

**SSCI 601b, Population, Health & Place Research
Practicum**

Units: 2

Term — Day — Time: Summer 2020 (Session 050) –
Mondays and Wednesdays – 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Location: Online

Instructor: Elisabeth J. Sedano, J.D., Ph.D.

Office: See Blackboard for URL to virtual office

Regular Office Hours: Wednesdays, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Also available by appointment via email.

Contact Info: sedano@usc.edu, 213-740-9582

Library Help: Andy Rutkowski

Office: VKC 36B

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. and Thursdays,
4:30 to 5:30 p.m., PT.

Contact Info: arutkows@usc.edu, 213-740-6390,
<http://bit.ly/andyhangout>

IT Help: Richard Tsung

Office: AHF 145D

Office Hours: By appointment.

Contact Info: ctsung@usc.edu, 213-821-4415 (office)

Course Description

The overarching goal of this course is to support Ph.D. students in Population, Health and Place (PHP) in developing leadership skills for interdisciplinary research. The Research Practicum is taken over consecutive summers (i.e., this course follows SSCI 601a, taken in the preceding summer). In general, the practicum sequence targets the development of research skills by: (1) providing research experience through participation in one or more supervised research projects prior to the dissertation; (2) involving students in conducting research early in their doctoral studies; (3) increasing the students' research skills; and (4) developing skills in communicating with an interdisciplinary audience – in writing journal articles, conference papers, extended abstracts, thesis proposals, grant proposals, and speaking at professional meetings.

The specific goal for this seven-week course is for students to make substantial progress on a dissertation proposal such that they will have produced a completed draft by August 15, 2020. The dissertation proposal is designed to lead to either a monograph of publishable quality (i.e., suitable as a basis on which to gain a book contract with a university press) or three manuscripts of publishable quality (i.e., suitable for publication as journal articles in peer reviewed journals or as refereed conference papers).

Students will meet with the instructor as a group and individually over the seven-week course, and they will coordinate with a guidance committee of their own choosing as they formulate and draft a dissertation proposal at the intersection of population, health, and place.

Learning Objectives

On completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Write a dissertation proposal which succinctly yet fully states a problem and one or more research questions, identifies relevant literature, and details a methodology for answering the research question(s).

Prerequisite(s): SSCI 601a

Co-Requisite (s): None

Concurrent Enrollment: None

Recommended Preparation: Students must be enrolled in the USC Population, Health and Place PhD program and have formed a Population, Health and Place PhD guidance committee.

Course Notes

This course is intended to help students along their research trajectories, not primarily to add to the student's store of knowledge. Therefore, relative to other courses in the PHP program, there are almost no required reading assignments. Instead, the course will be devoted to the development of the student's dissertation proposal.

The student and the instructor will review the learning contract from SSCI 601a to see what may have changed in the intervening academic year. Students will develop an amended plan to guide their time through the summer and until the anticipated oral defense of the dissertation proposal.

The second half of the summer will afford students concentrated time to focus on preparing the dissertation proposal. To aid in development of the dissertation proposal, the instructor will make available time to assist students as a sounding board in working with their guidance committees.

Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required

The modeling software and geospatial data required for research projects will be accessed using computing resources provided by the Spatial Sciences Institute.

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

The following book on leadership is required for this class; it is available from online outlets such as Amazon:

1. Sample, Steven B. 2003. *The Contrarian's Guide to Leadership*. San Francisco, CA, Jossey-Bass.

Beyond this, each student will read what is required for development of their dissertation proposal.

Description and Assessment of Assignments

Assignments are designed to move students efficiently through the planning and initial drafting of a dissertation proposal.

Learning Plan – 10 pts. Students will revisit the Learning Plans they drafted in SSCI 601a to assess how the prior months have matched the activities and goals they planned to achieve and to consider goals for the months ahead.

Review of Example Dissertation Proposals– 10 pts. Students will read and share their analyses of two previously completed dissertation proposals in the PHP program. This assignment reveals how previous students have effectively made interdisciplinary connections and used literature and advice from their committees to develop innovative dissertation projects.

Guidance Committee Assignment – 10 pts. Students will draft a short report which lists their advisors and committee members, identifies knowledge bases and skill sets which each possesses that aligns with specific aspects of their project, and plans meetings with each.

Statement of Research Goal and Questions – 15 pts. Students will draft a 1-2 page document which states the goal of their research and the research question(s) they seek to answer with their dissertation project.

Annotated Bibliography – 15 pts. Students will create an annotated bibliography, based on their prior and ongoing review of relevant literature, to organize the literature as it relates to their project and assess the gaps in their research. This assignment helps student situate their project within the universe of related literature and provides a foundation for the Related Literature section of the dissertation proposal.

Methods Outline – 15 pts. Students will devise a workflow for answering their research question(s), supported by relevant literature. This assignment represents the core of what will become the Methods section of the dissertation proposal.

Proposal Introduction and Outline – 15 pts. Students will draft an introduction to their dissertation proposal and outline the sections and subsections of the remainder of the document.

Proposal Completion Plan – 10 pts. Students will draft a plan for discrete research and writing tasks to be met over the remainder of the summer such they can produce a draft of their dissertation proposal by the end of the summer term.

Dissertation Proposal (Draft) – 0 pts. Students will provide a draft of their dissertation proposal to their guidance committee by August 15, 2020.

Grading Breakdown

The following table summarizes the SSCI 601b course assignments and their point distribution:

Assessment	Number	Points Each	Total Points
Learning Plan	1	10	10
Review of Example Proposals	1	10	10
Guidance Committee Assignment	1	10	10
Statement of Research Goal and Questions	1	15	15
Annotated Bibliography	1	15	15
Methods Outline	1	15	15
Proposal Introduction and Outline	1	15	15
Proposal Completion Plan	1	10	10
Dissertation Proposal	1	N/A	N/A
Total	9	-	100

Assignment Submission Policy

Assignments will be submitted for grading via Blackboard using the dates specified in the Course Schedule below.

Additional Policies

Students are expected to attend and participate in each class session where indicated in the schedule below and to complete and upload all assignments before the deadlines detailed in the Course Schedule. Late work will be assessed a penalty of 10% per day and zero grades will be assigned for work that is more than one week late.

Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

Week	Topic	Readings and Assignments	Deliverables/Due Dates
Week 1 5/20	Introduction: Introduction to the course. Expectations for the dissertation proposal. Review and revision of students' Learning Plans.	Learning Plan	
Week 2 5/26* *Monday, 5/25 is a university holiday	Leadership and Collaboration: Formation and management of the guidance committee. Learning from the committee and meeting demands of individual members while producing original, self-motivated work.	Sample (2003) Guidance Committee Assignment Review of Example Proposals	Learning Plan– Tuesday 5/26

Week	Topic	Readings and Assignments	Deliverables/Due Dates
Week 3 6/1	Research Questions and Goals: Formulation of research goals and research questions for students' projects.	Statement of Research Goal and Questions	Guidance Committee Assignment – Monday 6/1 Review of Example Proposals – Monday 6/1
Week 4 6/8	Related Work: Choice of literatures for students' academic audiences. Review of students' research of related literature to date.	Annotated Bibliography	Statement of Research Goal and Questions – Monday 6/8
Week 5 6/15	Data and Methods: Assessment of data needs for dissertation projects. Review of related methodological work in students' fields. Design of project workflows.	Methods Outline	Annotated Bibliography – Monday 6/15
Week 6 6/22	Project Framing: Organization of the proposal for highlighting the importance of the project.	Proposal Introduction and Outline	Methods Outline – Monday 6/22
Week 7 6/29* *Friday, 7/3 is a university holiday	Finishing the Proposal: Schedule for remaining research and writing to complete the remainder of the document.	Proposal Plan	Proposal Introduction and Outline – Monday 6/29 Proposal Plan – Thursday 7/2
End of Summer Term 8/15			Dissertation Proposal

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct:

Plagiarism – presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Part B, Section 11, "Behavior Violating University Standards" policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

Support Systems:

Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call
studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call

suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL), press "0" after hours – 24/7 on call

studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) - (213) 740-5086 | Title IX – (213) 821-8298

equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants.

Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298

usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity | Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776

dsp.usc.edu

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.