

BC3761x-3762y: Senior Seminar

Requirements: Senior standing. The course requirements are attendance at regularly scheduled classes and individual conferences (to be set by instructor and student individually), and completion of the senior essay. Class hours are Mondays, 6:10-8:00.

The Senior Essay: The senior seminar is a two-semester course that culminates in the completion of a senior essay. The essay must be a coherent piece of analytical writing. It is intended to pose questions about politics and government. In developing these questions, you should keep in mind three criteria: first, that they interest you sufficiently to devote eight months of work to them; second, that they involve subjects with which you have some familiarity and prior knowledge (through coursework, fieldwork, employment or internship); and third, that they be limited in scope to allow thorough treatment within limits of the time available. Essays vary in length, from 50 (minimum) to 75 pages, and usually consist of at least three chapters: the first poses the central issues in the form of one or more research hypotheses and discussion of the existing conventional knowledge in social science and popular literature; the second describes the research findings; the third draws conclusions and links up again with relevant literature and with any policy implications of the findings. Papers must be accompanied by scholarly notation (footnotes or endnotes), as well as a complete bibliography of sources consulted.

Research Strategy: You do not proceed in linear fashion, but rather iteratively, alternating primary research and discussion of secondary literature. Initially you will develop a research topic and a one or more central questions to investigate in the form of a prospectus. Instead of writing up chapter one, you will instead proceed directly to the main body of research work. After five weeks of research, you will step back and write up your initial findings, without worrying about where they will fit into the completed essay. You will then draft your first introductory chapter, based on your more complete understanding of the issues, the relevant literature, and the trajectory of your research. That completes the requirements for the first semester. In the second semester you will continue with your research, and draft the second chapter (or possibly more than one chapter), which consists of your research findings organized in terms of the questions you have asked in chapter one. You then write your final chapter linking it up with the literature. Your last task is to revise these materials and submit your completed paper.

Format for Thesis: Print on single side of page. Double-space. Provide endnotes or footnotes, which should be single-spaced. Number all pages. Include a title page, table of contents in the front; include a bibliography of sources at the end. Use any accepted system of citation (MLA, APA, Chicago) throughout. The following sources will be helpful in formatting: Charles Lipson, *How to Write a BA Thesis: A Practical Guide from Your First Ideas to Your Finished Paper* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005); Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses and Dissertations*, 7th Rev. Ed., Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007. For guidance on style and

quoting or paraphrasing, please consult the two following websites: Modern Language Association's *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* at <http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/DocMLA.html>; also consult the Columbia site at http://sipa.columbia.edu/resources_services/student_affairs/academic_policies/code_of_conduct.html

Guides to Thesis Writing: Any of the following works may also be useful: Howard S. Becker, *Writing for Social Scientists* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986); Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, Joseph M. Williams, *The Craft of Research* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995); Gordon Harvey, *Writing with Sources* (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 1998); Eviatar Zerubavel, *The Clockwork Muse: A Practical Guide to Writing Theses, Dissertations, and Books* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1999).

Course Grades: Your grade for the first semester will be YC, indicating "year course." Your grade for the second semester will be based on the *cumulative* quality of your work at all stages: developing a research prospectus and completing a first chapter in the first semester, and completion of the second and third chapters in the second semester. Grades range from A+ to F. If a departmental "distinction" for the essay is proposed, or if a grade of D or F is to be given, a second faculty member must read and concur. (Anyone who "disappears" and does not turn in work in the first semester will receive an F and will be obliged to take a full two-semester sequence with another instructor beginning Spring 2010 and ending Fall 2010, which means postponing graduation until February 2011.)

Deadlines: Work submitted after due dates is considered late and results in a grade penalty. Essays are not accepted after the final due date, which is the afternoon of the Senior Essay Party, usually in the third week of April, except by departmental decision involving an extraordinary circumstance.

Readings: Book Culture, Barnard Library Reserves and Butler Library Reserves.
Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, Joseph M. Williams, *The Craft of Research*, 2nd Ed., (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003). 0180.55M4B66, 2003
Charles Tilly, *Why? What Happens When People Give Reasons, and Why* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006) HM1076.T55 2006

Contact Information: Office Hours Wed. 4-6. 408 Lehman Hall. E-Mail rpious@barnard.edu.

Fall Semester Schedule of Meetings

September 14: Refining Research Interests.

Wayne C. Booth *et al.*, *The Craft of Research*, Chs. 3,4

September 21: The Logic of Social Science Inquiry

Charles Tilly, *Why? What Happens When People Give Reasons and Why* Chs. 1,3,4,5

Wayne C. Booth *et al.* *The Craft of Research*, Chs. 7,8,9

September 28: Discussion of Sources

Wayne C. Booth *et al.*, *The Craft of Research*, "Using Resources"
Class Handouts on Research Sources

October 5: Literature Review

Wayne C. Booth *et al.*, *The Craft of Research*, Chs. 5,6

October 12: **Preliminary Research Proposals Due**

Brief Presentations to Class about Research Interests

October 19: The Case Study Approach

(I will distribute these readings to you before class)

Michael Wievoiorka, "Case Studies," in Charles C. Ragin and Howard S. Becker, eds., *What is a Case? Exploring the Foundations of Social Inquiry*, 9th ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005). pp. 159-173.

Diane Vaughn, "Theory Elaboration" in Charles C. Ragin and Howard S. Becker, eds., *What is a Case? Exploring the Foundations of Social Inquiry* 9th ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005): 173-202.

Jeffrey Chwieroth, "Counterfactuals and the Study of the American Presidency" *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 32, No. 2, 2002.

October 26: Deduction and Induction in Cases

Graham Allison, "Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis" *American Political Science Review*, vol. 53, no. 3, September 1969

Richard Pious, "The Cuban Missile Crisis and the Limits of Crisis Management" *Political Science Quarterly*, vol. 116, No. 1, Spring 2001

Available on Proquest. Go to CU or Barnard Library on the web. Click on Resources and then Database. Click on "P" and scroll down the listings. At advanced search enter Pious in top left-hand box.)

November 2: Public Law Approaches to Politics

Research Prospectus is Due Today

(I will e-mail these readings to you before the class)

Louis Fisher “Legal Approaches to Studying the President”
Richard Pious “Public Law and the Executive Constitution”

November 16 Individual Meetings

November 23 Individual Meetings

November 30 This is the final class for the first semester.
Draft of Chapter One Due.

Statement of research interest and questions. Review of literature. Your research strategy and methods. Hypotheses. Counterfactuals. Sources available. Brief presentations to the Seminar based on draft.