

ARTEDUC 7711

Designing and Writing Research Proposals

Fall 2025

This course is designed to assist in understanding the nature and purpose of the dissertation proposal as well as the strategies necessary to conceive of it and construct it.

General Information:

Class meets Thursdays 1:00 PM-3:45 PM
Sullivant Hall 131

Should Class Meet Online, we will meet at:

<https://osu.zoom.us/j/99048831842?pwd=xseWR3jc4BYT1m0wITyYxa5jPXBa9r.1>

Professor:

Dr. Rachel Skaggs
Associate Professor of Arts Management
Holder of the Lawrence and Isabel Barnett Assistant Professorship in Arts Management
Arts Administration, Education, and Policy
The Ohio State University
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Office Hours: Thursdays from 10:00 – 11:30 in Sullivant 135D or on Zoom by appointment

***NOTE:** All students must come to office hours at least once during the semester as part of the participation grade.*

Course Mission and Objectives:

Broadly, the mission of this class is to understand the dissertation and proposal process, conceive of and develop your planned scholarly contribution, and write in a scholarly community.

- Understand university and departmental expectations and requirements for the dissertation process
- Confirm a dissertation advisor and identify a committee whose expertise and mentorship will contribute to your scholarly development
- Specify an appropriate scope and scale for your dissertation project
- Articulate what a contribution is and how a dissertation can make a contribution to an academic conversation
- Recognize the role of the dissertation within a scholar's publication pipeline
- Build community around shared writing practice and empathetic scholarly critique
- Draft a dissertation proposal within your scholarly community toward your anticipated contribution

Required Readings:

This semester we will be reading several actual dissertation proposals along with the published articles or books that have stemmed from these proposals. Dissertation and book proposals, as well as unpublished articles, have been shared in confidence by their authors and should only be used for this class's purposes. You do not have permission to cite or share these unpublished materials beyond this class.

Books

+Foss, Sonja K. and William Waters. 2026. *Destination Dissertation: A Traveler's Guide to a Done Dissertation*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group.

Noy, Shiri. 2024. *Project Management for Researchers: A Practical, Stress-Free Guide to Getting Organized*. University of Michigan Press.

*Wohl, Hannah. 2020. *Bound by Creativity: How Contemporary Art Is Created and Judged*. University of Chicago Press.

** Indicates that book is available as online ebook through OSU library.*

+Indicates that past edition of book available as online ebook through OSU library.

Articles

Guo, Wen. 2022. "Policy beliefs, policy learning, and risk perception: Exploring the formation of local creative Placemaking-catalyzed policy network." *Review of Policy Research* 40: 151-173.

Guo, Wen. 2023. "Institutional entrepreneurship through network governance: a social network analysis of NEA's creative placemaking national initiative." *Cultural Trends* 32(5): 490-512.

Lebo, Matthew J. 2016. "Managing Your Research Pipeline" *American Political Science Association*.

Murteza, Noor. 2023 "A walk in the park: Towards developing a fractal pedagogy of well-being." *Visual Inquiry: Learning and Teaching Art* 13(1): 49 – 66.

Murteza, Noor. *In Review*. "Curriculum Co-design: How to Create an Innovative Fractal Curriculum Toolkit."

Zhu, Biyun and Xuefei Li. 2024. "Transformational governance framework for institutions of cultural diplomacy: the case of the Chinese Confucius Institute." *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 30(4): 491-510.

Zhu, Biyun and Margaret Wyszomirski. 2022. "Designing cultural diplomacy policy: structuring a flagship mechanism." *Cultural Trends* 29(5): 558-575.

Dissertation Proposal Documents: Wen Guo, Noor Murteza, Hannah Wohl, Biyun Zhu.

University and Departmental Documents

Department of Arts Administration, Education, and Policy. *Appointments, Promotion, and Tenure Criteria and Procedures*.

The Ohio State University College of Arts and Sciences. *Promotion and Tenure External Evaluator College Approval Process*.

The American Sociological Association. *Counting Invisible Workload: A Resource for Faculty from Underserved Communities*

Recommended & Supplementary Readings

Dissertations

Guo, Wen. 2019. *A Policy-change Perspective on "Creative Placemaking": The Role of the NEA in the American Arts and Culture-based Urban Revitalization from 1965 to 1995*. PhD Dissertation, The Ohio State University.

Murteza, Noor. 2024. *Developing a Fractal Mindset: Leveraging the biophilic effects of nature in a community-engaged action research study*. PhD Dissertation, The Ohio State University.

Wohl, Hannah. 2017. *Creative Visions: Innovation and Style in the Production of Contemporary Art*. PhD Dissertation, Department of Sociology, Northwestern University.

Zhu, Biyun. 2021. *Cultural Diplomacy as National Strategy: A Comparative Study of Cultural Diplomacy Flagships Through A Multi-Level Design Framework*. PhD Dissertation, The Ohio State University.

Assignments (Rubrics available on Carmen):

Participation in Class Discussions, IRB Certification, & Office Hours Visit

Students will be active participators in course discussions, having read and prepared themselves for each class session. Students are required to come to the instructor's office hours at least once. Additionally, students are required to complete OSU's IRB ethics courses online, a prerequisite to conducting independent research; proof of completion of these modules is due by September 18th on Carmen as part of the participation grade.

Leading Class (4)

Each student will be required to lead class, in pairs or trios, each week after the first week of class. The student-led portion of class should be around 90 minutes and should focus on, rather than on content alone, addressing the readings with a specific focus on what the readings tell us about how a proposal, dissertation, or published writing can teach us about how to plan, propose, execute, and publish scholarly research. Class leaders should build in discussions or activities to support student learning and development of these skills in the classroom. Students will sign up for their presentation weeks during the first class. While student class leaders are responsible for generating discussion about the readings, all students should come prepared to substantively contribute to the discussion.

Research Process Memos (6)

Students will write six research process memos (RPMs) throughout the semester. These memos should fully address the prompt as directed on Carmen. **NOTE:** For your RPM 2, due October 9th, you will need to have already met with your dissertation advisor, confirmed with them that they are willing to serve as your dissertation advisor, and explicitly discuss their expectations for your dissertation proposal, a timeline for completion of the proposal, and any other expectations that you each hold of one another. *Please submit writing in docx format.*

Peer Review & Response Memos (3)

In class, we will learn how to be empathetic critical reviewers of scholarly writing. Critique and peer review are key to writing in a scholarly community and making a contribution through research. Students will peer review each other's writing drafts via Carmen, providing substantive critique, comments, and suggestions for relevant ideas that will help the writer improve the substance and style of their work. Once students have received their peer review comments, they will draft a one-page or less memo detailing if and how they plan to address substantive comments. Peer reviewers should complete their review by Monday at midnight (unless they make other arrangements with the person whose work they are reviewing) to allow the writer time to think about the critique and write a response memo before the beginning of the next class session. The instructor will also provide peer review in this format, on the same document by Monday at midnight unless other arrangements are made. *Please submit writing in docx format.*

Dissertation Proposal Draft

The final assignment is to write a complete draft of your dissertation according to the university, department, and advisor guidelines that you have come to understand throughout the semester. *Please submit writing in docx format. Due December 11th by 11:59 PM*

How do the assignments align with course objectives?

	Understand the dissertation and proposal process	Conceive of & develop your planned scholarly contribution	Build a scholarly community	Grade %
PARTICIPATION	X		X	20%
LEADING CLASS (4)	X		X	20%
RESEARCH PROCESS MEMOS (6)	X	X		30%
PEER REVIEW AND RESPONSE MEMOS (3)		X	X	15%
DISSERTATION PROPOSAL		X		15%

OSU Grading Scale:

	A (93%-100%)	A- (90% - 92%)
B+ (87%-89%)	B (83% - 86%)	B- (80% - 83%)
C+ (77% - 79%)	C (73% - 76%)	C- (70% - 72%)
D+ (67% - 69%)	D (63% - 66%)	E (62% - 0%)

Course Schedule

Course schedule is subject to change with notice from instructor. Please submit writing in docx format.

Date	Theme	Readings	Assignments
August 28	How Dissertations and Proposals Fit into Scholarly Communities	University and Department Guidelines	
September 4	Class will not meet due to STP&A Conference		
<p>In lieu of this class meeting, you are required to attend at least one session of the Barnett Symposium or GRAE. Within one week after the Barnett Symposium or GRAE, submit 3-5 bullet points in Carmen (Assignment: "Research Community Event Generative Thoughts") about how the event relates to your research or other generative thoughts related to your dissertation that have come up for you since the beginning of the semester.</p>			
September 11	Getting Started with Your Proposal Lauren Pace Class Visit (1:15 PM)	Foss & Waters 1 – 4 Wohl Dissertation Proposal	Research Process Memo 1
September 18	Content, Theory, & Method	Foss & Waters 6 Wohl 2021	Case Context Ethics Training Certificates Due

September 25	Literature Reviews	Foss & Waters 5 Literature Review vs. Annotated Bibliography: What's the Difference? Murteza Dissertation Proposal Murteza 2023, Murteza <i>In Review</i>	Case Context Peer Review & Response Memo
October 2	Data Collection and Analysis	Foss & Waters 7 Guo Dissertation Proposal Guo 2021, 2023	
October 9	Format & Contributions	Foss & Waters 8 Zhu Dissertation Proposal Zhu and Li 2024, Zhu and Wyszomirski 2022	Research Process Memo 2
October 16	Fall Break – Class Will Not Meet		
October 23	Writing & Revising	Foss & Waters 9	Theory (added to edited Case Context)
October 30	Bureaucracy & Presenting Your Work	Foss & Waters 10	Theory Peer Review & Response Memo
November 6	Advising	Foss & Waters 11	Research Process Memo 3
November 13	Executing your plan & Enacting Your Role	Foss & Waters 12 Noy 2024 Introduction – 6	
November 20	Where Do We Go from Here? Writing Habits, Processes, and Practices Class Visit from Dr. Shiri Noy	Noy 2024 7 – Conclusion	Research Design (added to edited Case Context & Theory)
November 27	Thanksgiving Break – Class will not meet		
December 4	The Dissertation's Role in Scholarly Careers & The Publication Pipeline	Lebo 2016 Foss & Waters 13 <i>AAEP Appointments, Promotion, and Tenure Criteria and Procedures</i> <i>OSU ASC Promotion and Tenure External Evaluator College Approval Process</i> <i>ASA Counting Invisible Workload: A Resource for Faculty from Underserved Communities</i>	Research Design Peer Review & Response Memo

Final writing due December 11th by 11:59 PM

Proposal should be submitted in Carmen and submitted to your dissertation advisor via email, cc'ing me with the body of the email describing the following:

- *What progress you made on the proposal during the semester.*
- *What feedback you would like from your advisor at this time.*
- *A proposed timeline for revising the proposal and scheduling a dissertation proposal defense meeting.*

Course Policies

Attendance: Attendance is a requirement of this course, and there will be no make-up sessions if you are absent. If there are any course slides or supplemental materials, they will be posted on Carmen within 24 hours after course meetings, and you may speak with your peers to clarify any missed material. Our class only meets once per week, so each absence is a full missed week of class. Please reach out to me via email if there are extenuating circumstances that you think should be an exception from this policy.

IF YOU ARE EXHIBITING SIGNS OF ILLNESS, DO NOT COME TO CLASS.

Late Work: Late work will be accepted but penalized 10% per day it is late. You will not be prompted to turn in late work, and work that is 10 days late or more will receive 0 points.

Academic Misconduct: It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct <http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>.

Technology in the Classroom: While taking this class, you must behave in a way that demonstrates respect for faculty and students and that supports the learning environment of all students. Therefore, laptops should be used only for tasks directly related to the class. During class time, computers, cellular phones, and other internet-enabled devices may not be used to check email, browse the Internet, or conduct work for other classes. Such behavior distracts other students and interferes with the faculty member’s ability to teach. All laptops and other devices will be off when there are guest speakers. Cell phones should only be used during the seminar break. You are expected to turn-off or disable notifications to their devices that would distract from the learning environment, whether meeting in-person or via Zoom. No recording is permitted unless agreed upon with the instructor in advance.

Chat GPT and Other AI Use: Artificial intelligence (AI) language models, such as ChatGPT, may be used to a limited extent with (i) appropriate citation and (ii) an explanatory note submitted by the student at the same time as submitting the assignment for which it was used to course faculty detailing the student’s intent for using the AI in relation to the assignment and the prompts that the student utilized. If utilized, AI is to serve as one tool to the student, not as a substitute for the student’s own critical thinking, research, writing, and presenting, etc. If you are in doubt as to whether you are using AI language models appropriately in this seminar, I encourage you to discuss your situation with me. You are responsible for fact checking statements composed by AI language models. All proposal writing will be scanned by TurnItIn.

Plagiarism: Copying/claiming someone else’s words, ideas, or works (i.e., essays, term papers, in part or in full) as your own is considered plagiarism. A proper reference style should be used when using words or ideas of other people. Suspected cases of plagiarism will be reported immediately to the Committee on Academic Misconduct. The Committee regards academic misconduct as an extremely serious matter, with serious consequences that range from probation to expulsion. All proposal writing will be scanned by TurnItIn. *If in doubt, credit your source.* Be sure to consult the course instructor if you have questions about plagiarism, paraphrasing, quoting, or collaboration. Consider using a citation manager like Zotero or Mendeley—using it now will help you immensely during graduate school and beyond in your writing and citation practices!

Disability Services:

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office of Student Life Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office of Student Life Disability Services is located in 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; slds@osu.edu

The SLDS has additional policies and resources related to the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on their services. These additional policies can be found on Carmen in the file titled SLDS COVID-19.

Title IX Information: Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories (e.g., race). If you or someone you know has been sexually harassed or assaulted, you may find the appropriate resources at <http://titleix.osu.edu> or by contacting the Ohio State Title IX Coordinator, Kellie Brennan, at titleix@osu.edu

Diversity Statement: The Ohio State University affirms the importance and value of diversity in the student body. Our programs and curricula reflect our multicultural society and global economy and seek to provide opportunities for students to learn more about persons who are different from them. We are committed to maintaining a community that recognizes and values the inherent worth and dignity of every person; fosters sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect among each member of our community; and encourages each individual to strive to reach his or her own potential. Discrimination against any individual based upon protected status, which is defined as age, color, disability, gender identity or expression, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status, is prohibited.

Religious Accommodations: Ohio State has had a longstanding practice of making reasonable academic accommodations for students' religious beliefs and practices in accordance with applicable law. In 2023, Ohio State updated its practice to align with new state legislation. Under this new provision, students must be in early communication with their instructors regarding any known accommodation requests for religious beliefs and practices, providing notice of specific dates for which they request alternative accommodations within 14 days after the first instructional day of the seminar. Instructors in turn shall not question the sincerity of a student's religious or spiritual belief system in reviewing such requests and shall keep requests for accommodations confidential.

With sufficient notice, instructors will provide students with reasonable alternative accommodations with regard to examinations and other academic requirements with respect to students' sincerely held religious beliefs and practices by allowing up to three absences each semester for the student to attend or participate in religious activities. Examples of religious accommodations can include, but are not limited to, rescheduling an exam, altering the time of a student's presentation, allowing make-up assignments to substitute for missed class work, or flexibility in due dates or research responsibilities. If concerns arise about a requested accommodation, instructors are to consult their tenure initiating unit head for assistance.

A student's request for time off shall be provided if the student's sincerely held religious belief or practice severely affects the student's ability to take an exam or meet an academic requirement and the student has notified their instructor, in writing during the first 14 days after the seminar begins, of the date of each absence. Although students are required to provide notice within the first 14 days after a seminar begins, instructors are strongly encouraged to work with the student to provide a reasonable accommodation if a request is made outside the notice period. A student may not be penalized for an absence approved under this policy.

If students have questions or disputes related to academic accommodations, they should contact their seminar instructor, and then their department or college office. For questions or to report discrimination or harassment based on religion, individuals should contact the **Office of Institutional Equity**.

Policy: Religious Holidays, Holy Days and Observances

Mental Health Services: As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily activities. The Ohio State University offers services to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing. If you or someone you know are suffering from any of the aforementioned conditions, you can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the **Office of Student Life's Counseling and Consultation Service (CCS)** by visiting ccs.osu.edu or calling 614-292-5766. CCS is located on the 4th Floor of the Younkin Success Center and 10th Floor of Lincoln Tower. You can reach an on-call counselor when CCS is closed at 614-292-5766 and 24 hour emergency help is also available through the 24/7 National Suicide Prevention Hotline at 1-800-273-TALK or at suicidepreventionlifeline.org.

We are all doing a hard thing, so let's all do our best and be kind to ourselves and to one another.