

## **90-904 PhD Research Seminar**

Spring 2024 / Wednesdays 1-3pm

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### **Course purpose**

The purpose of this seminar is to enable PhD students to refine their research skills as they develop a successful/defendable dissertation proposal and, in doing so, to contribute to their formation as scholars prepared to serve the academy, church, and world.

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

1. Demonstrate skills for independent and collaborative research in an area or discipline, including:

- developing and clearly stating a research topic;
- identifying and developing appropriate evidence; and
- identifying, using, and citing appropriate resources.

2. Identify and describe potential methodologies appropriate to a research project.

3. Articulate a methodological framework appropriate to one's discipline and area of research.

4. Situate oneself and one's research in a community of inquiry and practice.

### **Required Texts**

Wayne Booth, et al, *The Craft of Research*, 5th ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2024). 978-0226826677. Amazon \$19 paperback

John W. Creswell and David Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 6th edition (New York: SAGE Publications, 2022). 978-1071817940. Amazon \$32.

Christian Scharen, *Fieldwork in Theology: Exploring the Social Context of God's Work in the World* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2015). 978-0801049309. Amazon \$14-26.

Linda Tuhiwal Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (NY: Zed Books, 2021). 978-1350346086. [Available as an ebook from NU: [https://www-bloomsburycollections-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/monograph?docid=b-9781350225282](https://www.bloomsburycollections-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/monograph?docid=b-9781350225282). ]

Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses and Dissertations*. 9th edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018). 978-0226430577 (See also the [Turabian Citation Quick Guide](#) available through the library.)

### **Other required readings/resources**

John Creswell, "When should I choose a mixed methods approach," <https://methods-sagepub-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/video/when-should-i-choose-a-mixed-methods-approach> (accessed June 6, 2024)

Sandra Harding, "Is there a feminist method" in *Feminism and Methodology*, ed. Sandra Harding (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1987), 1-14.

Tyrus Miller, “How I See It: The humanities and generative AI,”

<https://www.humanities.uci.edu/news/how-i-see-it-humanities-and-generative-ai> (accessed June 6, 2024).

Nadine Naber, “The 3 R’s of Activist Research,” <https://nadinenaber.com/2022/02/the-3-rs-of-activist-research-responsible-relational-and-revolutionary-part-1/> (accessed June 6, 2024)

Arlene Stein and Jessie Daniels, *Going Public: A Guide for Social Scientists* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2017). [Introduction and Ch. 1-2; available as ebook from NU: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/northwestern/detail.action?docID=4780602.>]

Natalie Wigg-Stevenson, “[What’s Really Going on: Ethnographic Theology and the Production of Theological Knowledge](#),” *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies* 18.6 (2018): 423–429.

## Course Topics and Assignments

*Note that readings are to be completed prior to the class session for which they are scheduled.*

### Wks 1-3 What is research? What does it require? Who is it for?

#### 1. January 29

Come prepared to discuss who you are, the primary research question you intend to pursue in your dissertation, and why this question is important to you and to others.

*Read:*

Booth, et al, Prologue and ch. 1-2

Naber, “The 3 R’s of Activist Research”

Smith, Introduction to 3<sup>rd</sup> edition and Introduction

#### 2. February 5

*Read:*

Stein and Daniels, *Going Public: A Guide for Social Scientists*, Introduction and Ch. 1-2

*Write* a short (500 word) essay addressed to a non-specialized audience describing your research question/thesis. What are you planning to do? Why is it important? To whom is it important? Present this in class.

#### 3. February 12

Interview your faculty advisor to answer the following questions:

- What are you (the advisor) working on (and, perhaps, why)?
- What is your thesis?
- Who are your primary “conversation partners” in this project?
- What methods are you using and why?

*Write* a summary indicating what you learned about research (not about the faculty person) and what you need to give closer attention to in your own research. Report to class what you learned.

#### 4. February 19: Sources and evidence

*Read:*

Creswell and Creswell, ch. 2-3

Booth, et al, chs. 3-4, 7, 12

Turabian, ch. 15-16 (ch. 17 will become an ongoing reference, along with the online [Turabian Citation Quick Guide](#))

*What is a literature review and what is its purpose?*

*Review* Erik Gahner Larsen, “Literature Review and Research Design,” <https://teaching-methods.sagepub.com/content/literature-review-and-research-design>, University of Kent, (downloaded January 31, 2024).

*Prepare* a preliminary bibliography related to your research topic using resources published since 2000 (or make a case why an older resource is needed). The bibliography must include 15-20 entries and be formatted correctly following Turabian/Chicago. Copy your advisor for review/comment. **Due Feb. 26.**

#### 5. February 26: Advanced Information Technologies and Research

Drs. Dong Hyeon Jeong and Rudy Reyes as guests to talk about AI

*Read:*

Review Booth, et al, 3.3-3.4

Miller, “How I see it”

GETS plagiarism policy

*Watch* Jessica Parker and Kimberley Becker, “How to use AI for your Dissertation/Thesis: A Guide for Graduate Students,” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WSHnjYI3dBA> (accessed June 6, 2024).

#### March 5 Ash Wednesday (No class)

#### Weeks 6-9: Methodologies

What do we mean by method? How do the questions we ask determine the kinds of answers we will develop? What does it mean to decolonize our methodologies?

#### 6. March 12

*Read:*

Scharen, *Field Work in Theology*

Wigg-Stevenson, “What’s Really Going on”

*Write:* In his turn to Bourdieu, Scharen writes “we are shaped by a particular ‘field’...the concrete social context of our life.... What is shaped in us via the formative practice within a field is a ‘*habitus*,’ or mode of being in the world by which we practically navigate day-to-

day life.” (Scharen, 15) In our work, “fields” are both social contexts and academic disciplines. In 500-750 words (no more than that), describe the fields that shape your work and how they do so.

## 7. March 19

*Read:*

Creswell and Creswell, ch. 1, 5-10

Harding, “Is there a feminist method?”

Watch/listen to Creswell video “When should I choose mixed methods”

## March 26 Spring Break (No class)

## 8. April 2

*Read:*

Smith, ch. 1-5, 12-13

## 9. April 9

Dr. Mark Teasdale as guest to talk about the Human Subjects Review process

*Read:*

Booth, et al., 17

[Garrett Human Subjects Review Policy and Human Subject Review Application](#)

(downloadable from myGETS)

*Prepare* a methodology report (750-1000 words): *Describe* what you have read so far in your course work, especially your field, that addresses questions of method and what methods have been used. *Identify* the primary research methods employed in research in your field, including those of disciplines outside the field that the field regularly draws from. Given the readings of the previous weeks, describe what method or methods are most appropriate to your proposed project, why are they appropriate, and how will you use them. [See supplemental bibliography below]

## Wks 10-13 Developing a dissertation proposal

## 10. April 16

*Read:*

Booth, et al, 5-6, 8-9, 14

Find and read the *introductions* to three recent dissertations in your field. *Outline* the primary structure(s) of these introductions. What do they share in common? What makes them distinctive? Who are they writing to/for? How do they prepare you (the reader) to engage the

argument that follows? Small group—what did you learn? *Present* what you have discovered in class.

### **11-12. April 23 and April 30**

Write a draft dissertation proposal and be prepared to review it with your peer group in class on April 30. Share the draft with your advisor for review and comment prior to April 30.

The proposal must include the following components:

- a. A clear research question and thesis statement.
- b. An explanation of the significance and plausibility of the thesis (explaining why the topic is important and showing how the research would alter or supplement earlier studies).
- c. The present state of scholarship on the question (literature review).
- d. A discussion of the scholarly methods that are appropriate to the topic, what method(s) you will use, and why.
- e. A detailed proposed outline of the dissertation.
- f. A selected bibliography of primary and secondary works, possibly including annotations that demonstrate your critical judgment of the literature.

### **13. May 7**

*Revise* your proposal based on the comments you received from your peer group and advisor. *Submit* a final (final for now) version of your proposal in Moodle. Use the Dissertation Proposal Rubric provided on Moodle to review your own work.

### **Supplemental Bibliography on Qualitative Research Methods**

Vera Caine, D. Jean Clandinin, and Lessard Sean, *Narrative Inquiry: Philosophical Roots* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2022)

D. Jean Clandinin and F. Michael Connelly, *Narrative Inquiry: Experience and Story in Qualitative Research* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 2000).

John Creswell and Cheryl N. Poth, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Traditions*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Los Angeles: Sage, 2018).

Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore, [\*The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Practical Theology\*](#) (Newark: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011). Available as ebook through NU.

Mary Clark Moschella, *Ethnography as a Pastoral Practice*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim Press, 2023).

Sharon Merriam and Elizabeth J. Tisdell, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (San Francisco: Wiley, 2016).

Carl Olson, *Theory and Method in the Study of Religion: A Selection of Critical Readings* (Australia: Thomson/Wadsworth, 2003).

Michael Q. Patton, *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Los Angeles: Sage, 2015).

Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, eds., *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Los Angeles: Sage, 2013).

Christian Scharen and Anna Marie Vigen, eds. *Ethnography as Christian Theology and Ethics*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (London: Continuum, 2011). Available as ebook through NU.

John Swinton and Harriet Mowat, *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (London: SCM Press, 2016). Available as ebook through Styberg Library.

Knut, Tveitereid and Pete Ward, eds. *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Theology and Qualitative Research*. Hoboken, New Jersey: Wiley-Blackwell, 2022. Available as ebook through NU.