). She, however, borrowed her syllabus from [Chris Uggen](#) and [Heather Hlavka's](#) 2008 article—“[No More Lame ProSems](#): Professional Development Seminars in Sociology.” *I owe all the other edits to Dr. Fetner.*

Course schedule

Week 1	14-Sep	SSHRC Applications
Week 2	28-Sep	SSHRC Applications...Continued
<i>Reading Week</i>		
Week 3	26-Oct	Becoming A Sociologist (Comprehensive Exams)
Week 4	9-Nov	Alternate Paths of Sociology Degrees
Week 5	23-Nov	Professionalism within and Beyond Academe
Week 6	7-Dec	Next Steps for your Professional Career
Winter Break		

Week 7	11-Jan	Semester Reflections and Conference Abstract Submissions
Week 8	18-Jan	Pursuing Careers within Academia – Guest Speakers
Week 9	1-Feb	Successful Presentations / Knowledge Dissemination– Guest Speakers
Week 10	15-Feb	Preparation for Proposal Writing
<i>Reading Week</i>		
Week 11	8-Mar	Active Proposal Writing Session
Week 12	22-Mar	Alternate Paths of Sociology Degrees – Guest Speakers
Week 13	5-Apr	Wrap Up and Overview of Writing Goals

Course Policies

Submission of Assignments

All late assignments will be submitted to me through email.

Late Assignments

All late submissions must be approved by me.

Absences, Missed Work, Illness

Under exceptional circumstances a course instructor may approve an extension for the student for the completion of work in a course and assign an Incomplete grade (INC). The instructor will submit an incomplete grade with a 'Lapse To' grade, which is the grade that will default to at the date to clear incomplete grades. Normally this extension is in the range of a few weeks. A student who receives an incomplete grade must complete the work as soon as possible, and in any case early enough to allow the instructor to report the grade by the 'Final Date to Submit Results of Incomplete Grades'. If the INC grade is not cleared by the deadline, the lapsed grade will be recorded.

Avenue to Learn

In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have

any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

University Policies

Academic Integrity Statement

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](#).

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty

- Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- Improper collaboration in group work.
- Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or sas@mcmaster.ca to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University's [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the RISO policy. Students requiring a [RISO](#) accommodation should submit their request to the School of Graduate Studies (askgrad@mcmaster.ca) normally within 10 working days of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

Conduct Expectations

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#) (the "Code"). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and

personal growth of all McMaster community members, whether in person or online.

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students' access to these platforms.

Copyright and Recording

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy

It is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

Course Modification

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

Extreme Circumstances

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.

