

Political Science Honors Colloquium

Mondays, 7:00-8:30 pm, Fall 2020 and Spring 2021

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Google Calendar Office Hours Sign-Up

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Welcome to Political Science Honors Colloquium! A thesis project is a wonderful opportunity. The Honors Colloquium was created in 2006-07 to augment the core writer/advisor relationship with a cohort experience. By design, the colloquium experience remains secondary to the primary mentorship relationship, between you and your advisor.

Thus, although you will also benefit from my guidance and the input of your thesis examination committee, your two core scholarly supports are 1) *your advisor*, and 2) *each other*. Thus, my role isn't principally that of an extra faculty advisor. Rather, my task is to foster a colloquium environment designed for you to support each other.

In addition to peer review and peer support and encouragement, our colloquium is also a place to advance your broader professional agenda. If you need to rehearse for an upcoming conference presentation, or refine a job or fellowship application, our colloquium is an ideal place to do so.

Publication and Presentation Options

You will also develop a plan to publish or present your research findings in an academic or community forum. The four standard options are:

- 1) **Journal Publication.** You submit a 25-30 page version of your thesis to an academic journal. [See list of journals and conferences.](#)
- 2) **Community Publication.** You submit a shortened and jargon-free version of your findings to a community publication. Another option is to publish a version of your findings in a country that you studied, in English or another language.
- 3) **Conference Presentation.** You present a 25-30 page version of your thesis at a local, regional, or national conference. It can be an undergraduate, graduate, or professional conference. [See list of journals and conferences.](#) Due to the pandemic, conference opportunities are sharply reduced, but some organizations will host virtual conferences.
- 4) **Community Presentation.** You arrange a presentation of your research findings in a relevant community venue. This could be in the Twin Cities, your hometown, or a place you will visit over winter or spring break. Your presentation could be its own event or part of some larger gathering. If your project focuses on a community group, you could present your findings to the group that you studied. With the rising prevalence of Zoom, it may be more feasible to connect with some audiences that previously were out of reach.

Expectations

I expect you to work with each other and with me to co-create this colloquium so that it is a positive and supportive part of your thesis-writing experience. We will collaboratively shape the contours of the colloquium, including setting dates, groups, and expectations for peer review.

I expect you to respect the work of your peers through thoughtful and constructive written and verbal critiques. Each of us must be open to the idea that we have good ideas to offer and that we can learn from each other as well.

I expect you to be assertive and communicate with me about your needs, and especially to communicate in advance if you will be late or absent.

We expect a sense of solidarity, in that we are embarking on ambitious scholarly work that will require collaborative support from everyone.

We will invest in our scholarly community outside of Colloquium, by making an effort to attend each other's presentations, games or events, as able, given the pandemic.

Students with Special Needs

I am committed to providing assistance to help you be successful in this course. Students seeking accommodations based on disabilities should meet with Melissa Fletcher, Director of [Disability Services](#). Students are encouraged to address any special needs or accommodations with me as soon as you become aware of your needs. I'm committed to working with you to develop creative solutions and accommodations that fit your needs.

Students Experiencing Challenge or Crisis

Macalester has professionally trained staff to support students experiencing crisis. When a personal challenge or crisis occurs, it has an academic impact and may require flexibility around course responsibilities. In such situations, talking to a trusted professor can be helpful. If I can be of help, please don't hesitate to talk to me. I recognize that amid the pandemic, the state of crisis is chronic or even constant, which can make it feel harder to reach out, but I encourage you to do so.

Please be aware that I am *not* a confidential resource. Faculty are mandatory reporters of sexual violence--I am required to report any information you may share with us about an experience of sexual violence (whether it occurred on or off campus, or before or after you came to Macalester) with the Office of Title IX & Equity. This allows the Office of Title IX & Equity to follow up to offer resources and options for support. To find confidential resources on campus, visit macalester.edu/violenceprevention/support.

Readings

Most of your readings will be determined by you and your thesis supervisor, focused on your project, as well as reading drafts of your peers' work. There are also a few common readings, which are hosted on Moodle but can be downloaded direct from this syllabus if you are logged in to Moodle:

- Acevedo, Sara Maria, et al. 2015. "Positionality as Knowledge: From Pedagogy to Praxis." *Integral Review*, Vol., 11, No. 1: 28-46.
- Dolan, Julie. 2004. "Gender Equity: Illusion or Reality for Women in the Federal Executive Service?" *Public Administration Review*, Vol. 64, No. 3 (May-June): 299-308.
- Dosh, Paul. 2002. "Peace After Terror: Reconciling Justice and the Rule of Law in Argentina, El Salvador, and Guatemala." *Latin American Perspectives*, Vol. 29 No. 4 (July): 98-104.
- Mueller, Lisa. 2018. "Personal Politics without Clientelism? Interpreting Citizen-Politician Contact in Africa." *African Studies Review*, Vol. 61, No. 2 (July): 28-54.
- Peet-Martel, Jasper. 2014. "Deceptive Development and Democratization: Stadium Sonstruction and Securitization in the FIFA World Cup Host Countries of South Africa and Brazil." *Journal of Politics and Society* (Spring): 140-154.
- Przeworski, Adam, and Fernando Limongi. 1997. "Modernization: Theory and Facts." *World Politics*, Vol. 49 (January): 155-183.
- Sample Thesis Titles and Abstracts (updated 2018).
- Saul, Dylan. 2015. "[Capacity and Necessity: The Appropriateness of Judicial Policymaking in Affirmative Action](#)." *Pi Sigma Alpha Undergraduate Journal of Politics*, Vol. 15, No. 2 (Fall): 58-76.

- Siavelis, Peter. 2005. "Electoral System, Coalitional Disintegration, and the Future of Chile's Concertación." *Latin American Research Review*, Vol. 40, No. 1 (February): 56-82.
- Smith, Julia. 2011. "The Essential Role of Education in the Microfinance Strategy: A Commentary on Contemporary Neoliberalism." *Journal of Undergraduate International Studies*, Vol. 11 (Fall): 64-75.
- Stegner, Grant, and Cory Turner. 2006. "Nationalism as an Impediment to Democratic Reform: A Comparative Analysis of Iranian and Russian Nationalism." *Politica*, Vol. 12, No. 2 (Spring): 66-89.
- Stüven, Merrit. 2017. "The UN Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination Against Women: Exceptionalism and Women's Reproduction in the Debate Around U.S. Ratification." *Journal of Politics and Society* (Fall): 97-111.
- Trostle, Hannah. 2015. "[Media, Identity, and Violence: American Indian Occupations 1969-1973.](#)" *Pi Sigma Alpha Undergraduate Journal of Politics*, Vol. 15, No. 1 (Spring): 22-38.

ASSIGNMENTS

Assignments

Draft Proposal
 Final Proposal
 Rehearsal of proposal presentation
 Proposal Presentation
 Professional Game Plan
 Reflection on Advisor Interview
 Publication/Presentation Plans
 Mock Defenses
 Oral Defenses
 100-word Abstract
 Final PDF and hard copies due to Academic Programs

Due Date

Sept 4
 Sept 11
 Sept 14
 Sept 15-17
 Sept 28
 Oct 5
 Nov 2
 late March/early April
 mid-April
 mid-April
 late April

On-Time Work Policy: Setting and meeting deadlines is an important professional skill. I expect you to either meet the default deadlines or set alternate deadlines in advance. College is an important time to develop a reputation as someone who gets things done and gets things done on time. If you cannot meet a deadline, it is your responsibility to *communicate* with me about when you will complete your work.

Citation Style: Consult your thesis supervisor. Absent guidance from them, use the APSA style guide.

Assessment: Each 2-credit semester of Honors Colloquium is graded on a S/N basis (Satisfactory/No Credit), based on your work in two categories:

- 1) **Individual Work** (tasks related to your thesis)
- 2) **Cohort Work** (peer review and other tasks related to supporting your peers)

During the final week of Module 1, I will meet with each of you to discuss your progress in colloquium and you will receive a mid-semester summary mark of **Excellent**, **Good**, or **Unsatisfactory** in each of the two categories. These mid-Fall semester marks are temporary

and provide an early indicator about your work. We will discuss strengths and areas for further improvement.

At each semester’s end, you will receive a final summary mark in each of the two categories. In order to receive an overall course grade of “S,” you must earn a summary mark of at least **Good** in each of the two categories. If you earn a mark of **Unsatisfactory** in either category, you will earn an N in the course and earn no credit. A final grade of N will necessitate a meeting with me and your thesis supervisor, to determine if you will be permitted to move forward with your Honors project, and under what stipulations.

SYLLABUS

| Date (meeting dates in bold) | Agenda | Assignment |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| Weds, Sept 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Welcome / introductions / check-ins •Colloquium overview •Flexibility and understanding during the pandemic. •Thesis proposal and presentation expectations <p><u>Notes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •2-4 credits of POLI 644 required each semester •You can always schedule colloquium time for practice interviews (fellowships, jobs), peer review of personal statements, or other professional tasks not directly related to your thesis. | |
| Fri, Sept 4, 10 am | | •DUE: Draft Proposal |
| Weds, Sept 9 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Check-ins •Peer review of proposals in small groups •Research involving human subjects; SSIRB (deadline is Sept 11 or Oct 16) | •DUE: Comment on proposals in your group. |
| Fri, Sept 11, 10 am | | •DUE: Final Proposal. |
| Mon, Sept 14 | Thesis Proposal Presentation rehearsals | Come to class prepared to rehearse your 3-minute presentation and to field sample questions. |

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| Sept 15-17 | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Thesis Proposal Presentations</u></p> <p>Times/panels TBA.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your 15-minute slot includes your 3-minute presentation and 12 minutes of Q&A with a panel of approximately 3 faculty (this is NOT the same as your eventual thesis committee). |
| Mon, Sept 21 | <p>Post-Defense Round-Up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check-ins Discuss Acevedo (2015), position, and positionality Introduce Professional Game Plan assignment Introduce Advisor Interview assignment; brainstorm questions to ask. Collaborative discussion on expectations and design of Fall semester Colloquium (day/time to circulate drafts; Peer Review, frequency, expectations, rotation; building a scholarly community; content for non-peer review days; topics for Paul to present on; reviewing past Honor theses) Set individual peer deadlines for next three weeks. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read Acevedo (2015) Read letter from 2018-19 Honors cohort. |
| Mon, Sept 28 | <p>Library Session</p> | <p><i>Note: Yom Kippur (Sept 27-28)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DUE: Professional Game Plan |
| Mon, Oct 5 | <p>Thesis Components: Literature Review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss sample by Dosh (2002). <p>Peer Review</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dosh (2002) (read pp. 98-99; skim pp. 99-104) DUE: Reflection on Advisor Interview |
| Mon, Oct 12 | <p>Thesis Components: Theoretical Framing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify how these four articles <i>name, summarize, review, or use</i> other scholarship to set up or directly frame their own argument. Do they situate their argument relative to one specific scholar or many? Or to specific approaches? Which articles cite literature more directly connected to their central question/argument? Introduce Publication/Presentation Plans assignment <p>Peer Review</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read: Dolan 2004 (pp. 299-300); Mueller 2018 (pp. 28-31). Skim: Siavelis 2005 (pp. 56-61) and Przeworski & Limongi 1997 (pp. 155-159), |
| Mon, Oct 19 | <p>Peer Review</p> | |
| Oct 19-20 | <p>Mid-Semester Individual Meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss thesis and colloquium progress | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sign up for a meeting with Paul. |

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| Oct 24-27 | FALL BREAK | |
| Mon, Nov 2 (first Colloquium meeting of Mod 2) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Discuss observations of past capstone/Honors publications. Share any tentative ideas for Publication/Presentation Plans. •Discuss Write Well microlectures. •Set peer review deadlines for coming weeks. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Glance at sample publications by past capstone/Honors writers: Peet-Martel (2014), Saul (2015), Stegner & Turner (2006), Trostle (2015), Smith (2011), and/or Stüven (2017). •Take notes on any five Write Well Microlectures |
| Mon, Nov 9 | Peer Review | •DUE: Publication/Presentation Plans (hard copy) |
| Mon, Nov 16 | Peer Review | |
| Mon, Nov 23 | Thesis Components: Workshop on Revision and Outstanding Writing | |
| Nov 26-29 | THANKSGIVING BREAK | |
| Mon, Nov 30 | Peer Review | |
| Mon, Dec 7 | Thesis Components: Titles, Abstracts, Audience Assembling your April exam committee Peer Review | •Read Sample Thesis Titles and Abstracts, and line-edit two of the five entries, before class. |
| Mon, Dec 14 | Final meeting of Fall semester •End-of-semester surveys. | |
| | <i>Preview of Spring 2020</i> | |
| Dec 19-Jan 20 | WINTER BREAK | |
| Mon, Jan 25 | Nuts & Bolts •Check-in: Winter break progress •Confirm April mock defense lists •Scheduling oral defense with your committee | |
| Mon, Feb 15 | | •Deadline: Committee and defense date set. |

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| March 14-21 | <i>SPRING BREAK</i> | |
| late March | <p>Defense Prep: Presentation plus Q&A</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Format and Expectations. •For both mock and actual defense, be self-sufficient/in charge of your event (podium; water; tech; practice tech in actual room in advance so you can manage it yourself). •Generating oral defense questions. •In groups, practice asking some of these questions, but instead of giving full answers, you'll take a minute to think, and then try to answer in approximately one-sentence. | |
| late March/early April | <p>Mock Defenses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Each student has a 30-minute slot for their presentation dress rehearsal, mock Q&A, and written feedback from peers. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •You should have your 12-15 minute presentation drafted, with any slides, plus some draft answers to possible questions. •You should dress up as you would for your actual defense. |
| mid-April | Oral Defenses | |
| mid-April | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •DUE: Submit 100-word Abstract to Academic Programs (for Commencement program) |
| late April | <p>Final Colloquium Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Final issues around final revisions/submission. •Group discussion of advice for next year's Honors cohort. •End-of-Course Surveys | |
| late April | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •DUE: Final hard copy and PDF to Academic Programs. |

Peer Review Form

Name of Writer:

Your Name:

Argumentation

- 1) In one sentence, try and summarize the main argument. If the argument is unclear, note this.
- 2) Is the logic of the argument clear? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the argument?
- 3) Does the author introduce alternative explanations? Are they serious alternatives or "straw man" arguments? Does the author convincingly refute these alternatives?

Research

- 4) What parts of the project seem well researched? What areas need further attention?
- 5) Does the paper choose depth, breadth, or a balance of the two? Is this the right choice given the argument?

Writing

- 6) Does the paper's organization fit/support the central argument? How could organization be improved?
- 7) What parts of the paper are best written? What parts need further revision?
- 8) Are topic sentences and transitions clear and helpful? Whether or not subheadings are included, are they necessary? How do/would subheadings help/hinder the communication of this paper?
- 9) Is the paper's length appropriate given its content? Could the argument be made more effectively in fewer pages? Or would the argument be enhanced by a longer paper?

Theoretic Framework

- 10) Does the author engage academic works as scholars in a conversation or as mere fact archives? How could this be improved?
- 11) Is the author contributing to a scholarly conversation or simply summarizing it? What suggestions do you have here?

Creativity

- 12) What creative aspects grab your attention (e.g. visuals, clever framework, innovative approach)?
- 13) What ideas can you offer to make this research project even more engaging?