

SOSC 4100 **Research Pro-seminar**

Fall 2021

Thursday 09:00 - 09:50am

G009A, CYT Bldg

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Description and Objectives

This class prepares students for their QSA Capstone Project. By the end of the term, students will have a detailed plan for their Capstone Project that they will execute in SOSC 4110. We will meet biweekly, during which time students will discuss their ideas. We may also have sessions devoted to topics relevant for fourth year students, including PG studies, guest presentations from faculty or RPG students, and possibly other invited guests.

Assessment

Attendance and Participation

Students must attend all class sessions and participate in discussion (See "Schedule" below).

Progress Reports

You need to submit two brief reports on your progress via Canvas in **Week6** and **Week 10**, respectively (See "Schedule" below).

Midterm Report (Presentation, Week 8)

This should summarize your progress midway through the term. You should describe all major achievements you have obtained. If you have run into any obstacles, describe them, and explain how you overcame them. You may list any questions you have that you would like to raise in discussion with the instructor.

Capstone Project Plan (Presentation, Weeks 12 & 13)

At the end of the term, each student will submit a Capstone Project Plan. This should be realistic and attainable. This will include all the key elements of a proposal including a specification of the aims and significance of the research, a brief discussion of relevant literature and a description of the data and methods.

In most cases the data will be something available from a public repository like the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (<https://www.icpsr.umich.edu/web/pages/>), but it could be data collected by the student, or provided by a faculty member. For public data from ICPSR or another repository, or data provided by a faculty member, the plan will need to confirm that the contents of the data are appropriate to the task at hand.

The plan should be around 1750 words of text. References should be included but are not included in the word count requirement. Pages should be numbered. All work must be your own. If when describing a method or a dataset you believe it is necessary to use text from elsewhere, clearly identify it as a quotation and provide proper attribution.

You are welcome to exceed the recommended word length if you want to get a head start on your Capstone Project by writing more literature review, presenting descriptive results from your dataset, or otherwise writing material to be re-used in your Capstone Project.

The general organization may resemble a proposal you have written for SOSC 2140 or another class. The difference is that it must be realistic, and something that you are confident you can complete in the available time in SOSC 4110. It must also involve quantitative analysis using methods you have learned in SOSC 1100, SOSC 2400, and other methods classes. Ideally the dataset will be large and complex enough that your analysis will successfully showcase your skills for potential employers or postgraduate programs.

The plan must include the following elements:

1) Aims – 250 words

A very brief statement of the goal of the Capstone Project, roughly 250 words. For someone who doesn't read the rest of your proposal, this should provide a basic idea of your plan.

2) Significance – 250 words

Explain why the analysis is important. Convince the reader that the work is worth doing.

3) Background – 500 words

Anything about the topic or the setting you think it is important for the reader to know. May include discussion of previous relevant studies.

4) Relationships of interest - 250 words

What specific relationships are you interested in? If you already have hypotheses, you may state them here.

5) Data – 250 words

Describe the data you will use, including basic information about the target population, the sample size, when it was created and so forth. List the names of the variables that you will use in your study.

6) Methods -250 words

Describe the methods you will use. In addition to basic bivariate analysis of relationships between pairs of variables via tabulations or scatterplots, you should plan on using some more advanced methods that will help showcase the skills you have learned for employers or postgraduate programs. These may include multiple regression and beyond.

Schedule (Subject to adjustment)

Calendar Week	Agenda	Meeting	Submission
Week 1 (9/2)	NO CLASS		
Week 2 (9/9)	Course Introduction	YES	
Week 3 (9/16)	Workflow of Social Data Analysis	YES	
Week 4 (9/23)	Discussion	YES	
Week 5			
Week 6 (10/7)	Discussion Progress Report I	YES	√
Week 7			
Week 8 (10/21)	Midterm Report (Presentation)	YES	√
Week 9			
Week 10 (11/4)	Discussion Progress Report II	YES	√
Week 11			
Week 12 (11/18)	Capstone Project Plan (Presentation)		
Week 13 (11/25)	Capstone Project Plan (Presentation) (<i>cont'</i>)	YES	√