

Anthropology 391 (31505)

Research and Grant Proposal Writing

Monday 9:00-12:00 PM, SAC 5.124

Professor Circe Sturm

Office: SAC 5.122 (232-1561), circe@austin.utexas.edu

Office Hours: Wednesdays 2:00-4:00 PM

Course Description

This graduate seminar is designed to teach research proposal writing skills that are needed to secure external funding. The overall course objective is to complete a fundable research proposal by the end of the semester. Students will draft a grant that follows an expanded National Science Foundation Model. Therefore, the course is best suited for graduate students in anthropology who have a clear research project in mind and are approximately a year away from applying for external funding. Advanced graduate students in other disciplines can enroll in the course, but only with special permission from the instructor. Over the course of the semester, students will identify and approach funding sources, produce a proposal with all necessary components—including a problem statement, literature review, theoretical framework, methodology and bibliography—learn to critique their own proposals and those of others, work with partners, and formally present their research to the class.

Requirements

Because the course is organized around weekly writing assignments, preparation and time management are essential. Writing assignments must be done on time and brought to each class meeting. Expect to constantly write and revise. As a general rule, late assignments will not be accepted. Assignments will be due at the beginning of class and there will be no incompletes or time extensions, except in the case of documented emergencies. If you cannot keep up with the intensive writing expectations, then you should drop the class and retake it another semester.

You are also required to submit a one-page bibliography during the first week of the semester. This bibliography will consist of a list of books, articles and chapters that are relevant to your research topic. The bibliography may include readings that you have already completed as well as ones you plan to read this semester. The bibliography will become your required reading for the class, and it must be regularly updated and revised as the semester progresses. Students should also arrive with questions and ideas and be prepared to discuss the components of their research proposals in class. If you are having difficulty with any of the topics presented in class, then it is your responsibility to meet with other students or to attend my office hours to clarify course materials. Please use these opportunities to your advantage. I will also set up individual meetings with each of you, and will expect you to come to these meetings with previously prepared questions.

You are required to complete two proposals: one that is an in-class version, another that is a formal funding agency version. The final “class” version will follow the sequence on the research proposal components (RPC) handout, and will be no longer than 10 pages, single-spaced with 2-inch margins. The “agency” version will be based on the class version but will be put together according to the requirements of the specific funding agency you have identified. You will need to obtain application forms from the funding agency early in the semester, though many of these are now available online. Please note that the weekly class assignments follow a different sequence from that which is outlined in the RPC handout. This difference serves a pedagogical purpose.

Writing assignments are due on the date indicated in the course schedule below. Make a copy of the assignment for yourself and the instructor. If you are doing an in-class presentation, then also bring additional copies for each of the seminar participants.

The scale for final grades is such that 90 to 100% = A; 80 to 89% = B; 70 to 79% = C; 60 to 69% = D; 59% and below = F.

You will be evaluated on the basis of your weekly writing assignments (40%); the final two research proposals (40%); and active participation in classroom presentations and discussions (20%). Since this is a seminar, students must be prepared to exchange ideas and to engage one another in the classroom setting, in addition to having writing assignments completed on time.

Documented Disability Statement

Any student with a documented disability who requires academic accommodations should contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at (512) 471-6259 (voice) or 1-866-329-3986 (video phone), <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>. Faculty are not required to provide accommodations without an official accommodation letter from SSD. Please notify me as early in the semester as possible if disability-related accommodations are required to ensure your full participation in the course.

Accommodations for Religious Holidays

By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

Changes to Course Syllabus

I reserve the right to change or amend the course syllabus as necessary, primarily due to any unforeseen circumstances that may arise during the course of the semester.

Course Schedule

- Jan. 23 **Introduction and Aims of the Course**
- Jan. 30 **Posing Research Questions**
DUE: 6-10 pp. (double-spaced) trial draft of the entire proposal
- Feb. 6 **Modeling Hypotheses**
DUE: 1 p. statement of the research question(s), 1 page bibliography of relevant literature
- Feb. 13 **Designing Research Methods**
DUE: 1 page statement of the hypothetical answer(s) to the research question(s). Include a separate list of variables and terms.
- Feb. 20 **Reviewing the Scholarly Literature**
DUE: 3 pp. statement of research methods, including data gathering instruments, procedures, tests, population selection, interview techniques, methods for evaluations of findings, and previous research experience.
- Feb. 27 **Making the Case for Project Need and Significance**
DUE: 3 pp. literature review
- Mar. 5 **Theoretical Innovations: Arguing Your Own Take**
DUE: 1-3 pp. statement of need and significance. 1-2 paragraph statement about why your research is needed, and a 1-2 paragraph statement about the significance of your project. Call or e-mail research official of funding agency to make a preliminary inquiry
- Mar. 12 NO CLASS, Spring Break
- Mar. 19 **Abstracts: Economy and Impact**
DUE: 3 pp. statement of theory. Explain relationships among variables and plausibility of answers to research questions. Connect theory to gaps in previous research (found in literature review).
- Mar. 26 **Creating a Professional Curriculum Vitae (CV)**
DUE: 1/2 page abstract, 1 page budget and justification, 1 page time-table.
- Apr. 2 **Presenting Your Research, Public Speaking**
DUE: 1 page CV and full length CV. Follow-up with funding agency, if needed.
- Apr. 9 NO CLASS, Invited Lecture at Michigan. Individual meetings scheduled for later in the week.
- Apr. 16 **Presentations of Proposals**
- Apr. 23 **Presentations of Proposals**

Apr. 30 **Presentations of Proposals**
DUE: Final “In-Class” proposal

May. 7 DUE: Final “Funding Agency” proposal