

## **Doctoral Research & Professional Development Seminar: 1<sup>st</sup>-year Ph.D.**

**Fall 2018** Room 240 Mondays 11a-1p.m.

The first part of this course (SOC6611Y) supports students in the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the PhD program in sociology at the University of Toronto. (Note, Part II of Practicum takes place in Fall of Year 3). This course offers discussion on topics relevant to sociology as a profession, helps 1<sup>st</sup>-year students build academic skills such as proposal writing, gathering and understanding relevant literatures and data sources for producing scholarship. It nurtures “soft skills” like communicating with others in the department and profession, and discussing one’s ideas. It motivates students to achieve milestones in a timely way, and sets them on pathways toward career goals. The course focuses on the practical matters of professional life, and of reaching goals, including creating a meaningful life as a professional sociologist.

### Learning objectives:

1. Provide practical information about sociology as a profession.
2. Introduce resources or re-familiarize you with resources likely to be useful to you.
3. Provide a collegial place to ask questions and learn as you transform into professional sociologists.
4. Foster an environment promoting creativity and exchange of ideas.

### Requirements:

1. Be there at each of our class meetings. Unless otherwise noted, the only preparation expected is that you ask yourself what you would like to know about each topic before course meetings.
2. Voice your ideas. Articulating your ideas is a fundamental soft skill that is enhanced each time you speak up and listen and respond thoughtfully to comments and questions about your idea. As a means of facilitating participation, I will circulate notecards at the beginning of each class and ask you to write out one question related to the week’s theme. I will use these questions to jumpstart and guide our discussion.
3. Be yourself. We do not want you to merely “learn about” the professional world of sociology. Instead, you will start taking on the role of a professional sociologist. To do so, you will need to make accommodations to the professional world but at the same time keep your passions about your work and capitalize on your own assets and ideas.
4. Look for ways to get involved in the intellectual life of the department no matter how busy you are. Be an active scholar by identifying area events or departmental talks you will attend. During the term, each student is to attend (a) at least one job talk and (b) at least one additional event (e.g., departmental workshop, colloquia). Email me a 2-or-so paragraphs “review” of an event you attended within 1 day of the event you attended, and report to class about your experience there. Ideally you have more events that you will be participating in and that you are interested in reviewing; thus you are welcome to send reviews as often as you like. Though beyond the time frame of the fall term, course hours are also allocated for the spring Practicum Annual Conference (date and time TBA). Please be sure to attend one day of that “mini-conference” to see other PhD students present their work.
- (5) Please note that reading is (virtually) forbidden! By design, there are few scheduled readings assigned for this course. For some topics, you will visit websites, see a list of publications on a topic, or examine some “ambient” materials that cross our paths.

## Evaluation

This is a required pass/fail course for Ph.D. students in sociology. Your course grade will be determined solely by your participation. If you attend and participate fully over the two terms (Fall-first year of Ph.D.; Fall-third year of Ph.D), you will pass the course.

\*\*At the beginning of each class, students will turn in question cards for our panels of experts.\*\*

## Course schedule:

### **Sept. 10 (week 1): Setting the Stage for your PhD program**

Leader: U of T junior faculty

introductions what kinds of work do professional sociologists do? what do the data suggest about U of T Ph.D. graduates? who am I as a professional sociologist? how should I shape my graduate career to meet my goals? milestones & pathways being an active scholar

\*Identify fall events or talks you will attend and report on; email to me your plan

### **Sept. 17 (week 2): SSHRC and OGS applications**

Leader: U of T Sociology Research Administrator: Sherri Klassen

creating a research question writing a brief research statement

\*Bring a one-paragraph research question to class, and be prepared to write, read, provide feedback and revise your application materials in class.

### **Sept. 24 (week 3): Academic Integrity and Professional Ethics**

Leader: TBA, School of Graduate Studies

working with sources and cited them appropriately integrating previous work into your own writing what is self-plagiarism and is it a problem? becoming an ethical sociologist

**Oct. 1 (week 4): Becoming a Sociologist**

**Mapping the Fields (hour 1)**

**Leaders:** Advanced students

how & when to integrate into the profession Canadian sociology CSA US Sociology ASA ASA journals ASA sections plugging in to these worlds

**Tricks of the Trade (hour 2)**

**Leaders:** Advanced students

specializations learning in your area, on your topic, and in sociology generally hierarchies & power mentors, advisors, supervisors and committees ranks & positions in department & university marching forward & upward through graduate school & beyond

**Oct. 8: Thanksgiving Holiday**

**Oct. 15 (week 5): Time Management -- the Ph.D. Program & Life**

**Leaders:** Advanced students

time management for courses & projects prioritizing research tools data sources writing tools bibliographic tools strategies & styles quadrants of priority for deadlines feeling overwhelmed? getting help

**Oct. 22 (week 6): NO CLASS in lieu of attending and reporting on one job talk**

**Oct. 29 (week 7): NO CLASS in lieu of attending and reporting on one job talk**

**Nov. 5: No seminar scheduled, Fall break at UTSG undergrad**

## **Nov. 12 (week 8): Mapping out & Reading the Scholarly Literature**

mapping a subfield and its journals choosing the best sources finding difficult sources looking outside the subfield the annotated bibliography the craft of connecting with the literature 3Rs: recent, relevant and regularly cited following citations when to stop reading

Audiences products lit review?—never “review” the lit! course papers journal articles practical and psychological tips reverse engineering the sociology article organizing the writing process sections, paragraphs, topic sentences

\*Reading: Hannah Wohl and Gary Alan Fine. 2017. “[Reading Rites: Teaching Textwork in Graduate Education](#).” *American Sociologist* 48:215-32.

\*Reading: Zuckerman, Ezra W. 2008. “Tips to Article-Writers.” MIT Sloan School of Management <http://mitsloan.mit.edu/shared/ods/documents/?DocumentID=2468>

## **Nov. 19 (week 9): Doing Research as a Graduate Student: As an RA and on Your Own**

**Leaders:** Experienced graduate students

What’s it like to be an RA? finding an RA project to work on publishing with faculty and/or other students collecting data doing fieldwork getting the relevant training to do research

## **Nov. 26 (week 10): The CV as a motivational document**

**Leaders:** Junior faculty

Local, national and international audiences in-house versus public/website what belongs on the CV? showcasing your expertise in multiple ways

*bring a draft copy of your CV to class*

## **Dec. 3 (week 11): No seminar scheduled**

NOTES:

Most of this syllabus was originally developed for the U of T grad program by Melissa Milkie. She, in turn, adapted past syllabi (with permission) from Tina Fetner and from the addendum of Chris Uggen and Heather Hlavka's 2008 article, “No More Lame ProSems: Professional Development Seminars in Sociology.”