Diplomacy Syllabi
School of Diplomacy and International Relations

Spring 2014

Senior Research Project

Naaborle Sackeyfo
Seton Hall University

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarship.shu.edu/diplomacy-syllabi

Recommended Citation
https://scholarship.shu.edu/diplomacy-syllabi/83
Course Summary:
The course is designed to help students learn research, writing, and oral communications skills that they can apply to all academic and professional pursuits. The ultimate goal is to complete a well-written, strongly argued, and thoroughly documented Senior Research Project. The course is structured to include both class and individual meetings. The first several weeks mix class and individual meetings with the professor to focus on helping students turn their research interests into a research puzzle, find and use primary and secondary sources, develop hypotheses, conceptualize variables, identify an effective research design, and present their ideas professionally in public settings. The next several weeks help students shape their particular projects, with a focus on writing, revising, and providing effective feedback to fellow students. During the last weeks the students formally present their research findings and constructively critique one another’s presentations.

Required Reading (available at the SHU Bookstore):

Course Policy:

- Academic Integrity/Plagiarism- Students are expected to honor the standards of academic integrity as outlined in the University catalog. Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will be reported to the administration, and may result in a lowered or failing grade for the course and up to possible dismissal from the School of Diplomacy. See university and school standards for academic conduct here: http://www.shu.edu/offices/community-development/community-standards/ http://www.shu.edu/academics/diplomacy/academic-conduct.cfm. If any policies seem unclear, feel free to contact the professor for additional clarification.

- Use of electronic devices for any purpose other than taking notes is not appropriate during class time. It distracts other students and the professor and will result in a lowered grade (in other words, do not use your laptop for email, shopping, Twitter, Facebook, and the like).

- Email Policy- I will do my best to get back to you within a minimum of 24 hours. However, I am not available on the weekends.
Expectations and Grading:
Students should come to class meetings prepared to discuss the readings and to present their assignments to their colleagues and the professor. Students should come to each of the individual meetings with the professor prepared to present and discuss their assignments. The final grade will be determined as follows:

- Writing assignments: 15%
- Participation: 15%
- Preliminary draft: 15%
- Oral presentation: 20%
- Final draft: 35%

Evaluation: Final Grades will based on the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67-69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Course Meetings, Readings, Assignments, and Due Dates:*
*Note: Any assignments may be turned in early

Weeks 1-3: Class and Individual Meetings

Tue, Jan 14
Course overview and choosing a topic
Identifying research questions, defining problems, and finding, using, and citing sources
*Reading: BCW (Booth, Colomb, & Williams), pp. 35-101, 273-276

Tue, Jan 21 (class):
Hypotheses, variables, thesis statements, causal claims, and research design
*Assignment: Preliminary Bibliography – due in class Tuesday, Jan 21
Bring a bibliography with at least 20 potential sources on your research topics. This should help you to determine if there is enough information about your topic/s to continue with it or choose one of two. All sources should be academic books, journal articles, or primary materials such as government documents or institutional databases.

Tue, Jan 29: Individual meetings
*Reading: BCW, pp. 105-138
*Assignment: Research Topic Descriptions – due at meeting
Write two descriptions of research topics that you are considering, each a paragraph long. What’s the puzzle? Why is it interesting and important? Be prepared to present the descriptions to the professor.

Week 4: Class Meeting
Tue, Feb 4
Discussion of the bibliography, research question, and research strategy
Reading: BCW, pp. 139-151

Assignment: Annotated Bibliography – due at meeting
Bring a bibliography with at least 10 annotated sources. Below each of these 10 sources describe the article’s key points and how they relate to your research in 3-4 sentences. Do not simply use the article’s abstracts; use your own words. All sources should be academic books or journal articles. Be prepared to discuss progress and future plans.

Weeks 5-7: Class and Individual Meetings
Tue, Feb 11
Assessing existing research
Assignment: Preliminary Literature Review – due in class Tuesday, Feb 11
Write a three-page review of at least five articles in academic journals that directly relate to your research topic. The review should compare and contrast the readings, stressing the major arguments presented, the evidence used, the type of analysis employed, limitations, and areas of contention between the authors. Most importantly, the review should propose how your research question relates to one or more debates within the academic literature. Be prepared to present the review to the class.

Tue, Feb 18 (Individual meetings)
Thesis statements and research strategies
Assignment: Thesis Statement / Research Strategy – due at meeting
Write a two-page thesis statement and research strategy that includes how the thesis relates to the state of the debate regarding your topic and what strategy you will use to assess your causal claims, including what cases you will examine and what data sources you will use.

Tue, Feb 25 (Class):
Thesis statements and research strategies
Assignment: Thesis Statement / Research Strategy – due in class Tuesday, Feb 25
Present a revised thesis statement and research strategy to the class in a 3-5 minute formal presentation that includes how the thesis relates to the state of the debate regarding your topic and what strategy you will use to assess your causal claims, including what cases you will examine and what data sources you will use.

Weeks 8-11: Individual meetings
Tue, Mar 4, Mar 18, Tue, Mar 25
Discussion of the introduction and outline (and research progress at subsequent meetings)
Reading: BCW, pp. 173-202
Assignment: Introduction and Outline – due at meeting
Bring a detailed 3-7 page introduction and outline. The introduction should not be more than 4 pages and should include the research puzzle, the policy &/or theoretical importance of the question/topic, the thesis statement (or set of hypotheses), and the plan for the paper. The outline should briefly describe the main points (and, preferably, the sources to be used) in each section.
Spring Break: March 11

Week 12: Class meeting
Tue, Apr 1:

Week 13: Class meeting
Tue, Apr 8:
  Presenting research in public and making revisions
Assignment: Preliminary draft – due in class Tuesday, Apr 8
  Hand in the preliminary draft at the beginning of class and send an
  electronic copy as well. The preliminary draft should be at least 4,000
  words and should include at least the introduction, the literature review
  section, some analysis of cases and data, and an outline of the remaining
  pages.

Week 14: Individual meetings
Tue, Apr 15:
  Discussion of ways to strengthen the preliminary draft
Reading: BCW, pp. 203-210, 232-269

Weeks 15 & 16: Class Meetings
Tue, Apr 22, and Tue, Apr 29:
  Student presentations
Reading: BCW, pp. 213-231.
Assignment: Oral Presentation and Constructive Critique
  Students should come prepared to present their research, including the
  puzzle, thesis statement, findings, and conclusions. Presentations should
  be 10-12 minutes long and should include some kind of visual aid
  (overhead projector, PowerPoint presentation, or hand-out). Students
  should also be prepared to provide constructive critiques (including praise)
  of their fellow students. To this end, I will provide a peer review critique
  guidelines to help you assess your peers.

Thursday, May 8: Final Paper Due (earlier is welcome)
  Final drafts are due. An electronic copy should be sent to my email address
  and a hard copy placed in my mailbox by noon. Both an electronic and a hard
  copy are required.
  Requirements:
  • 7,000 to 9,000 words total, including title, text, notes, bibliography, and tables
     (roughly 25-30 pages)
  • Typed, double spaced, one-inch margins
  • Must incorporate suggestions from the individual meetings with the professor and
    from the oral presentation
  • Must include appropriate citation method, and all sources in the bibliography must
    be cited in the text