

Honors 21-22: Welcome

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Our goal

Who is responsible for what

How we are organized

Your topics

Our goal

Our goal

- ▶ We want everyone here to write a first rate piece of original, publishable, social scientific research on an important question
- ▶ We want everyone here to get honors
- ▶ We want you to get a deep understanding of how research is done and a deeper appreciation of how to evaluate research
- ▶ We want you to be well and enjoy the research process

What is a thesis?

- ▶ An original piece of research
- ▶ Length: 75 pages. In practice 70-150. *Quality trumps quantity.*
- ▶ Asks and answers a *well defined question*: it is so important that the question is well defined. A good test is whether, right now, you could imagine, broadly, 3 or 4 different answers to your question but you don't know which one is right.
- ▶ A typical structure might look like this (see [here](#)):
 1. Introduction and motivation
 2. Theory: maybe formal, maybe not; hypotheses
 3. Design: what information you will use and how you will use it
 4. Results: basic patterns, main analysis
 5. Going deeper: new analysis, explorations, or theoretical development
 6. Conclusions
- ▶ But there is no fixed structure: it depends on the substance

Who is responsible for what

Our roles

Three people are helping you:

- ▶ Your adviser
- ▶ The instructor and the preceptor

Our roles: Your advisor

Your adviser:

- ▶ High level substantive guidance.
- ▶ Helps determine the question and strategy. Helps connect with literature.
- ▶ Takes part in prospectus defense and thesis defense.
- ▶ Grades the thesis.
- ▶ Some read multiple early drafts, some do not.

Working with your adviser:

- ▶ Keep them up to date. Share a folder with them so they can see progress and have everything in one place.
- ▶ Be sure they understand the big picture as well as the details.
- ▶ Share concise summaries of where you are before meetings.
- ▶ Always identify what you are unhappy with, where you need help
- ▶ You do *not* have to follow the advice of your advisor; but:
 - ▶ if you don't understand the advice, ask for clarification; repeat back what you think is being suggested
 - ▶ if you don't agree push back and argue your position.
- ▶ You should treat them respectfully, and of course, they should also treat you respectfully. If issues arise let us know.
- ▶ Address: Different professors prefer different addresses but:
 - ▶ a good default is "Dear Professor X."
 - ▶ "Hey" is not a good default.
- ▶ Don't ghost

Our roles: Instructor / Preceptor

- ▶ We help with all of that ↑
- ▶ We help navigate research processes and tools
- ▶ We give written feedback after the prospectus and thesis defense
- ▶ We meet regularly to accompany progress, give guidance and troubleshoot
- ▶ In practice, if appropriate, we sometimes help with coding issues and related. But we try not to do any work that is properly yours!

Our roles: you

Besides the interim products, you have two “final” deliverables:

- ▶ Class grades depend mainly on the thesis (95%) this is the main deliverable
- ▶ There is 5% for a “dissemination project” which might be:
 - ▶ A blog post summarizing the work
 - ▶ A short article in a college newspaper or elsewhere
 - ▶ A journal submission
 - ▶ A video summarizing some feature of the work
 - ▶ Youtube... Instagram...

Our role: You 2

- ▶ Besides your work on these deliverables you can add a lot by being supportive of each other.
- ▶ Tune in to the projects of others in your small group. Figure out who you might be a special support to.

Note on Grades:

- ▶ Technically:
 - ▶ Honors grades are awarded by the adviser.
 - ▶ Class grades are awarded by the instructors.
- ▶ In practice these tend to be the same but they do not have to be. The instructor grades are sometimes higher or lower and seek to correct for grading idiosyncrasies.
- ▶ If appropriate, Fall grades can be updated based on the fruits of the work, seen in the Spring.
- ▶ Thesis grades are based on 31 March version of the thesis (this means that there is time between the defense and the “deposit” to edit).

Note on Honors determination:

- ▶ A committee in the department makes final determination on honors.
- ▶ This decision is largely based on the grading of the thesis, as well as GPAs
- ▶ More information on honors [here](#)

How we are organized

Group meetings

- ▶ This plenary
- ▶ Tomorrow and Wednesday: General methods meetings.
 - ▶ Research design / approaches.
 - ▶ 21 more quantitative
 - ▶ 22 more qualitative (process tracing and case selection)
- ▶ Thursday, Friday: Past theses: Come to at least one of these.
- ▶ Next: Research tools; IRB processes. Come to one or both of these.

Small meetings

- ▶ We will organize people into 4 groups of 3 or 4
- ▶ Every group will have a two hour monthly session.
- ▶ Provide **memos** by the *evening before* your session; save into: Honors_2021/2 Student folders/Your Name/1 memos
- ▶ Prepare to present your memo for about 10 mins with the aims of communicating to the whole group (a) where you have made progress (b) what challenges you have
- ▶ In addition: weekly open office hours

Major Deadlines

- ▶ 14 April 2021: Public presentation of theses
- ▶ **31 March 2021: Theses Due**
- ▶ 21-23 March: 2021: Thesis defense meetings
- ▶ 10 March 2021: Draft of complete thesis given to advisers
- ▶ 19 February 2021: Drafts of 3 chapters.
- ▶ 18 January 2021: Drafts of 2 core chapters.
- ▶ 25 November 2020: First draft of “main” chapter (in practice which is written first depends on the project but often writing is best done from the inside out)
- ▶ 25-29 October 2020: Design defenses with advisers (“prospectus defense”)

Walk through Drive folder structure

- ▶ Google drive is a **file sharing** software that keeps folder synced across computers and users
- ▶ Easier to use if you install the **desktop app** rather than using web interface
- ▶ Google drive warning: If you put something in everyone can see it; if you delete something everyone loses it; **edit with care**
- ▶ If you do not want your work to be shared; or you face capacity constraints with big data files: we can set up individual folders. Let us know.
- ▶ Advantage of writing and doing analysis “**live**” is that it is easier for us to give timely feedback; we know where you are on the work at any moment. Very open science. Not for everyone.

Folder Structure

1. Resources and readings
2. Student folders / your name
 - 2.0 archive
 - 2.1 memos
 - 2.2 design
 - 2.3 resources
 - 2.4 data and analysis
 - 2.5 writing
 - 2.6 final presentation
3. Final presentations
4. Final theses
5. Dissemination projects

Miscellaneous

- ▶ Research approval, IRBs, ethics
- ▶ Funding

Being well

- ▶ Doing original research can be a huge source of joy.
- ▶ It can also be very challenging and very stressful; everyone doing research—*everyone*—goes through stages where they think that they and their work are worth nothing. Reach out if you feel overwhelmed.
- ▶ Communicate with us when you run into problems.

Your topics

Now time to hear from you

- ▶ say briefly who you are
- ▶ describe the **main question**
- ▶ say why it is important
- ▶ what other research this connects to
- ▶ how you are thinking about answering the question
- ▶ highlight something about the research that you are still fuzzy on
- ▶ We have 4 minutes each:

Random order

- ▶ Joyce Liu
- ▶ Michael Rubin
- ▶ Zoe Mavrides
- ▶ Megan Rodriguez
- ▶ Sarah Howard
- ▶ Emily Eget
- ▶ Sydni Scott
- ▶ Ohad Klopman
- ▶ William Todd

Random order

- ▶ Stephanie Lai
- ▶ Kerem Tuncer
- ▶ Molly Kraus
- ▶ Lorelei Vaisse
- ▶ Jose Ramirez
- ▶ Trey Sprouse
- ▶ Shelly Michael
- ▶ Emily Olson