

Animal Studies Capstone Seminar

Spring 2019



Description

In this seminar, Animal Studies M.A. students pursue intensive self-directed projects with the support of their instructor, peers, and project advisor. This project can be a research paper, policy proposal, or artistic project that explores central themes in Animal Studies in an original and rigorous way. Students secure a project advisor either prior to or during this seminar. They then select a project topic in consultation with their advisor and instructor, and they develop a polished draft of this project by the end of the semester. This seminar provides students with support in defining the projects and tools for pursuing them appropriately. This includes asking insightful research questions, defining research topics, scoping a research or artistic literature, and writing and communicating the results or final project clearly and persuasively. This is an individualized class, and students will have ample opportunity to develop and present works in progress.

General Information

- Time: M 5–7:30
- Place: TISC LC4
- Email: jeffsebo@nyu.edu
- Office: 285 Mercer Street #908
- Office hours: W 3:30-5:30pm

Readings

The required book is Kate Turabian & Wayne Booth, *A manual for writers*, 9th edition (hereafter MW). This book is available at many online retailers. All other readings will be made available on NYU Classes or online.

Grading

Your grades will be determined as follows:

- **Weekly Assignments** (15%): Starting 2/4, each week you will complete a short assignment related to the topic of discussion for that week. You will then post your assignment on NYU Classes. These posts are due no later than 10:00am the day of class, and will be graded Pass/Fail.
- **Weekly Research** (15%): Starting 2/4, each week you will select two scholarly articles related to your project topic and write a 250 word summary of each. You will then post these summaries on NYU Classes. These summaries are due no later than 4:30pm the day of class, and will be graded Pass/Fail.
- **Presentation 1** (15%): You will select a date to give a 30 minute class presentation. You will share a 2,500 word draft via the Messages tab on NYU Classes no later than 5 days in advance (i.e. the prior Wednesday). In class, you will distribute a 1-2 page handout. You will then spend 10 minutes discussing the current state of your draft and 20 minutes taking questions and comments from the group.
- **Presentation 2** (15%): You will give a 10 minute presentation to the department during class on 5/6. Specifically, you will give a 5 minute Powerpoint presentation that expresses your main idea in a clear, concise, and engaging manner for a general audience. You will then spend 5 minutes taking questions.
- **Project Draft** (30%): You will complete a draft of your M.A. project and submit it on NYU Classes by the end of the day on 5/12. The draft should be at least 5,000 words (or the equivalent), and should be completed in a manner appropriate for the field and medium of choice.
- **Attendance and Participation** (10%): I expect regular attendance and thoughtful participation from all students throughout the semester, and especially during class presentations.

Policies

- **Late Papers/Extensions/Incompletes**: Late papers will lose 1/3 letter grade for each day late. Late WA and WR assignments will be accepted for half credit up until the start of class. Extensions and incompletes will be granted only in exceptional circumstances. If you want to request either, please do so in advance.
- **Academic Dishonesty**: Plagiarism results in failure in the class and referral to an academic dean. Plagiarism includes: copying sentences or fragments from any source without quotes or references; not citing every source used in your papers; citing internet information without proper citation; presenting someone else's work as your own; or copying verbatim from any source. You are subject to the CAS guidelines on plagiarism: cas.nyu.edu/page/ug.academicintegrity.
- **Academic Accommodations**: Academic accommodations are available to any student with a chronic, psychological, visual, mobility, learning disability, or who is deaf or hard of hearing. Students should please register with the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at 212-998-4980.

NYU Henry and Lucy Moses Center for Students with Disabilities
726 Broadway, 2nd Floor
New York, NY 10003-6675
Voice/TTY Fax: 212-995-4114
Web site: <http://www.nyu.edu/csd>

Schedule

- **1/28 - Introduction**
 - Reading: MW, “What research is and how researchers think about it”
 - No assignment
- **2/4 - Project topic**
 - Reading: MW, “Defining a project: topic, question, problem, working hypothesis”
 - Assignment: Come up with two possible topics for an M.A. project. For each topic, write 250 words about what question you would be asking and how you would be attempting to answer it.
- **2/11 - Literature review**
 - Reading: MW, “Finding useful sources,” “Engaging your sources”
 - Assignment: For each M.A. project idea, create a 10 item bibliography of sources that you would consult. These bibliographies can overlap as appropriate.
- **2/25 - Research methodology**
 - Reading: John Cresswell, “Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches”
 - Assignment: For each M.A. project idea, write 250 words on your expected research methods. These research methods can overlap as appropriate.
- **3/4 - Professional engagement**
 - Reading: Benjamin Todd, “All the best advice we could find on how to get a job” (online)
 - Assignment: Prepare an updated resume / curriculum vitae and a 250 word author bio, in a style appropriate for your field of choice.
- **3/11 - Public engagement**
 - Reading: Mira Sucharov, “Writing an effective op-ed,” “Striking an effective online voice”
 - Assignment: Write a 500 word op-ed about your topic. You are welcome to discuss your research on this topic or another aspect of this topic, as appropriate.
- **3/25 - Presenting**
 - Reading: MW, “Presenting research in alternative forums”
 - Assignment: Prepare and submit a 5 minute / 5 slide Powerpoint presentation about your topic. You are welcome to discuss your research on this topic or another aspect of this topic, as appropriate.
- **4/1 - Writing**
 - Reading: MW, “Constructing your argument,” “Drafting your paper”
 - Assignment: Write a 500 word summary of your project. Include your thesis statement, all major points that you plan to make, and how you plan to support these points.
- **4/8 - Controversy**
 - Reading: Sandra Harding, “Standpoint epistemology,” Mira Sucharov, “Political debate”
 - Assignment: Write a 500 word summary and analysis of a controversy in a field related to your work. Include one or more links to articles about this controversy in your submission.
- **4/15 - Revising**
 - MW, “Revising your draft,” “Learning from comments on your paper”
 - Assignment: Write a revised and expanded 1000 word summary of your project, along with a revised and expanded 20 item bibliography for your project.

- **4/22 - Class presentations**
 - Reading: Four student works in progress
 - Assignment: Write at least two questions or constructive comments on each of the four works in progress distributed for this week, and come to class prepared to discuss them.
- **4/29 - Class presentations**
 - Reading: Four student works in progress
 - Assignment: Write at least two questions or constructive comments on each of the four works in progress distributed for this week, and come to class prepared to discuss them.
- **5/6 - Department presentations**
 - No reading
 - Assignment: Prepare a polished 5 minute Powerpoint presentation on your project.
- **5/13 - Conclusion**
 - No reading
 - Assignment: Submit a polished draft of your project by the end of the day on 5/12.