

Doctoral Research & Professional Development Seminar: 1st-year Ph.D.

Fall 2019 - Room 240 - Mondays 10 a.m.-12 p.m. – Prof. M. Milkie

This course (SOC6511H) supports students in the 1st year of the PhD program at U of T sociology. This course offers discussion on topics relevant to sociology as a profession, helps 1st-year students build academic skills such as proposal writing, and 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 present at each of our class meetings.
 2. Voice your ideas and respond thoughtfully to others’ contributions. Participate at each meeting. Articulating 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. At the beginning of many classes, students will respond to questions related to our topic in a “process journal.”
 3. Be yourself. We do not want you to merely “learn about” the professional world of sociology. Instead, you are beginning to take on the role of a professional sociologist. In doing so, we all make accommodations to the professional world, but at the same time we strive to keep passions about our work and capitalize on our assets.
 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. At the end of the term, you’ll send a “review” of two events you attended, and we will discuss our experiences in class.
- *Note that by design, there are few scheduled readings or assignments for this course.

Evaluation

This is a required credit/no credit course for Ph.D. students in sociology. Credit for this course will be determined by your participation. If you attend and participate fully, you will receive credit for the course.

Course schedule: *= material/ideas to bring to class

Sept. 9 (week 1): Grant writing as setting the stage for your Ph.D.: SSHRC and OGS applications

Leaders: U of T Sociology Research Coordinator Sherri Klassen; Associate Grad Chair Markus Schafer

*bring a laptop and a draft grant document with the following: 1 sentence with a research question, 1 sentence saying how you will answer the question (what method you will use) and one sentence explaining why this research will be important for the academic field.

Topics: creating a research question; writing and perfecting an abstract; starting the brief research proposal; be prepared to write, read, provide feedback and revise your application materials in class.

Sept. 16 (week 2): Grant writing: SSHRC and OGS applications

Leaders: U of T Sociology Research Administrator: Sherri Klassen; Associate Grad Chair Markus Schafer

*bring laptop with a draft 2-page proposal to class, plus 5 hard copies. Be prepared to provide and receive feedback on your application material during class.

Topic: Writing and perfecting the research proposal

Sept. 23 (week 3): Becoming a Sociologist & Mapping the Fields of Sociology

Leaders: Advanced Ph.D. students may join

*bring list of events or research talks/job talks you will attend and report on

Topics: milestones & pathways; being an active scholar; nurturing your advantage; broad training, narrow specializations; mentors, advisors, supervisors and committees // what kinds of work do professional sociologists do?; what do the data suggest about U of T Ph.D. graduates? how should I shape my graduate career to meet my goals? Canadian sociology-CSA; US Sociology-ASA; journals & sections; plugging in to these worlds; deadlines and advancing projects

Sept. 30 (week 4): Time Management--the Ph.D. & Life; Practice Job Talk

Leaders: Advanced Ph.D. students may join

Topics: 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

Practice Job Talk: Patricia Louie, Advanced Ph.D. student

Oct. 7: (week 5): No formal class. At any time during fall term, attend and evaluate a Research Talk/an Academic Job Talk

Note: brief (1/2-1 page) evaluation of the event/talk is due Dec. 2, along with that of the second event you attend and critique.

Oct. 14: Thanksgiving Holiday

Oct. 21 (week 6): Challenges in the Academy: Mental Health Concerns

*arrive to class with the printed certificate of completion for the U of T "Identify, Assist, Refer" educational training module for students to support mental health; we will debrief in class, 10-11 a.m.

Oct. 28 (week 7): How to Find & Read Scholarly Literatures

Leaders: Advanced Ph.D. students may join

*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>

Topics: mapping a subfield and its journals; Browzine; purposes for searches, reading and writing; choosing the best & finding difficult sources; looking outside the subfield; the annotated bibliography; 3Rs: recent, relevant and regularly cited; following citations; how to read; when to stop reading

Nov. 4: No seminar scheduled, Fall break at UTSG undergrad

Nov. 11 (week 8): SMART Goals & Writing Workshop

*bring a laptop and a one-paragraph abstract for a project you are working on currently or will begin now, to class. This could be a course paper, a practicum paper idea abstract, or a new project/paper to be developed for submission to a conference or journal, among other pieces of writing [It may be helpful to consider the SSHRC language for proposed work - “Provide a brief summary (max 1800 characters including spaces) of your Outline of Proposed Research in *language the public can understand*”]; leave class with writing goals for Winter, Spring, Summer.

Topics: Audiences; products; lit review?—not really; course papers vs. journal articles; practical and psychological tips; reverse engineering the sociology article; organizing the writing process; sections, paragraphs -- topic sentences; headers, and more.

Nov. 18 (week 9): Challenges in the Academy: Sexual Violence

*arrive to class with the printed certificate of completion for the U of T “Sexual Violence Education & Prevention” module for students; we will debrief in class, 10-11 a.m.

Nov. 25 (week 10): The CV as a motivational document

Leaders: Advanced Ph.D. students / Junior faculty may join

*bring 2 hard copies of your draft CV to class

Topics: Local, national and international audiences; what belongs on the CV?; showcasing your expertise in multiple ways; using CV to motivate progress

Dec. 2 (week 11): No formal class. At any time during fall, attend and evaluate a second Research Talk/an Academic Job Talk

Note: Brief evaluation report (1-2 pages covering 2 events) due via email by Dec. 2, 12 p.m.

Dec. 9 (week 12): Networking skills – Active interactions with scholarly communities

Leaders: Advanced Ph.D. students/Junior faculty may join

Topics: purposes for networking; how to do it well; conversation skills, and the art of socializing professionally; stories from the trenches

Note: continue networking skills – socializing in a professional setting at the Holiday Party, exact time and location TBA; Students completing the Prosem, part I will enjoy a meal together, while we have low stakes practice of networking skills with grad student colleagues and U of T faculty

*Mark your calendars to attend the Practicum Annual Conference (PAC) & a meeting with Prof. Milkie on April 2 & 3, 2020.

NOTE:

Portions of this syllabus have been blatantly copied 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." The rest owes much to the spirit of that piece and to earlier discussions with U of T faculty and the grad office.

Academic Integrity

Copying, plagiarizing, falsifying medical or other certificates, or other forms of academic misconduct will not be tolerated. Any student caught engaging in such activities will be referred to the Dean's office for adjudication. Any student abetting or otherwise assisting in such misconduct will also be subject to academic penalties. Students are expected to cite sources in all written work and presentations. See this link for tips for how to use sources well: (<http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize>)

According to Section B.I.1.(e) of the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters it is an offence "*to submit, without the knowledge and approval of the instructor to whom it is submitted, any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought in another course or program of study in the University or elsewhere.*"

By enrolling in this course, you agree to abide by the university's rules regarding academic conduct, as outlined in the Calendar. You are expected to be familiar with the *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* (<http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/osai/The-rules/code/the-code-of-behaviour-on-academic-matters>) and *Code of Student Conduct* (<http://www.vicereprodstudents.utoronto.ca/publicationsandpolicies/codeofstudentconduct.htm>) which spell out your rights, your duties and provide all the details on grading regulations and academic offences at the University of Toronto.

Accessibility Services

It is the University of Toronto's goal to create a community that is inclusive of all persons and treats all members of the community in an equitable manner. In creating such a community, the University aims to foster a climate of understanding and mutual respect for the dignity and worth of all persons. Please see the University of Toronto Governing Council "Statement of Commitment Regarding Persons with Disabilities" at <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/ppno-v012004.pdf>.

Equity and Diversity Statement

The University of Toronto is committed to equity and respect for diversity. All members of the learning environment in this course should strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect. As a course instructor, I will neither condone nor tolerate behaviour that undermines the dignity or self-esteem of any individual in this course and wish to be alerted to any attempt to create an intimidating or hostile environment. It is our collective responsibility to create a space that is inclusive and welcomes discussion. Discrimination, harassment and hate speech will not be tolerated.

Additional information and reports on Equity and Diversity at the University of Toronto is available at <http://equity.hrandequity.utoronto.ca>.