Senior Seminar

Thursday – 1:10pm to 4:10pm
CSB 113

Instructor: Professor William M. Rodgers III
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732-932-4100, x6203
Heldrich Center Office, 30 Livingston Avenue, Room 203
Office Hours: Tuesday, 1:00 to 2:00pm and by Appointment

Course Description

The Senior Seminar serves as the capstone experience in the planning and public policy program. It is a small seminar in which participants work closely with your peers and me to identify research questions, develop and implement their research design, produce a 25 page manuscript and present it in a public forum.

The primary objectives of the semester are to further develop your analytical, problem solving skills, spark your intellectual curiosity, apply the methods and literature you have learned in previous classes, and strengthen your research, writing and presentation skills. The thesis provides you with an excellent opportunity to engage in discussions that have piqued your interest in earlier courses and help you identify future career interests.

Past students have found this experience useful while searching for a job and applying to graduate school.

Major Course Objective: Conduct scholarly policy-related research

Helpful Resource and Information


Grading Policy

Your grade will be based on the following elements:

15% Participation in Periodic Group and Individual Meetings with Professor Rodgers
20% Proposal and Interim products
25% Final Presentation
40% Final Paper

Students are required to attend all classes, meetings, and meet all deadlines. If you have a conflict, I will be much more sympathetic to your situation if you are professional in how you handle the situation. That is, be proactive. If you have an emergency, after the event has passed, please provide the appropriate documentation.

Final papers will not be accepted after the semester’s completion and incomplete or temporary grades will not be assigned.

Integrity Policies

Academic and intellectual integrity is not only at the center of the policymaking process, but are also values of the Bloustein and Rutgers communities. Because of this, we will hold all students to the following standards:

- Prompt arrival at all course sessions and meetings (Attendance will be taken)
- Attendance, participation, and respectful behavior in all classes and meetings
- No use of cell phones and instant messaging during classes and meetings
Statement on Academic Honesty

All members of our community must be confident that each person’s work has been responsibly and honorably acquired, developed, and presented. Any effort to gain an advantage not given to all students is dishonest whether or not the effort is successful. We view a violation of academic honesty as a breech of trust, and will result in a “Fail” in this class, as well as possible suspension or expulsion from the institution. When in doubt about plagiarism, paraphrasing, quoting, or collaboration, consult the course materials and instructors.

Tentative Schedule (Subject to Change)

Week 1 January 19, 2017
Course description: objectives, expectations, grading, and reading

Students describe 2 to 3 research questions/areas of interest

Developing a Research Question (Rodgers)

Week 2 January 26, 2017
No Formal Class - Complete Out of Class Assignment

Week 3 February 2, 2017
Students present 2 to 3 potential questions

How to conduct a literature review (Rodgers)

Week 4 February 9, 2017
Students present iteration #1 of “Literature Review Table”

Week 5 February 16, 2017
Students present Iteration #2 of “Literature Review Table”

Identification and choosing methods and data (Rodgers)

Week 6 February 23, 2017
Students present proposed methods and data sources to class
Week 7  March 2, 2017
Start Analysis – No Formal Class Meeting
Individual Meetings with Rodgers

Week 8  March 9, 2017
Presentation of 1st refinement of argument/hypothesis/claim and preliminary evidence

Week 9  March 16, 2017
No Class - Spring Break

Week 10  March 23, 2017
Student Presentations of Results

Week 11  March 30, 2017
Full Draft due to classmates and instructor: Tuesday, March 21, 5:00pm
Class Feedback Session

Week 12  April 6, 2017
Student Updates: How did you incorporate comments?

Week 13  April 13, 2017
Class Feedback Session
How to develop a presentation (Rodgers)

Week 14  April 20, 2017
Class Feedback Session
Students present draft presentations

Week 15  April 27, 2017
Final Research Presentations
Submit Manuscript