Course Overview:
Welcome to Senior Thesis (trumpets blaring in background). You will spend the next two semesters eating, breathing, and sleeping your very own research project. Senior Thesis is the culmination of your development as an International Studies major and is intended to represent a “capstone” in your progress. To this point, you have attempted to master a variety of skill and knowledge sets. Thesis allows you the opportunity to put all of this into practice in an intensive, directed research project.

Thesis is constructed to allow you as much creative freedom as possible, but within a narrowly defined structure. Our goal is to direct your inquiry such that the final product is a cohesive and coherent thesis paper of approximately 40 pages. This final project is created through an iterative process of revision and resubmission over the fall and spring semesters. Our syllabus is very clear on assignments and due dates.

Students will spend the first weeks of the course developing a research proposal. This proposal will spell out the topic area, method, and theoretical approaches that the student will take in the coming months. We will then spend time learning how to create and use a literature review, followed by the writing of a literature review. This will be followed by discussion on theoretical modeling and methods. Students will develop their own models (based on the literature) for testing in the empirical portion of their papers.

Thus will end the fall semester.

Over the winter break, students are expected to work on their thesis projects; whether by conducting additional reading, data collection, and/or writing.

The spring semester will be devoted almost entirely to writing the empirical portion of the thesis and conclusion.

Students should be aware that individual instruction is most directly conveyed through professor comments on draft papers and individual meetings. Students will address professor comments and make corrections where indicated. Upon doing this, students may realize that previous portions of the paper may be inadequate. The student is then expected to revise and resubmit.
This is the iterative process at work. At a point, the “linear” process of paper writing breaks down and a student may find herself simultaneously addressing corrections/changes to multiple parts of the thesis.

Senior Thesis Schedule Spring 2018

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<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Class Topic</th>
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<tr>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>Bi-weekly individual meeting</td>
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Departmental Policy on Completion of the Thesis

It is expected that students will complete their theses by the end of semester. Only under extraordinary circumstances will a student be granted an “I” or incomplete grade. An “I” indicates that a significant portion of the required work is done, with only a portion left to complete after the regular term. If an “I” is not converted into a regular grade within one semester, the student will automatically receive the grade of “F.” There will be no “IE” (extended incompletes) granted.

Grade

Your fall/spring semester grade is based upon the following components:

- Class attendance and Individual meetings 20%
- Timely submission of all assignments 30%
- Completion and Quality of the Senior Thesis 50%
  - Introduction (10%)
  - Literature Review (25%)
  - Theory and Modeling (20%)
  - Analytical Body (35%)
  - Conclusion (10%)

Academic Honesty: You must write your own quizzes and exams. Plagiarism is a representation of another person's work as your own (for example, directly quoting from another source without using quotation marks). See the University of St. Thomas regulations, “Scholastic Dishonesty.” If you plagiarize, or otherwise cheat, on any exam or assignment, you will be punished to the maximum extent possible. While some cross-pollination of ideas may occur, student papers must not be written in collaboration. Student papers of similar flow, structure, word-choice, and content will be treated in the same manner as if they were plagiarized.

Grading Policy: The grade will be rounding to one decimal place. No additional rounding will be executed.

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<td>&gt;93</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92.9</td>
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<td>B+</td>
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Policy on Missed Exams and Late Papers:
1. If you have an "acceptable excuse" that causes you to miss a deadline (e.g., illness with a note from a doctor), contact your professor (me) within two business days of the test (preferably contact me before the test) and the due date will be rescheduled.
2. Late papers lose a letter grade per day late (including both business and non-business days). However, if you have an "acceptable excuse," you will have extra time to finish your assignments.
3. If you are late for over three days (>3, including both business and non-business days) without an "acceptable excuse," you will receive a 0 on assignment.

Disability Statement: Any student with a documented disability needing academic accommodations is requested to speak with me (the professor) as early in the semester as possible. All discussions will remain confidential. Students with disabilities will also need to contact Counseling and Disability Services in Crooker Center. This office can be reached at (713)525-2169 or 6953.
Papers will be organized in the following manner:

A. Introduction (app. 5 pp)
   - Present the context of the paper.
   - Present the research question or thesis.
   - Discuss the research question or thesis.
   - Provide a "road map" of the rest of the paper.

B. Literature Review (app. 10 pp)
   - What previous research has been conducted regarding your question or thesis?
   - What were the findings/ conclusions of the previous research?
   - What was the method used by others to arrive at their conclusions?
   - Identify key areas of debate and consensus.
   - Identify how your paper will contribute to this literature.

C. Theory and Modeling (app. 5 )
   - Begins with summary of the theory section.
   - Your discussion of your theoretical approach.
   - Provide testable hypotheses based on your model.
   - Illustrate in a visual model with elaboration.

D. Methodology (approximately 3 pages)
   - Provide measures for your variables.
   - Identify your data sources.
   - Discuss how you will test this data, i.e., your method.

E. Study/ Findings (app. 15 pp)
   - This section can be quantitative or qualitative. Even if qualitative, however, there must be an attempt to be as systematic as possible.
   - Equipped with what you learned from the literature review and theory section, test your research question/ proposition to find support or refutation for your expected finding.
   - The study portion is different from the literature review because the student is collecting his or her own data/information about a case or cases and then testing it independently.
   - A summary of the major findings should be presented at the end of this section.

F. Conclusion (app. 5 pp)
   - Summarize the basic goal of the paper and whether it was achieved in the course of the paper.
   - Summarize the basic findings and whether or not they were what were expected.
   - Indicate what was learned by the student during the course of this exercise.
   - Provide policy prescriptions, future research suggestions, hypothetical “next steps” were this line of research to be continued.
Brainstorming a Topic and Developing the Research Question

1) Write on a subject that interests you.
2) Be realistic about your ability to find literature and data for this subject.
3) As you develop your idea, check internet for extant literature and data. Based on this search, you may tweak your initial ideas.
4) Develop ideas from reading the paper, journals, and magazines devoted to international affairs.
5) Extend on a subject on which you have previously written. This does not mean add a handful of pages to an old paper, but significantly revise and rewrite.
6) Find a topic, such as “human trafficking” and ask questions related to it, such as:
   a. What are the causes of …?
   b. What are the consequences of …?
   c. How is human trafficking related to something else?
7) Review literature on your subject to identify persistent questions and challenges (usually summarized in concluding chapters/sections).

Research Proposal – A Good model is the introductory chapter to any scholarly book.

1) **Paper Topic.** What is the topic that you are going to write about? This paper does not have to state an *a priori* thesis, political position, or any other “pre-determined” statement. It is best to simply approach this paper as a curious scholar. You have a question about the world and this is your chance to answer it.
2) **Establish context for the topic.** What’s going on in the world that makes one want to conduct research on this particular issue? Justify why this is an important issue to address.
3) **Research Question.** What is a specific question that you are going to pose and then answer with this thesis? Obviously, there will be more questions that arise as corollaries, but you must pose a single interrogative sentence that captures the “gist” of the matter. Indicate your primary research question, but also include corollary questions. Elaborate on the theoretical and empirical underpinning for the research question/s. The research question is not only intended to help the reader keep attention to your main thesis, but also helps the author stay on track and on topic. Every page or so, you should ask yourself, “Is what I’m writing speaking to the research question?” If not, you’re on a tangent.
4) **Research Model.** What literatures/authors will you explore to help you answer the research question? Has your question been addressed extensively so that you are going to “wade through the mess” and provide some new organization or conclusions? Are you seeking to “twist” something out there or are you going to provide a new “direction”? How will you synthesize this literature to arrive at your answer? Will you compare and contrast arguments and logic? Will you collect data and “test” assertions made in the literature? Will you write an intensive case study or include a group of cases to test for the answer to your question?
5) **Contribution.** Ultimately, what do you think that your contribution is going to be? Will you seek to clarify, counter existing theses, offer a new thesis, propose a new policy, etc.?
Annotated Bibliography
Each entry in your annotated bibliography should address the following items.

1) thesis/ research question
2) basic theory underlying the work
3) Method used to reach conclusions (supporting material, literature reviewed, method)
4) primary conclusions (stick to about three if many)
5) how this work will “fit” into your paper

Incorrect Annotated Bib – Too general, little detail, no findings,


This book explores the Hunger Strikes that took place in the Northern Irish Prisons from October 1980 to October 1981, which resulted in the death of 10 Irish prisoners. O’ Malley discusses the hunger strikes, the reaction to them, the consequences of them and finally the legacy of them in the northern Irish conflict. The author investigates the hunger strikes through interviews with the priests who visited the striking prisoners, their families and neighbours, prison and government officials, and local politicians as well as by analyses of the media during this period.

Correct Annotated Bib – Thesis, elaborates on theory, findings (but weak on method)


This article discusses the aftermath of a conflict and its effect on the next generation, their collective memory. It also focuses on the need to make use of the collective memory of the post-conflict generation in order that history won’t repeat itself and conflict arises again. Hoffman uses the South Truth and Reconciliation Committee as an example to prove that the “world of violence cannot be righted but it can be rectified.”

The author explains that systematic violence which is meant to humiliate such as torture is the worst kind that affects collective memory and the way it is interpreted could affect the resurgence or reduction of conflict. As the post-generation is the hinge between the past and future and much depends on how it turns from one to another. Therefore the method of transmission of these memories is important in order to “remember without hating”. When the author talks about post generation she defines it as the children of both the victims and the perpetrators, who through collective memory and guilt could re-start the conflict in a reverse manner where the children of the victim would turn on the children of the perpetrator.

The author concludes that the only way that remembering without hurting could occur is if there is dialogue between the children of the victim and perpetrator so that memory would be truly collective in the sense that each would hear the others memories as well would understand and identify with the other.
Chapter 1 – Introduction

Your research proposal will be the basis for your introduction. By the time you finish this project, however, what you wrote will need to be revised to reflect the realities of the final product. Chances are, the paper you complete will not look exactly like the one you have proposed. That’s okay. Revising the research proposal into the Introduction will be one of the last things you do.

Chapter 2: Literature Review – Usually second chapter/section of book or journal article

A literature review is a review of collected works related to your research question. The goal of the review is, broadly speaking, to summarize the “state of the literature” with regard to concepts, definitions, measurement, methods, and findings. This is not just a “review” but also a critique in which the author (you) make statements about the relative levels of consensus and debate within a literature; characterize “progress”; and list the basic findings within the literature.

With a good review, you are equipped to place your research within an extant literature. You draw on what has been done as a foundation for your own research, place your own study within it, and then are able to ascertain what your ultimate contribution has been to the literature. Your research should add to the literature/debate; otherwise one is left to question the utility of so much effort on your part.

The literature review provides: basic background and state of the literature for your own study, provides a “big picture” of the literature so that you will have a better idea as to what your particular contribution is going to be, and highlights the strengths and weaknesses of current approaches to your own research question. The lit. review is organized topically.

A key difference between the lit. review and annotated bibliography is that the lit. review does not devote considerable space to a single author, rather to groups of thought within the broader literature. Unless you are going to devote considerable space to critiquing a single author as central to your paper, you should focus on groups of thinkers that share essentially the same conclusions, but come into conflict with other groups with different findings. What are the basic arguments, interconnecting theories, method, and conclusions for each “school of thought?” How does this group differ from other groups? Why would one group be “on the right track” while another is “way off base”? This gives you a better since of how your paper will contribute to the larger debate.

References

When must one cite a work? If your own idea or "common knowledge", then no cite. If you use someone else's ideas, words, or data then cite (and quote if borrowing verbatim or paraphrasing). Typically, the literature review will be based on published material. The case portion of the paper may call for very current information and, therefore, electronic sources may be used. Do not use “encyclopedic sources”, rely upon primary sources for definitions of terms and concepts.
Citation Format:
Your citation format must follow from the APSA, MLA, or Chicago Style Manual:

Format for the Literature Review Section

I. Introduction to the topic
   A. What is the topic/topics to be covered?
   B. What is the relevance of these topics to your research question?
   C. Road map – how will you assemble this material and how will it culminate in understanding key concepts, language, and linkages relevant to your question?

II. Review of:
   A. Key concepts and definitions, methods, and findings
   B. Current findings and debates within the literature
   C. Review of “school of thought”
      i. Attention to relevant individual authors
      ii. Attention to groups of authors

III. Synthesis and critique of the literature. This should identify areas of consensus and debate drawn from the reviewed articles in order to provide summary points about the “state of the literature” on your topic.

   1) Are scholars asking essentially the same question or not? Discuss.
   2) Are scholars defining key concepts the same way or are their large differences?
   3) Does everyone use the same kinds of data and measures? Discuss.
   4) Does everyone use a different method or not? Discuss.
   5) Does everyone come up with similar or different findings? Discuss.

IV. Conclusion in which you:
   A) Summarize the state of the literature
   B) Summarize key findings in the literature
   C) Summarize key groups of thought
   D) Discuss and segue into the theory section of the paper
Based on your review of the literature and your own observations, you have developed some expectations about why and how one thing is related to another. There will be contending schools of thought, and your paper will need to present a theoretical position on such relationships.

As you have learned elsewhere, the Scientific Method requires scholars to present theory (that explains connections) and then provide testable hypotheses (that may support or refute the theory). Remember, you are not out to “prove” a thesis. You are to answer a question, which may or may not align with your own worldview. Hypotheses are not “proven,” rather they are tested. The scholar should not introduce her own bias by “making the data fit” her own view.

Hypotheses are typically stated in “if-then” format with explicit statement about the direction of the relationship. Please remember that the theoretical story must first be provided. This story is then followed by a “summary hypothesis” such as:

You have spent the last several pages explaining one cause of human trafficking – poverty. Human trafficking sources tends to be highest in contexts of socio-economic stress and sourcing tends to be lower in wealthier settings. So, a natural hypothesis would be:

H1: If per capita income increases (by some amount), then the level of human trafficking sourcing will decrease (by some amount).

Over the next several pages, you have discussed how destinations for trafficked people tend to be in higher income settings. So, although trafficked people tend to originate in poor countries, they may end up in higher income countries as exploited labor. So, a next natural hypothesis might be:

H2: If per capita income increases (by some amount), then the country is more likely (by some amount) to be a destination country for trafficked people.

These are “testable” because per capita income can be measured and levels of human trafficking can be measured (to some extent). You will provide the data sources for each in the next section on Methodology.

Once theory has been discussed and hypotheses presented, the next step is to provide a visualization of your theory, known as a model. This is a one-page graphic (usually a flowchart) that summarizes your explanation into a visual.

You will use different shapes, lines, and connections to illustrate variables and their relationship to each other. For example, a major variable could be illustrated as a large, bold square, whereas a minor variable could be a smaller square with no bold lines. A bold line would indicate strong connections to another variable or a dashed line could illustrate weak connections.
Chapter 4: Methodology – Clearly marked in any book chapter or journal article

Think of the methodology section as the instructions for a recipe. Your prior theory section has presented the ingredients and amounts. The methodology section provides the mixing and “baking” instructions. As in baking a cake, one might have all the right ingredients, but if not mixed or cooked properly, the result will not be credible.

This section provides the reader with a step by step process in which you have taken the ingredients (variables) and tested (cooked) them in a way that best represents your intention. Remember, method is driven by theory. Theory is driven by the research question.

Your first section is a discussion of the method to be used. This could be statistical (involving coefficients) and/or descriptive (data tables showing patterns). Even qualitative methods require a systematic way of putting the components of a story together in a logical manner and one that the reader will understand. You will have learned a variety of such methods in your Research Methods in International Studies course.

Secondly, you will discuss your sample of cases. For example, as part of your method, you will need to decide if you want to conduct a:

- cross-national study – every possible country or a sample of countries from around the world
- regional study – includes only those countries from a certain region or category (wealthy, poor, etc.)
- case study – a single case

You will need to justify your method and case selection.

Third, you will want to determine the years of coverage. Will you select only the most recent years for analysis or draw from multiple years over time?

Fourth, you will need to discuss the sources for the data you will use to test the hypotheses. Standard data sources from the web are listed below.
Data Sources (just a couple of examples)

General data:  http://qog.pol.gu.se/

Elections
- Elections around the World: www.electionworld.org
- Lijphart Election Archives: www.dodgson.ucsd.edu/lij/

Female representation across the world: www.ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm

Constitutions
- World Values Survey: www.worldvaluessurvey.org/

Comparative Democratization Project
- www.democracy.stanford.edu

Political regimes, rights, and case studies
- Freedom House: www.freedomhouse.org
- POLITY Data: www.cidcm.umd.edu/polity/

Conflict data:
- Correlates of War: www.correlatesofwar.org/
- Uppsala Conflict data: www.pcr.uu.se/database/

Journals

Social Science & International Studies
- American Journal of Political Science
- American Political Science Review
- British Journal of Political Science
- Comparative Politics
- Comparative Political Studies
- Human Rights Quarterly
- International Studies Quarterly
- Journal of Democracy
- Journal of Political Economy
- Party Politics
- Review of International Studies
- World Politics

Latin America
- Journal of Inter-American Studies and World Affairs
- Journal of Latin American Studies
- Latin American Perspectives
- Latin American Research Review

Africa
- Africa Today
- African Affairs
- Journal of Modern African Studies

Asia
- Asian Survey
- Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs
- China Journal
- China Review International
Chapter 5: Body of Paper

The body of the paper is considered “the meat” of the paper. This is where the author connects the hypotheses, data, and method to begin a line of discussion that leads to answering the research question. While content of the body will vary from paper to paper, the basic structure of the body will not vary so much. How to write the body? One section at a time and guided by standard essay writing. So, take a deep breath and dive right in.

I. Introduction
   a. Review where you’ve been and where you’re at in the paper at this point.
   b. Remind the reader of the research question and its relevance.
   c. Provide a roadmap to this section of the paper.

II. Descriptive/Historical Material
   A. Take this opportunity to provide narrative about the cases studies, phenomena at work.
   B. Provide plenty of anecdotes (examples) that illustrate the problem being addressed.
   C. Present descriptive graphs and tables.

III. Body Sections
   A. Arranged by hypothesis and/or topic.
   B. Present hypothesis tests, including the “numbers” as well as graphs and tables.
   C. Explain “the numbers” and whether the data support or refute the hypotheses.

IV. Conclusion
   A. Summary findings of your research.
   B. Some times, presenting the summary findings in a single table is helpful.

Chapter 6: Conclusion – Reference any conclusion in a book and/or journal articles

Whoo Hoo! You’re almost home free. The Conclusion performs four basic functions:

1) Summarize the study findings by answer the research question.
2) Discuss the findings with reference to any surprises, lessons learned, etc. This is where you demonstrate the learning process as it unfolded with this project.
3) Prescriptions – How can your findings be applied to resolving the issues addressed in the paper?
4) Future research – What were some weaknesses in the paper that can be addressed in the future? If given more time, how would you change your study? What new research questions has this project revealed to you?