

**SOCI 625D1/D2: Professional Development Seminar in Sociology**  
Fall 2019 and Winter 2020

*Class Location:* LEA 819

*Class Meeting Time* (for exact dates see 'Course Schedule' below):

Tuesdays 11:35 a.m-12:25 p.m. (in Fall term)

Tuesdays 4:05-4:55 p.m. (in Winter term)

*Instructor:* Professor Barry Eidlin

**Course Description**

The purpose of this professional development seminar is two-fold: first, to acquaint incoming sociology graduate students with the department's faculty members and second, to familiarize students, more broadly, with the norms of the discipline.

**Course Materials**

Rojas, Fabio. 2011. *Grad Skool Rulz: Everything You Need to Know About Academia from Graduate School to Tenure* (available for electronic download at <https://www.smashwords.com/books/view/93455> Cost \$3.00)

**Course Organization and Requirements**

***Class format:*** Seminar format (1 hour every other week, for exact dates see 'Course Schedule' below). 7 seminars will be held in the fall term and 6 in the winter semester.

***Course requirements:***

Course Attendance/Participation = 75%

'Talk' Attendance = 25% (*Students are required to attend the Sociology Department Speaker Series talks and one non-departmental talk (e.g., Social Statistics and Population Dynamics Seminars, Social Studies of Medicine Seminars)*)

- NOTE: Students are required submit a one-page summary of the non-departmental talk

**Course Schedule**

**Seminar #1: Applying for External Funding**

*Tuesday, September 10<sup>th</sup>*

*Guest Speaker: Professor Jason Carmichael (Graduate Program Director)*

- What are you eligible for?
- How many times can you apply?
- When are the deadlines?
- How should you prepare your application?
- When, from whom and on what should you solicit feedback?

*Required Rojas Reading: Chapter 3*

### **Seminar #2: Speed Socialization**

**\*\*to be held Friday, September 13<sup>th</sup> 3:00-4:00 p.m.  
in Thomson House Ballroom\*\***

This event brings together students of the incoming graduate cohort with departmental faculty members in an informal setting to get acquainted with *unprecedented* speed!

ASSIGNMENT: Read the faculty profiles and come up with 1-2 questions you might ask them.

### **Seminar #3: Assistantships: Research and Teaching**

*Tuesday, September 24<sup>th</sup>*

*Guest Speakers: Professor Sarah Brauner-Otto and Yvonne Chang (PhD Candidate)*

- What can you expect from an assistantship?
- What's the point of an assistantship?
- How do you balance your need for money and completing your degree?
- What are your contractual obligations?

*Required Rojas Reading: Chapter 21*

**ATTENDING SPEED  
SOCIALIZATION**

**ASKING PROFESSORS  
QUESTIONS  
AT SPEED  
SOCIALIZATION**

**ASKING PROFESSORS  
QUESTIONS AT  
SPEED SOCIALIZATION  
AFTER CONSULTING  
THEIR WEBPAGE**

**ASKING PROFESSORS  
QUESTIONS AT SPEED  
SOCIALIZATION AFTER  
CONSULTING THEIR  
WEBPAGE, THEN STAYING  
FOR DEPT RECEPTION**



### **Seminar #4: Priorities and Program Timeline: What Should You Be Focusing On and When?**

*Tuesday, October 8<sup>th</sup>*

*Guest Speaker: Professor Axel van den Berg*

- What courses should you take and when?
- What do certain courses (e.g., reading and research, bibliographic methods) involve?
- What should you be doing during the summer?
- When can you expect to finish your program?
- When should you begin the job search?

*Required Rojas Reading: Chapters 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8*

### **Seminar #5: Finding a Supervisor, Forming a Committee, Finding a 'Second Reader', Etc...**

*Tuesday, October 22<sup>nd</sup>*

*Guest Speaker: Professor Poulami Roychowdhury*

- How do you choose a supervisor?
- What's the role of your supervisor?
- What's the role of committee members, a 'second reader' etc...?
- How do you negotiate expectations?

*Required Rojas Reading: Chapters 12, 13, 19 and 20*

**Seminar #6: Area Exams**

*Tuesday, November 5<sup>th</sup>*

*Guest Speakers: Sakeef Karim (PhD Candidate) and Winnie Yang (PhD Candidate)*

- What are they?
- What's the purpose of them?
- What 'areas' are available in which to take an exam?
- How should you prepare for an area exam?
- What happens if you fail an area exam?

*Required Rojas Reading: Chapter 9*

**Seminar #7: Presenting Your Work**

*Tuesday, November 19<sup>th</sup>*

*Guest Speakers: Professor Jan Doering*

- How are conferences and workshops useful?
- How do you choose a conference venue for your work?
- How do you fund your conference attendance/presentation?

*Required Rojas Reading: Chapter 29*

**Seminar #8: Balancing Academia and the Rest of Life**

*Tuesday, January 14<sup>th</sup>*

*Guest Speakers: Professors Luca Pesando and Shelley Clark*

- How do you cope with academic obligations and everything else?
- How do you set limits?
- How do you avoid 'burnout'?
- What can you do when faced with personal or family crisis?

*Required Rojas Reading: Chapter 11, 22 and 23*

**Seminar #9: Academic Writing: Tips and Tricks**

*Tuesday, January 28<sup>th</sup>*

*Guest Speakers: Professor Jennifer Elrick and Yvonne Hung, McGill Writing Centre Graduate Program Coordinator*

- How do you structure your 'writing' days?
- When should you seek feedback on written work?
- How do you co-author a manuscript, in practical terms?

*Required Rojas Reading: Chapter 17 and 18*

**Seminars #10 and #11: *Publish, Publish, Publish***

*Tuesday, February 11th and Tuesday, February 25th*

*Guest Speakers: Professor Barry Eidlin (Feb. 11) and Professor Zoua Vang (Feb. 25)*

- How can you revise a research paper (for a class) into a publishable piece of scholarship?
- Should you send out your manuscript and if so, where?
- What are predatory presses?
- How is writing book reviews valuable?
- What is the average review time?
- How do you respond to reviewers?
- How do you deal with rejection?
- How do you get a book contract?
- Can more than one press/journal review your manuscript?
- How do you write for broader publics beyond academia?
- What if English is not your first language?

*Required Rojas Reading: Chapters 26, 27 and 28*

**Seminar #12: *Doing a Dissertation***

*Tuesday, March 10<sup>th</sup>*

*Guest Speakers: Milaine Alarie and Xavier St-Denis, recently-graduated McGill PhDs (Sociology)*

- Why do a dissertation?
- Should you write a 'book' or 'article-based' dissertation?
- What does a dissertation proposal involve?
- How should you go about preparing it?
- What does a 'defense' involve?

*Required Rojas Reading: Chapters 14,15 and 16*

**Seminar #13: *Job Prospects***

*Tuesday, March 24<sup>th</sup>*

*Guest Speaker: TBA*

- What different opportunities are there for you *in* academia (e.g., liberal arts college vs. research university)?
- What opportunities are there for you *outside* of academia?
- What are Canadian sociologists doing?
- How do you network?
- How can/should you use social media to promote yourself?

*Required Rojas Reading: Chapters 30, 31, 32, 34, 38, 39, 40 and 41*

## Other Useful Resources

### At McGill

1. GRADUATE AND POSTDOCTORAL STUDIES (GPS) <http://www.mcgill.ca/gps/students>
2. POST-GRADUATE STUDENTS' SOCIETY (PGSS) an association of all graduate students and postdoctoral fellows at McGill... We are here to support you throughout your academic work at McGill and to serve as a resource if you ever need help dealing with the University or life in Montreal." <https://pgss.mcgill.ca/en>
3. SKILLSETS "a centrally-managed program that is jointly hosted by Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies and Teaching and Learning Services. We develop and promote interdisciplinary professional development offerings to all Graduate Students and Post-Doctoral Fellows." <http://www.mcgill.ca/skillsets/>
4. CAREER AND PLACEMENT SERVICES (CaPS) <http://www.mcgill.ca/caps/>

### PhD blogs

1. THE DUTCH PHD COACH <http://www.thedutchphdcoach.com/blog/>
2. DR. SUSTAINABLE <http://www.drsustainable.com/>
3. GET A LIFE, PHD <http://getalifephd.blogspot.nl/p/about-me.html>
4. GRADHACKER <http://www.gradhacker.org/>
5. PHD2PUBLISHED <http://www.phd2published.com/>
6. THE THESIS WHISPER <http://thesiswhisperer.com/>
7. THE PROFESSOR IS IN <http://theprofessorisin.com>

### HIGHER EDUCATION NEWS

1. UNIVERSITY AFFAIRS (for Canada) <http://www.universityaffairs.ca/default.aspx>
2. CHRONICLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION <http://chronicle.com/section/Home/5>

### ACADEMIC JOB LISTINGS

1. UNIVERSITY AFFAIRS (for Canada) <http://www.universityaffairs.ca/default.aspx>
2. AMERICAN SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION  
<http://www.asanet.org/employment/employment.cfm>

### OTHER PROFESSIONAL MATERIALS

1. THE AMERICAN SOCIOLOGIST (journal) "The American Sociologist publishes papers, comments, and other writings on topics of professional and disciplinary concern to sociologists. The contents examine intellectual, practical, and ethical issues affecting the work, careers, and perspectives of sociologists." <http://link.springer.com/journal/12108>