

POSC 491 Proposal
D.I.S. Course: “The Craft of Writing Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations”

Theme: To develop an understanding of the craft of writing advanced academic papers with an emphasis on organization, development of thoughts, proper use of citations, research, and bibliographies.

Focus: Analyze the *technique* of ‘well-crafted’ scholarly papers. How is an effective paper developed and written using a widely accepted social sciences format (‘Chicago Style’)? How do we create effective arguments and present them in a convincing manner? How do we discern between ‘better’ and ‘worse’ sources, and how may we cite them? What sorts of sentence, paragraph, and chapter structures ought we adhere to and why? How can we improve our skills at editing our own work with a critical and (reasonably) objective view of our written materials.

Objectives:

- 1) To expose the student to some of the primary source manuals for effective scholarly writing.
- 2) To examine the craft of writing research papers and to understand the usefulness of following a general pattern for their development.
- 3) To consider the structures of sentences, paragraphs, and chapters or headings.
- 4) To develop an appreciation for the reasons why scholarly papers need to be structured in certain ways and how they become more effective with organization and clarity.

Evaluation:

- 1) An examination to test the student’s competency with the information provided in the readings.
- 2) To create a short essay utilizing the proper format, structures, and organization necessary for scholarly writing.
- 3) To take an existing work of the student and edit it with the new tools he/she has developed in an effort to make positive changes that make the work more articulate, concise, and coherent.

Preliminary Reading List:

Kate L. Turabian. A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations (6th ed.) Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996.

The University of Chicago Office of Publications. The Chicago Manual of Style (14th ed.) Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.

Edward P. Bailey and Philip A. Powell. The Practical Writer With Readings (3rd ed.) Toronto: Harcourt Brace Pub., 1992.

John C. Hodges *et al.* The Harbrace College Handbook for Canadian Writers. (3rd ed.) Toronto: Harcourt Brace Pub., 1990.