CCJS389H: Independent Research in Criminology and Criminal Justice  
Departmental Honors Seminar  
Spring 2012  
Susquehanna Hall 1103  
Wednesday 11-1:45

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Office hours: Wednesday and Fridays 3:30 pm to 4:30 pm and by appointment

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Office hours: Thursday 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is the second course in the required four-semester (12 required credit hours) honors program sequence. In this course, students will continue to develop the thesis topic identified in the previous semester and prepare to write and defend the honors thesis. They will finalize their choice of thesis topic, conduct a thorough literature review on the chosen topic, identify a specific research question within the topic, locate data that can be used to answer the research question, and develop a detailed outline for the thesis document.

During the semester, students will also interview CCJS graduate students and law school students to learn more about their experiences, and discuss how to apply for graduate school or law school.

Specific activities for Spring semester:

• Write statement of topic, preliminary research question, and list of references.
• Read and take notes on all readings. Add readings as they are identified. Refine research question on the basis of the reading.
• Iterative process of refining research question:
  • Locate data that can be used to answer the question.
• Refine research question based on data availability.
• Refine reading list based on revised research question.
• Refine research question based on new readings.
• And so on until final question that is important to answer and can be answered is identified.
• Revise written topic/justification for the research project. Why is it important?
• Develop detailed outline for thesis document (Booth pages 173-186). Outline includes all major points to be included in each section.
• Attend panels to learn about graduate school and law school.

HONORS THESIS

This will be a research proposal, and will include a full literature review that provides a persuasive case that the chosen research question has not yet been answered in rigorous research and is worthy of empirical attention. The proposal then describes the data and methods that will be used to answer the question. You may propose to collect “primary” data, in which case you will explain and justify a sampling strategy, data collection method, and measures. You may also propose to use “secondary” data, in which case you will identify the data set, justify that it is appropriate, and argue how the fundamental concepts are captured by measures in the data set. Then you must explain how the data will be analyzed and how this analysis will answer the question. Finally, the thesis ends with a critical consideration of the likely implications of the research, limitations of their proposal, and directions for future work. (about 30 pages).

CLASS FORMAT

This class operates as an independent study. Students will submit various documents demonstrating progress and meet with Prof. Gottfredson to discuss progress and resolve problems. Students are expected to make continuous progress towards the thesis and to ask intelligent questions of the visitors during the two panel sessions.

GRADING POLICY

Grades will be based on the written justification for the research project including a statement of its significance and an outline for the thesis.

DISABILITY SUPPORT

Every effort will be made to accommodate students who are registered with the Disability Support Services (DSS) Office and who provide a University of Maryland DSS Accommodation form, updated for the current semester. Students requiring special accommodations must inform me and provide the required DSS form within the first two weeks of class.
**COURSE OUTLINE**

Below is a schedule of class meetings and milestones.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Class Meetings</th>
<th>Milestones/Readings/Assignments (due before class)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/25/12</td>
<td>Course Overview, Thesis outline, topic statement outline</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/1/12</td>
<td></td>
<td>Statement of topic, preliminary research question, and list of references READ: Booth chapter 6 on engaging sources.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/22/12</td>
<td></td>
<td>All readings completed and outlined</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/29/12</td>
<td></td>
<td>Statement of topic, revised research question, refined list of references</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/7/12</td>
<td>Locating Data</td>
<td>Statement of hypothesis, constructs Complete: ICPSR tutorial at <a href="http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/help/newuser">http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/help/newuser</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>3/14/12</td>
<td>Law School Panel with Professor Bellido de Luna, Esq., Clinical Instructor &amp; Managing Director, University of Maryland Law School</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/21/12</td>
<td></td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/28/12</td>
<td></td>
<td>Potential data source identified</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/11/12</td>
<td>Graduate School Panel</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4/18/12</td>
<td></td>
<td>Final statement of thesis topic, research question, and list of references due</td>
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<tr>
<td>5/2/12</td>
<td></td>
<td>READ: Booth chapter 10 and pages 173-186</td>
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<tr>
<td>5/9/12</td>
<td></td>
<td>Final outline due</td>
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