Professional Development and Career Seminar

SOCI 995B
Spring (Jan 18, 2022 – May 13, 2022)
Wednesday 11:30 AM – 12:20 PM
Oldfather Hall 707
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Professor: Dr. Jeffrey A. Smith
Office: 724 Oldfather Hall
Email: jsmith77@unl.edu
Office Hours: Tuesday 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM, Wednesday 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM or by appointment
(office hours in person or via Zoom: https://unl.zoom.us/s/136239647)

Course Description
This is a one-credit course covering professional development and socialization into the field of Sociology. We will cover department culture and expectations, as well as more general aspects to having a successful graduate experience. We will also discuss how to prepare for a long-term career (academic or non-academic). Class meetings will be discussion based, covering key topics and readings. This course is designed to provide you with the basic information you will need to be successful in the UNL Sociology graduate program. It is also designed to have a broader lens, so that you will become aware of the opportunities and difficulties that come with graduate school, and an academic career more generally. The main learning objects for the course are:

- Review the basic requirements and procedures of the department
- Plan graduate student career
- Become familiar with common pitfalls in graduate school and possible solutions
- Discuss career pathways and strategies to reach goals

Grading
This course is graded as Pass/No Pass. To pass the course you must: a) actively participate in class discussion; b) complete any assignments; and c) attend scheduled departmental events, such as colloquia, job talks and the like. No tests or graded papers will be assigned.

Textbook and Readings

The main readings for each week will be a chapter in the Calarco book. I will also occasionally include additional readings to supplement the book.

Course policies

Academic Misconduct (or Don’t Cheat):
“The Student Code of Conduct applies in its entirety. It addresses various aspects of student conduct in- and outside the classroom. Academic honesty is essential to the existence and
integrity of an academic institution. The responsibility for maintaining that integrity is shared by all members of the academic community. The University's Student Code of Conduct addresses academic dishonesty. Students who commit acts of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary action and are granted due process and the right to appeal any decision. Please visit http://stuafs.unl.edu/ja/code/three.shtml, paying close attention to section 4.2. For additional information about plagiarism as a form of academic dishonesty subject to university regulations and the UNL Student Code of Conduct, please visit http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/integrity#plagiarism.”

Services for Students with Disabilities
“The University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can discuss options privately. To establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD). If you are eligible for services and register with their office, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so they can be implemented in a timely manner. SSD contact information: 232 Canfield Admin. Bldg.; 402-472-3787.”

If you need accommodations it is your responsibility to discuss this with me early on in the semester.

Instructional Continuity
If in-person classes are canceled, you will be notified of the instructional continuity plan for this class by Canvas.

Course Schedule (subject to change)

Week 1: Introduction to the Class (Jan 19)

Week 2: Basic Requirements of the Graduate Program (Jan 26)

Required Readings:

1. Read over Graduate Guidebook, p. 4-12

2. Review: UNL Office of Graduate Studies Steps to Program Completion:

MA: https://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/academics/program-steps/masters-degree-steps-to-completion

PhD: https://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/academics/program-steps/doctoral-degree-steps-to-completion
Week 3: Timing and Expectations of the Graduate Program (Feb 2)

*Required Readings:*

1. Read over Example Timelines (on Canvas)

Week 4: Requirements Continued: Teaching Portfolio, Comprehensive Exams (Feb 9)

*Assignment: Draft of Initial MOC or POS

*Required Readings:*

1. Read over Graduate Guidebook, p. 12-16

Week 5: Graduate Student Awards and Annual Reviews (Feb 16)

*Assignment: Turn in draft of CV

*Required Readings:*

1. Read over Graduate Guidebook, p. 17-21

Week 6: Choosing an Advisor and Assembling a Committee (Feb 23)

*Assignment: Turn in Annual Review Summary Report

*Required Readings:*

1. “Building Your Team”, Ch. 2 in A Field Guide to Grad School

Week 7: Research and Publishing, Part I (Mar 2)

*Assignment: Please hand in a brief summary indicating your progress on finding an advisor. If you have not found an advisor, be explicit on who you are considering.

*Required Readings:*

1. “Doing Research and Finding Funding”, Ch 6 A Field Guide to Grad School
2. “Writing about Your Research” Ch. 7 in A Field Guide to Grad School
Week 8: Research and Publishing, Part II (Mar 9)
*Assignment: Turn in title and description of proposed research for Application for Summer Research Support

*Required Readings:

1. “Publishing and Promoting Your Work”, Ch. 8 in *A Field Guide to Grad School*

Week 9: Spring Break (Mar 16)

Week 10: Conferences and Wider Engagement with the Field (Mar 23)
*Assignment: Make sure Application for Summer Research Support is turned in and signed by department due date

*Required Readings:

1. “Talking about Your Research”, Ch. 9 in *A Field Guide to Grad School*
2. “Going to Conference”, Ch. 10 in *A Field Guide to Grad School*

Week 11: Writing the Thesis and Dissertation (Mar 30)

*Required Readings:

1. Ch 3 in Tom Carsey’s: “Advice about Graduate School, Finding a Job, Reaching Tenure in Political Science and other Social Sciences, and All of the Steps in Between” [on Canvas]
2. Ch 8 in Tom Carsey’s: “Advice about Graduate School, Finding a Job, Reaching Tenure in Political Science and other Social Sciences, and All of the Steps in Between” [on Canvas]

Week 12: Job Market, Part I (Apr 6)

*Required Readings:

1. “Navigating the Job Market”, Ch 11 in *A Field Guide to Grad School*

Week 13: Catch up day (if needed) (Apr 13)

Week 14: Job Market, Part II: Non-academic Focus (Apr 20)

*Required Readings:

Week 15: Dealing with Competing Demands (Apr 27)

Required Readings:

1. “Balancing Teaching, Research, Service and Life”, Ch 12 in *A Field Guide to Grad School*

Week 16: Catch-up Day (if needed) (May 4)