

Development Studies and Social Change (DSSC) 8212
Doctoral Research Workshop
Spring Semester 2009
Wednesday 2:40-4:25pm
1383 Social Sciences Building

Instructors:

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Office Hours:
By appointment

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Wednesdays 9:45-10:30,
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COURSE OBJECTIVES:

The Doctoral Research Workshop is designed to meet the needs of ICGC Scholars writing dissertation proposals and preparing for dissertation research. The fall semester of this workshop has as its primary objective the very practical purpose of assisting ICGC Scholars in writing successful grant proposals to support their dissertation research. It provides a forum for students and faculty to discuss the elements of a successful proposal, share information on funding sources, and critique one another's proposal drafts. Spring semester will be devoted to discussion of intellectual, practical, political and ethical issues in preparing for and conducting research. The workshop as a whole is an important part of the ICGC community intellectual experience. In participating in this workshop with an interdisciplinary group of ICGC colleagues, you have the opportunity to learn an enormous amount about other intellectual fields through reading others' proposals and discussing their projects. You can also generate future collaboration with your colleagues – it is invaluable to know people you can turn to in the future for collaborative projects or a friendly critique of your work.

Spring semester requirements

(1) To receive credit for the course, all participants are expected to attend each session. We will allow one unexcused absence. If you need to miss any additional sessions, please contact one of the instructors prior to the class meeting that you expect to miss.

(2) For the class sessions when proposals are discussed, we ask you to closely read each proposal and prepare a minimum of one page of written comments for each author. Comments on the proposals to be discussed **must be posted to the website prior to the start of the class session** in which they will be discussed. All comments will be available for viewing by all class members, and you will also be able to post responses to the comments of others.

To make your comments as coherent and useful as possible, please address at least 4 of the 6 criteria listed below, under “Discussion of Proposals,” plus any additional thoughts that you may want to share with the proposal writer.

(3) Proposals should be posted to the class website at least three days prior to the date they will be discussed in class. The comments will be available for viewing by class members and authors will also be able to post responses to the comments of others if they so desire.

In addition to posting your proposal, you are required to post your CV and the guidelines for the proposal(s) you are submitting. Including your CV and the grant guidelines helps us to give you more focused and useful suggestions for improving your proposal.

In summary, items to be posted to the web are:

- Your proposal
- Your CV
- Guidelines/instructions for the grant/proposal if available

Proposals, CVs, and guidelines are due on the website by 8 am on Sunday, the week before they will be discussed. If you have trouble posting and need to send them to the instructors, please send them to all three addresses:

kbt@umn.edu, dlevison@umn.edu, calk0009@umn.edu

Proposal authors are not expected to make an oral presentation. We work from the assumption that everyone is familiar with the content of the proposal, and devote workshop time to improving the week’s proposals. The suggestions and comments your fellow workshop members give you will help you to write a more convincing application for your selected grant competitions.

(4) Questions for guest panelists should be posted to the class website at least three days prior to the panel date. Please also complete any short readings on the panel theme suggested by the guest panelists – we will make them available one week prior to the class session.

Proposal Discussion Sessions

During workshop sessions we will discuss what works and what doesn’t work in each proposal, usually in this order:

1) Strengths of the proposal

2) Identification of the research question

What will the author investigate? Are his/her objectives stated clearly early in the proposal?

3) Situating the research question

What will this project contribute to existing literature/theory/policy? Why is the project important/unique to the theory in which it is located, to the field, and/or to academia?

4) Methodology

How will the author investigate/research his/her research question? Why are the methods the author proposes to use appropriate?

5) Implementation

What are the specific activities the author will undertake to complete the proposed project? How feasible is the proposed project? What personal credentials qualify the author to undertake this project?

6) Writing and style

Please address editing, organization (does it "flow"?), clarity, and presentation of the proposal.

The person receiving comments on his/her proposal may want to bring a **tape recorder** in order to capture all the comments he/she will receive. Past classes have agreed to let participants use tape recorders, and we will ask current members whether taping is acceptable to them.

Peer review of proposals

Please write/give the kinds of comments to others that you would like to receive on your own proposal, remembering that peer review can be a scary process. Our expectation for the workshop is that comments on proposals will be made in a supportive and constructive way: you are encouraged to ask difficult questions and to point out strengths and weaknesses of your peers' proposals in a manner that is both honest and kind. Peer review is an important academic skill – expertise in giving and receiving peer critique will serve you well.

When receiving criticism of your own proposal, remember that the workshop goal is to help you turn out the most competitive proposal possible and to secure funding for your own research. ***While the comments and suggestions of your fellow workshop participants do not indicate success or failure, they are also a gift that should not be taken lightly.*** These comments represent opportunities to write a strong and clear proposal that is persuasive for readers who may or may not be confined to your discipline. It is better that your friends make suggestions for improvements to your proposal now, before potential problems are seen by the people holding the money!

Web-site instructions:

To access the class WebVista site:

1. Go to <http://www.myu.umn.edu>
2. Log in with your UM internet ID (X.500 username) and password
3. Click the *my Courses* tab
4. Select the *Active* tab to display a list of your courses

5. Click on the *Section 001* link found next to this course's name

The first time you try to access the class website, access may be denied – but your attempt “initiates” your access. You should be able to sign on 24 hours later.

Panel Discussion Sessions

The sessions at which advanced ICGC Scholars and faculty or guest speakers will share their research experience and expertise are intended to provide information on research issues and methods that will be useful in your own research or in understanding and evaluating the research of other scholars. The panelists will each make a brief presentation, followed by discussion. In order to make these sessions as productive as possible, we will ask you to prepare questions related to the panel topic prior to the class session and sometimes to do a reading on the topic. We will provide short readings suggested by guest panelists in advance of the class session.

SPRING 2009 WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 – January 21 Course Introduction

WEEK 2 – January 28 Proposal Review

Felly Chiteng Kot
Drew Thompson

Please post your comments to Week 2 on the Web.

WEEK 3 – February 4 Proposal Review

Veronica Michel-Luviano
Elizabeth Mumia

Please post your comments to Week 3 on the Web.

WEEK 4 – February 11 Student Panel on Practicalities of Dissertation Research

David Menyah (Geography)
Susan Mlangwa (Sociology)

Please post your questions to Week 4 on the Web by Tuesday morning.

WEEK 5 – February 18 Interviewing Techniques

Joan DeJaeghere (Educational Policy and Administration)
Kristen Nelson (Forest Resources)

Please post your questions to Week 5 on the Web by Tuesday morning.

WEEK 6 – February 25 Collaborative Research Methods and Ethics

Dr. Okey Ukaga (U of M Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships Program)
Kandace Creel (Gender, Women and Sexuality Studies)

Please post your questions to Week 6 on the Web by Tuesday morning.

WEEK 7 – March 4 Proposal Review

John Flomo

Please post your comments to Week 7 on the Web.

WEEK 8 – March 11 Combining Qualitative and Quantitative Research Methods

Elizabeth Boyle (Sociology)
Greta Friedemann-Sanchez (Public Affairs)

Please post your questions to Week 8 on the Web by Tuesday morning.

SPRING BREAK – March 17

WEEK 9 – March 25 Archival Research

Helena Pohlandt-McCormick (History)

Please post your questions to Week 9 on the Web by Tuesday morning.

WEEK 10 – April 1 Writing Workshop

Center for Writing Staff

Please post your questions to Week 10 on the Web by Tuesday morning.

WEEK 11 – April 8 Proposal Review

Elliot James
Chris Strunk

Please post your comments to Week 11 on the Web.

WEEK 12 – April 15 Course wrap up