

***POLI 692H: Honors Thesis Research***  
***Fall 2016 – University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill***

**Instructor**

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 11am – 12pm, Thursdays 1 – 3pm

**Course Information**

Meeting Times: Mondays 2:30-5:30pm  
Location: Hamilton 452  
Website: <https://sakai.unc.edu/portal/site/poli692h-f16>

**Overview**

This course is a weekly workshop for students writing an honors thesis in political science. The goal of the workshop is to help you to make progress on your thesis project and improve your scholarly research and writing skills. Class sessions will involve a variety of activities, including student presentations, class discussions, group activities, peer review sessions, time for individual writing and research, and consultations with the instructor. You will complete the thesis process in the spring semester under the supervision of your advisor in POLI 693H.

**Words of Advice**

The research proposal you prepared for POLI 691H is only a starting point for your research experience this year. You should realize that both the topic and research design of your thesis might change in large and small ways as you begin delving into the research process. Every research project runs into unforeseen snags, pitfalls, and crises. All researchers (including myself!) experience periods of blues, self-doubt, and discouragement, as well as competing demands on their time, energy, and attention. My hope is that this workshop will help you to persevere through any rough spots in the research process and provide a venue for you to devote your focused energy on your thesis project.

In addition to the workshop, you should make sure to meet regularly with your thesis advisor this semester. S/he will be able to provide expertise on your thesis topic and guide your research process. Your thesis advisor (along with the other members of the committee) will evaluate your final thesis, so you should be sure to work closely with your advisor throughout the process.

**Grading**

Attendance & Participation: 1/3 of course grade  
 Final Thesis Grade: 2/3 of course grade

**Attendance and Participation**

You are expected to attend and actively participate in the weekly Monday workshop. During the workshop, I expect you to actively participate in class discussions, group activities, peer reviews sessions, and periods set aside for individual writing and research. You will also be required to make two presentations of your thesis research to the class—once at the beginning of the semester and once as a part of a thesis workshop later in the semester. You must bring your laptop to class every week and have access to electronic copies of your thesis work. If you prefer, you may also bring hard copies of relevant sections of your thesis draft for peer review or to work on revision and editing.

**2/3 Thesis Draft**

You must submit a draft of 2/3 of your thesis by Friday, December 5 at 5:00pm. (See details below.) While this draft will not be graded, failure to submit this draft by the deadline will result in a reduction of your attendance and participation grade.

**Final Thesis Grade**

Your thesis advisor will assign a final grade for your thesis after the thesis defense. If your work is not completed in the form of a defensible honors thesis, or if that defense is unsuccessful, a grade will still be assigned commensurate with the quality of the work performed. *If you do not successfully defend a thesis for honors, the highest grade you can receive for your final thesis grade is B+.*

Note: A placeholder grade for POLI 692H of SP will be assigned at the end of this semester. This grade will be replaced with a permanent grade after the final grade for the thesis is assigned.

**Assignments****Readings**

There will not be many assigned readings in this course, as I want you to focus your energy on your own research. All course readings will be posted on Sakai.

**2/3 Thesis Draft**

You will be expected to submit a draft of 2/3 of your thesis at the end of this semester. Since all theses and research processes are different, what constitutes “2/3 of your thesis” is something that can be determined in discussions with your advisor and me. We will have an in-class peer review session for the thesis draft on December 5. You will need to submit this draft to me and to your advisor by 5:00pm on Friday, December 9. I will provide additional details later in the semester.

## Schedule

Below is a preliminary schedule of topics that we will cover in the thesis workshop. I am happy to be flexible with these topics, as I want all of us to play an active role in this workshop. If you have any ideas for a topic that you think we could pursue in a workshop session, let me know!

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>
August 29	Introduction
September 5	<b>NO CLASS (Labor Day)</b>
September 12	Presentations: International Relations and Comparative Politics
September 19	Presentations: American Politics and Political Theory
September 26	Revisiting Thesis Examples
October 3	Lit Review / Conducting Analysis
October 10	Constructing Arguments / Conducting Analysis
October 17	Thesis Workshop 1
October 24	Thesis Workshop 2
October 31	Thesis Workshop 3
November 7	Thesis Workshop 4
November 14	Thesis Workshop 5
November 21	TBD
November 28	Introductions & Conclusions / Describing & Presenting Analyses
December 5	Peer Review: Thesis Draft
December 9 (Fri)	2/3 Thesis Draft Due at 5:00pm

## Honors Graduation Requirements

To graduate with Honors, you will need to meet the following criteria:

- Successfully complete the major in political science
- Successfully complete the requisite honors thesis courses
- Successfully defend an honors thesis
- Maintain an overall GPA of 3.3 or higher
- Maintain a GPA of 3.5 or higher in political science

To graduate with Highest Honors in political science, you must meet the above criteria AND:

- The thesis committee must determine that the defended thesis is of exceptional quality and that work goes significantly above and beyond what is required for a successful honors thesis
- You must maintain a GPA of 3.8 or higher in political science

### **Important Dates for Completing Your Thesis in Spring 2017**

Please mark these dates on your calendar. Missed deadlines may mean that you will not be able to graduate with honors.

**Friday, February 17:** Submit a complete draft of your thesis to your advisor and to me.

**Monday, March 20:** Distribute a copy of your completed thesis to your advisor and the two other members of your thesis committee. (Ask them whether they would prefer a hard copy or an electronic copy.) These other committee members should be selected in consultation with your thesis advisor. At least two of the three members of the thesis committee must be regular members of the faculty of the Department of Political Science. Graduate students may not serve on thesis committees.

**Monday, March 27 – Friday, April 7:** The oral defense of your thesis should be scheduled during this period or earlier. You should contact Kim Barbour in the department office to reserve a room for your defense (Hamilton 365 or 355). In very rare cases (such as your advisor being ill or called out of town unexpectedly), a defense may not be possible during this period. In such cases, you should discuss alternative dates with me as soon as you can.

**Friday, April 7:** You must successfully defend your thesis by this date to be eligible to graduate with honors or highest honors. The Department must submit your name to the College of Arts and Sciences on Monday, April 10 in order for you to graduate with honors. I will not submit your name if I have not received a thesis defense form signed by your committee members.

### **Preparing the final version of your thesis**

The final version of the thesis must be typed with footnotes at the bottom of the pages or endnotes at the end. A bibliography must be provided at the end of the thesis. Number the pages consecutively throughout the entire thesis. The University requires a standard title page (see Sakai) and a 1 and ½ inch margin on the left-hand side and a 1-inch margin on the top, bottom, and right-hand side of the page. You should get in the habit of employing a standard format style while working on your thesis. My personal recommendation is that you follow the guidelines in the APSA Style Manual (see Sakai) or use the Chicago author-date style, as these are the styles most commonly used in political science research. The title page will need to be signed by your committee members. You must submit the final version of your thesis electronically via the Carolina Digital Repository (CDR) by the last day of classes. Otherwise you will not be able to graduate with honors. The University Library will catalog electronic theses and make them available to the public.

### **December Graduation**

If you plan to graduate in December 2016, you should successfully defend your thesis by November 11. The Department must submit your name to the College on or before November 14 in order for you to graduate with honors in December.