

SSCI 601b, Population, Health & Place Research Practicum

Units: 2

Term — Day — Time: Summer 202 (Session 050) –Mondays and Wednesdays – 1 to 2:50 p.m.

Location: TBA (Residential)

Instructor: Robert O. Vos, Ph.D., GISP

Office: AHF B57b

Regular Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. Also, available by appointment via email for in person or remote meetings.

Contact Info: vos@usc.edu, 213-821-1311, see contact page on Blackboard for Zoom Room

Library Help: Andy Rutkowski

Office: VKC 36B

Office Hours: By appointment

Contact Info: arutkows@usc.edu, see contact page on Blackboard for Zoom Room

IT Help: Richard Tsung

Office: AHF 145D

Office Hours: By appointment.

Contact Info: spatial_support@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 via four pathways. First, by providing research experience through participation in one or more supervised research projects prior to the dissertation. Second, by involving students in conducting research early in their doctoral studies. Third, by increasing the students' research skills and fourth, by developing skills in communicating with an interdisciplinary audience – in writing journal articles, conference papers, extended abstracts, dissertation 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, 2022.

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 that succinctly yet fully states a problem and one or more research questions, identifies relevant literature, and details a methodology and sources or collections of data 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.

Class Conduct

Harassment, sexual misconduct, interpersonal violence, and stalking are not tolerated by the university. All faculty and most staff are considered Responsible Employees by the university and must forward all information they receive about these types of situations to the Title IX Coordinator. The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for assisting students with supportive accommodations, including academic accommodations, as well as investigating these incidents if the reporting student wants an investigation. The Title IX office is also responsible for coordinating supportive measures for transgender and nonbinary students such as faculty notifications, and more. If you need supportive accommodations, you may contact the Title IX Coordinator directly (titleix@usc.edu or 213-821-8298) without sharing any personal information with me. If you would like to speak with a confidential counselor, Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) provides 24/7 confidential support for students (213-740-9355 (WELL); press 0 after hours).

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 in the upcoming fall semester.

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 that lists their advisors and committee members, identifies knowledge bases and skill sets that 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 that 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 the research on this topic that exists today. This assignment helps the student situate their project within the universe of related literature and provides a foundation for the Related Work 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, 2022.

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	--	--
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 5/18	Introduction: Introduction to the course. Expectations for the dissertation proposal. Review and revision of students' Learning Plans.	Learning Plan	
Week 2 5/23, 5/25	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 5/24
Week 3 6/1 *Monday, 5/30 is a university holiday	Research Questions and Goals: Formulation of research goals and research questions for students' projects.	Statement of Research Goal and Questions	Guidance Committee Assignment – Tuesday 5/31 Review of Example Proposals – Friday 6/3
Week 4 6/6, 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 6/6
Week 5 6/13, 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 6/13
Week 6 6/20, 6/22	Project Framing: Organization of the proposal for highlighting the importance of the project.	Proposal Introduction and Outline	Methods Outline – Monday 6/20
Week 7 6/27	Finishing the Proposal: Schedule for remaining research and writing to complete the remainder of the dissertation proposal document.	Proposal Plan	Proposal Introduction and Outline – Monday 6/27 Proposal Plan – Tuesday 6/28 Proposal – Monday 8/15

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 [Research and Scholarship Misconduct](#).

Students and Disability Accommodations

USC welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University’s educational programs. The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter disability-related barriers. Once a student has completed the OSAS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and accommodations are determined to be reasonable and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be available to generate for each course. The LOA must be given to each course instructor by the student and followed up with a discussion. This should be done as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at osas.usc.edu. You may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at osasfrontdesk@usc.edu

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 for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX (EEO-TIX) - (213) 740-5086
eeotix.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 for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) - (213) 740-0776

osas.usc.edu

OSAS ensures equal access for students with disabilities through providing academic accommodations and auxiliary aids in accordance with federal laws and university policy.

USC Campus Support and Intervention - (213) 821-4710

campussupport.usc.edu

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion - (213) 740-2101

diversity.usc.edu

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu

Non-emergency assistance or information.

Office of the Ombuds - (213) 821-9556 (UPC) / (323-442-0382 (HSC)

ombuds.usc.edu

A safe and confidential place to share your USC-related issues with a University Ombuds who will work with you to explore options or paths to manage your concern.

Occupational Therapy Faculty Practice - (323) 442-3340 or otfp@med.usc.edu

chan.usc.edu/otfp

Confidential Lifestyle Redesign services for USC students to support health promoting habits and routines that enhance quality of life and academic performance.