



# Reporting Sociological Research



SYA5516, Spring 2009

11–12:15, Tuesday  
in 517 Bellamy

11–12:15, Thursday  
in Pepper computer lab

Instructor: Dr. John Reynolds, 223 Pepper Center Bldg, 644-4321, [john.reynolds@fsu.edu](mailto:john.reynolds@fsu.edu)

Office Hours: Wednesday, 9 to noon; *call first to verify I'm not in another meeting*

Web page: We will regular use the course Blackboard site at <http://campus.fsu.edu>.

## Course Description

In this course, students “edit each others’ work, discuss critiques in working sessions, revise drafts, and arrive at a final revision of their master’s research paper” (departmental web page, 12-12-2008). The course meets Tuesdays and Thursdays with each day serving a different function. Tuesdays we will meet in Bellamy to work on general skills and discuss topics related to communicating your sociological research to broader audiences. In this venue students will seek input from classmates in regards to the best characterization of their papers’ findings, make 15- to 20-minute presentations of their research (in preparation for professional conferences), seek and address additional feedback to prepare completed papers for publication, and complete applications for paper competitions. We will also review an anonymous article submitted to a journal or a conference. Thursdays are in-class writing days that take place in the computer classroom in the Pepper Center Building. On those days you will have the opportunity to consult with the instructor and/or other students on parts of the text with which you may be struggling. Course grades are “Satisfactory” or “Unsatisfactory.”

## Course Learning Objectives

Students successfully completing SYA 5516 will be/have:

1. Have completed the master’s research paper requirement.
2. Have made significant progress in developing a paper to be submitted for publication.
3. Have identified research paper competitions for which they are eligible, if applicable.
4. Be proficient at offering constructive feedback on peers’ scholarly projects.
5. Be prepared to present their research at a department brownbag or professional conference.

## Required Texts and Materials

Locke, Lawrence F., Waneen Wyrick Spirduso, and Stephen J. Silverman. 2007. *Proposals That Work: A Guide for Planning Dissertations and Grant Proposals*, 5<sup>th</sup> edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. ISBN: 978-1412924238.

## Grading

Students who attend, write, present their research in a professional format, and give/respond to feedback will receive a grade of Satisfactory. A course grade of Unsatisfactory will be assigned in the unlikely event that a student has more than two unexcused absences, does not make weekly progress on their research papers, or turns in plagiarized work.

## **Course Requirements**

1. Regularly post revisions to your papers in progress on Blackboard.
2. Provide constructive feedback to classmates when requested. The point of commenting on your colleagues' work is to take what you think is the most important limitation and offer a concrete solution on how to address this limitation.
3. Present your research to the class in a 15 to 20 minute presentation. Prepare for the presentation as if it was for a professional conference or a job talk – use the principles of good presentations that we learned last semester and culled from listening to job candidates.
4. Attend every class. However, in recognition that external demands make attendance impossible sometimes, you can miss two class meetings without an official excuse. Students missing class due to attending professional conferences still must submit their weekly progress or activity via Blackboard. Repeated absences and failure to apply steady effort to your writing may result in a grade of **Unsatisfactory**. Students will be forewarned if they are at risk of receiving this grade.
5. Submit a plan of action (goals and deadlines) at the beginning of the semester, and follow-up with a self-assessment of progress made at the end of the semester.

## **Food and Drink Policy**

Feel free to bring your lunch to class when we meet in Bellamy on Tuesdays, or bring snacks to share with your classmates. No food or drinks are allowed in the Pepper Center Computer Lab.

## **Other Information**

### Americans with Disabilities Act

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should: (1) register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center; and (2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type. For more information about services for FSU students with disabilities, contact Student Disability Resource Center, 08 Kellum Hall, Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL 32306-4400, (850) 644-9506 (voice), (850) 644-8504 (TDD).

### Academic Honor Policy

This course will uphold FSU's Honor Policy (<http://academichonor.fsu.edu/policy/policy.html>) that is based on the premise that each student makes a commitment to avoid any violation of academic integrity and refuses to tolerate violations of academic integrity committed by other students.

## Course Calendar

(Topics and topic sequence subject to change depending on student needs.)

Reading assignment: Beginning the second week of class, read one chapter of Lock et al.'s *Proposals that Work* per week until you get to Chapters 8 and 9 – spend two weeks each on these longer chapters. Though the weekly readings may not necessarily come up in every class, it is very important that you read the assigned text. The guidelines in it pertain to almost all research-based writing, and the material specific to writing grant proposals will be very important when it comes time to work on your dissertation proposal.

**Jan. 8** – Course introduction, map out and submit semester goals, sign up for presentation dates. Assigned reading = article by Johanson in Bb Course Library, photocopied memo by Barbara Reskin.

**Thursdays for rest of semester** – In-class writing time (not email or data analysis) in Pepper Computer Lab.

**Jan. 13, 15** – Tuesday: identifying additional readers of your papers to improve publication and award prospects; guidelines on peer-review. Assignment = Review anonymous article in Course Library, submit your written review to Blackboard by January 26. Assigned reading = Locke Chapter 1.

**Jan. 20, 22** – Tuesday: writing and revising workshop; intensively editing the introduction for a paper in progress by Reynolds and Johnson. Assigned reading = Locke Chapter 2.

**Jan. 23** – Last day to apply online at <http://registrar.fsu.edu/services/graduation/apdefault.htm> for Spring 2009 Graduation. If you would like to walk in the graduation ceremonies this spring and think you may complete your master's degree requirements by the end of the semester, apply for graduation.

**Jan. 27, 29** – Tuesday: workshop on peer-reviewing articles. Assigned reading = Locke Chapter 3.

**Feb. 3, 5** – Tuesday: class presentation or topic TBA\*. Assigned reading = Locke Chapter 4.

**Feb. 10, 12** – Tuesday: class presentation or topic TBA. Assigned reading = Locke Chapter 5.

**Feb. 17, 19** – Tuesday: choosing potential publication outlets. Assigned reading = Locke Chapter 6.

**Feb. 24, 26** – Tuesday: class presentation or topic TBA. Assigned reading = Locke Chapter 7.

**March 3, 5** – Tuesday: class presentation or topic TBA. No assigned reading this week. If your master's paper is at a level of completion to where it might be competitive for the Department's Klar-Allen Best Research Paper Award, submit it to Prof. Brewster.

**March 8, 10** – *No class, Spring Break*

**March 15, 17** – Tuesday: second half of article reviewing workshop. Assigned reading = 1<sup>st</sup> half of Locke Chapter 8.

**March 22, 24** – Tuesday: class presentation or topic TBA. Assigned reading = 2<sup>nd</sup> half of Locke Chapter 8.

**March 31, April 2** – Tuesday: class presentation or topic TBA. Assigned reading = 1<sup>st</sup> half of Locke Chapter 9. (Note: The Southern Sociological Society meetings are April 1-4 in New Orleans.)

**April 7, 9** – Tuesday: finalizing potential paper award competitions and getting submissions ready. Assigned reading = 2<sup>nd</sup> half of Locke Chapter 9.

**April 14, 16** – Tuesday: class presentation or topic TBA. No assigned reading this week.

**April 19, 21** – Tuesday: class presentation or topic TBA. Turn into Blackboard the self-assessment of the progress you made this semester.

**May 2** – Spring Commencement at the Civic Center, 9:00 a.m. (if you have completed the MA degree reqs.)

\* **TBA topics** – include assessing the readability of your writing, sociology dissertations at FSU (format, # of pages, # of references), “hooks” and # of references in published articles, guest speakers on academic & non-academic writing, the peer-review process, opportunities for awards/recognition, and scholarly presentations

