

**St. Francis Xavier University
Department of Sociology
Sociology 391: Junior Seminar
2017-2018**

Instructor: Dr. Riley Chisholm
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Office Hours:

Mondays 9-11 and 12:30-2

Tuesdays 11-2

Wednesday: No office hours

Thursdays 9:30-12:30

Friday: No office hours

The junior seminar is a three-credit course offered for honours Sociology students, normally in their 3rd year. You will shadow the 4th year students to observe the steps taken in completing a thesis project.

Schedule and course plan:

You will be provided with the 491 schedule, which you will follow and participate in. In addition, we will meet once a month to discuss your research project. The additional 391 meeting time will be determined in accordance with students' availability.

Note: Honours students are entitled to use the student resource room, Annex 8B. You can arrange to get a room key (and possibly a locker) from the Administrative Assistants, Marion and Rhonda, in Annex 103.

Evaluation

Your 391 grade is based on the following work:

September 27: 20% Research project proposal due

October 18: 20% Research project list of references in APA or ASA formatting

December 6: 30% Research project literature review

March 7: 30% Research project due

Research project proposal (10%) Due September 27

The research project proposal provides an opportunity to select a research topic that excites you and which you will develop over this year. It may be an area you will study for your thesis, however, it can be an entirely unrelated topic area. You will write a 3-5 pages paper describing a topic that you wish to explore this year from a critical sociological perspective. Your goal is to offer a clear description of your investigation and locate it in a field of study. Along with your description, you must identify the social significance of the topic and why it is a topic worthy of your and our attention.

References (10%) Due October 18

For this assignment, you are asked to create a list of preliminary references in either ASA or APA formatting, which gives a sense of the breadth of the research already conducted in your topic area. You will be handing in a brief 3-5 pages description on the types of research done in the study area you searched as well as a few comment on what you learned from this search.

Literature review (30%) Due November 29

Think of this assignment as a review paper in which you offer some sensible insight into what is known already in your area of research. For instance, if your topic is on Post-Trump America foreign policy, you would likely start with a description of how it has unfolded historically, and how the Trump Administration fits into that history. Are current policies and practices similar or different? How so? What are the implications? You may provide relevant statistical data and possibly comments by others who are experts in the area. You should specify the geographical scope (e.g., Are you interested in US involvement in Afghanistan, North Korea or Yemen, or the world as a whole? Will you look at US military operations or US-backed insurgencies, as well?). Length: 8-10 pages. As with all written assignments, grammar, spelling, tone, depth of analysis and criticality will be considered relevant to your score.

Critical essay (30%) Due March 7

For this assignment, you will submit a 10-page essay which, is the final paper for your research project. You must ensure that you have well-edited your work and included a tight introduction and conclusion, along with a completed references list. Your literature review (see above) must be incorporated in some meaningful way into the essay so as to support your claims, and define the academic context in which you are conducting your work. This is not the same thing as simply cutting and pasting your literature review into the essay—you must make use of what you have learned in the literature review to weave support throughout your paper. However, you do so in a way that cooperates with your theoretical claims and final proposition (outlined in your conclusion).

Critical essay presentation (20%) Due March 21 (Time and location TBA)

Along with the 491 students, you will present your research to the Department of Sociology for discussion and feedback. You will have approximately 15 minutes. Important to your presentation is the clarity you bring to your topic, theoretical rigour, detail of analysis, breadth and depth of investigation and force of presentation.