

This seminar is required for second-year students in the urban studies Ph.D. and Master of Urban Studies programs. Students will apply their substantive background and methodological training to develop a research proposal: statement of focused research question, development of a theoretical/conceptual model, literature review, development of hypotheses, appropriate methodology, design of data acquisition strategy. The seminar is intended to gauge whether you are capable of succeeding in the Urban Studies graduate program. To successfully complete the seminar, students are expected to demonstrate the following competencies:

- Ability to find relevant literature
- Ability to prepare a critical literature review that synthesizes and objectively examines the merits and faults of the existing literature
- Ability to define a meaningful research question, grounded in the literature and theory
- Ability to select an appropriate methodology for the research question and to show understanding of the advantages and limitations of the research approach/methods chosen
- Ability to identify relevant sources of data or information and to discuss their benefits and disadvantages
- Ability to develop a plan for carrying out the chosen method(s), including anticipating obstacles and obtaining Human Subjects approval
- Ability to present research in a format that is suitable for a peer-review journal
- Ability to present research effectively in an oral format

In addition to these serious and important objectives, we will spend time discussing more “practical” aspects of your graduate program, including selecting and working with committees, the journal review process, your curriculum vitae, work habits, career management, and more.

We will draw upon articles as well as this book: Locke, Spirduso, and Silverman, *Proposals that Work*, 5th edition, Sage Publications, 2007. (abbreviated PTW on schedule)

Grading:

- Final Research Proposal (75%)
- Three Minute Thesis presentation (10%)
- Active participation, including in-class & interim assignments (15%)

Week	Main Topics	Assignments	Reading (complete before class)
1: 9/29	Introductions Research Questions		
2: 10/6	Theoretical Framework and Conceptual Models	Bring a draft conceptual model (paper copies to share)	PTW Chapter 1, 3 Earp, JA and Ennett, ST (1991). "Conceptual models for health education research and practice". <i>Health education research</i> , 6 (2), p. 163. Carpiano, R M and Daley, DM (2006). "A guide and glossary on postpositivist theory building for population health". <i>Journal of epidemiology and community health</i> , 60 (7), p. 564.

Week	Main Topics	Assignments	Reading (complete before class)
3: 10/13 (move to 10/10?)	Analyzing research approaches Literature reviews <i>Bibliographic software;</i> <i>Reference styles</i>	Bring a summary of a scholarly article that relates to your topic: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the question? • Why is it important? • What is the theory/model? • Methods • Limitations 	PTW Chapter 4 Boote, DN and Beile, P, "Scholars Before Researchers: On the Centrality of the Dissertation Literature Review in Research Preparation," <i>Educational Researcher</i> , 34(6): 3-15.
4: 10/20	Refining research questions Exploring other disciplines <i>Committees</i>	Bring a re-draft of your model, with your research question(s) (follow format of Table 3.1) Look at a dissertation in your field, bring your observations to class	Articles for your literature review
5: 10/27	Moving from research question(s) and conceptual model to appropriate methods <i>Methods courses</i> <i>Work habits</i>	Interim Draft: Introduction, purpose/rationale, question(s), conceptual model, literature review	PTW Chapter 5
6: 11/3	No class meeting. Instead: (1) Meet in small groups to discuss feedback; (2) Meet with your advisor/potential chair to discuss your topic	Written review of another student's interim draft (one page). Use Table 1 in Boote & Beile.	Markusen, Ann (1999). "Fuzzy Concepts, Scanty Evidence, Policy Distance: The Case for Rigour and Policy Relevance in Critical Regional Studies". <i>Regional studies (0034-3404)</i> , 33 (9), p. 869. Shearmur, Richard (2010). "Editorial—A World Without Data? The Unintended Consequences of Fashion in Geography". <i>Urban geography</i> , 31 (8), p. 1009.
7: 11/10	Writing and Presenting <i>Conferences; Journal review process;</i> <i>Networking</i>	Interim draft: Methodology	PTW Chapter 6, 7 Boice, Robert (1989). "Procrastination, busyness and bingeing". <i>Behaviour research and therapy</i> , 27 (6), p. 605. <i>Recommended:</i> Mokhtarian's Writing Tips and Traps Forsyth, A (1999). "On writing and tenure". <i>Journal of planning education and research</i> , 19 (2), p. 164.
8: 11/17	Developing a data collection and analysis plan Human Subjects	Written review of another student's interim draft (one page) (3-minute thesis practice and feedback (in-class)	PTW Chapter 2
9: Holiday			
10: 12/1	Pulling it all together; Research limitations; What will your research lead to? <i>Your career ahead</i>	Oral report on data reconnaissance	
TBA	3-minute Thesis Presentations to faculty and students		
11: 12/8		Final Research Proposal due	