

DEREE COLLEGE SYLLABUS FOR: SO 4790 SENIOR YEAR THESIS		US CR: 3/0/3
(Previously: SO 4690 Senior Year Seminar) (Updated: Spring 2024)		UK LEVEL 6 UK CREDITS: 15
		PREREQUISITES:
CATALOG DESCRIPTION:	The Senior Year Thesis is the culmination of our undergraduate students' sociological training. Capstone, independent study, thesis-based course for graduating Sociology students. Supervision by selected members of the Sociology department team. Two terms of study, typically Fall and Spring of the last year of studies.	
RATIONALE:	The capstone course rekindles students' sociological imagination related to an interest they developed in the major or an important social issue. It requires graduating Sociology students to employ knowledge from the sociology curriculum and use secondary and primary data to formulate a research question, use a methodological design, collect evidence, and present an analysis of their findings. It helps students develop a portfolio of sociological skills and interests to pursue after graduation.	
LEARNING OUTCOMES:	<i>As a result of taking this course, the student should be able to:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Examine a selected sociological problem in an independent manner. 2. Relate their work to existing theory and research. 3. Evaluate different methodological approaches towards collecting and analysing primary data in the context of their investigation. 4. Formulate conclusions that follow from their research that identify implications for sociology. 5. Organize and present their work in a clear and coherent manner using communication aids (Ppt. slides, posters, handouts etc.) 	
METHOD OF TEACHING AND LEARNING:	In congruence with the teaching and learning strategy of the college, the following tools are used: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the first semester, students will work with an allocated supervisor on identifying a suitable topic, formulating a research question, developing a preliminary research plan and will review relevant literature. During the second semester student develop the research instruments, conduct their research, analyse, and interpret their data, and clearly articulate and present their findings in their thesis. Students will be required to complete an extensive individual written thesis employing primary as well as secondary data collection and analysis. The subject of the project 	

must directly relate to an area of sociology of the student's choice and be researched in the context of specific theory frameworks, employing a sound and purposeful methodological approach.

- Office hours: students are encouraged to make full use of the office hours of their supervisor, where they can discuss their topic, receive advice on aspects of their work, ask questions, go through draft chapters, etc.
- Use of Blackboard management platform to further support communication, by posting instructions, useful links, resources and recommended readings, timely announcements, and online submission of assignments etc.

ASSESSMENT:

Summative:

1st Assessment: A research dissertation of 7,000 to 7,500 words	80
Final Assessment: Oral presentation	20

For the dissertation to receive a grade, timely submission of all preparatory work is required (e.g., research question, literature review, methodological design, outline and drafts). Failure to submit the preparatory material will result in an FA grade.

Formative:

Various assignments (including online activities) such as development of development of research tools, coding and data analysis, writing strategies and style.	0

The formative assessments aim to prepare students for the summative assessments.

The First Assessment (Research dissertation) tests learning outcomes 1,2,3,4.

The Final Assessment (Oral presentation) tests learning outcomes 5. *The final grade for this module will not be determined through grade averaging. Students are required to resit any failed assessments.*

INDICATIVE READING:

REQUIRED READING:

Becker, Howard S. 1986. *Writing for Social Scientists: How to Start and Finish Your Thesis, Book, or Article*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Booth, Wayne C. et.al. 2016. *The Craft of Research* (4th ed.) Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Bryman, Alan. 2016. *Social Research Methods* (5th ed.) Oxford: Oxford University Press.

	<p>RECOMMENDED READING:</p> <p>Harris, Angelique, Alia R. Tyner-Mullings, 2013. <i>Writing for Emerging Sociologists</i>: Sage</p> <p>Hart, Chris, 2018 <i>Doing a Literature Review: Releasing the Research Imagination</i>, SAGE</p> <p>Luker, Salsa 2008. <i>Dancing into the Social Sciences: Research in an Age of Info-glut</i>. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press</p> <p>Northey, Margot et al. 2018. <i>Making Sense in the Social Sciences: A Student's Guide to Research and Writing</i> (5th ed.) Oxford: Oxford University Press.</p> <p>Strunk, William Jr., 2000. <i>The Elements of Style</i> (4th ed.) New York: Macmillan.</p> <p>Books and articles will be recommended by the respective supervisor depending on each student's chosen topic area.</p> <p>Other sources, including books, journal articles, research papers etc. recommended by the respective supervisor depending on each student's chosen topic area.</p>
<p>INDICATIVE MATERIAL: (e.g. audiovisual, digital material, etc.)</p>	<p>REQUIRED MATERIAL: Will be assigned by the respective supervisor depending on each student's chosen topic area.</p> <p>RECOMMENDED MATERIAL: Will be recommended by the respective supervisor depending on each student's chosen topic area.</p>
<p>COMMUNICATION REQUIREMENTS:</p>	<p>Use of appropriate academic conventions in the social sciences as applicable in oral and written communications.</p>
<p>SOFTWARE REQUIREMENTS:</p>	<p>MS Office and Blackboard CMS Enter any additional s/w requirements.</p>
<p>WWW RESOURCES:</p>	<p>https://sociology.fas.harvard.edu/files/sociology/files/thesis_guide_sep_t_2012.pdf</p>
<p>INDICATIVE CONTENT:</p>	<p>Given the nature of this module, there is no specific content to be covered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the first semester, students identify a suitable topic, formulate a research question, develop a preliminary research plan and review relevant literature.

- | | |
|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In the second semester, students develop the research instruments, conduct their research, analyse and interpret their findings and submit their thesis. |
|--|--|