Course Description and Objectives

The Honours Seminar facilitates learning of the theoretical, methodological, and empirical competencies necessary for completion of the honours thesis. The honours thesis offers students the opportunity to demonstrate theoretical sophistication, clear and focused argumentation, sound analytical reasoning, and concise writing. The program is designed to prepare students for graduate-level studies. The thesis is based on a process similar to completion of an MA thesis. Under the supervision of a faculty member in the Department of Sociology, students will write and defend a research proposal, complete a thesis within the allotted timeline, and present their research at an end-of-year symposium.

Students have three options for their honours thesis. (1) A thesis normally consists of an in-depth appraisal of key literature on a specific topic or issue that is of interest to the student. This appraisal features a critical synthesis of selected peer-reviewed articles, concise argumentation about the nature of the topic/issue, and a discussion of sociological implications. (2) In some cases, a supervisor may offer the student the opportunity to work on a grant-funded project that will serve as the basis for the thesis. The student needs to negotiate the requirements for this research with the supervisor and submit a copy of this agreement to the honours advisor. (3) Under exceptional circumstances, students will carry out their own independent research project for their honours thesis.

Students are encouraged to discuss these options with the honours advisor, and to consult past theses to gain an appreciation of the standards expected. Past theses can be signed out at the Department of Sociology’s main office.

Required Textbook and Readings

This course does not have a required textbook; instead, students will be assigned a number of required readings each week. The readings are TBA.

* A more detailed course outline will be distributed to students during the first week of classes.