Welcome to Soc 811 – Sociological Research. Our goals this semester are for you to 1) write a draft your MA Research Paper or PhD Dissertation Proposal and 2) have a plan for completion and defense next semester. By the end of this class you will have written the following:

- Interesting and informative title
- project abstract
- engaging introduction
- complete literature review
- description of your research methods
- summary of your research findings
- discussion of your contribution to sociological scholarship
- conclusion pointing the way to future research
- complete bibliography

Our seminar’s deadlines and activities are intended to provide a step-by-step map of how to get from here to there, guiding you through the writing achievements listed above and the design of a schedule for completion and defense of your MA research paper or PhD dissertation proposal. The skills you will learn in this class will be useful not only in completing your research paper or proposal, but also in writing a successful paper for presentation, article for publication, or MA thesis or PhD dissertation.

As members of this class, you and I are making a commitment to write for 15 minutes five days a week. We will keep a writing diary so that at the start of each class, each of us will answer these questions: did you write five days a week; what were your goals for the week; did you meet your goals (why or why not); what challenges did you encounter last week; what are your plans for next week; what challenges do you anticipate for the coming week? At the end of this discussion we will have a 30-minute write-in at the start of each class. You will not be graded on these daily writing assignments—they are intended to motivate, not judge. Tanya Golash-Boza inspired this syllabus from her several successful stints as instructor for this course. She’s now in California, but she will speak to us most weeks through her blog entries referenced below. Thank you, Tanya!

**August 24**  
**Introduction:** Where are you on your research project? What are your research goals this semester?  
**From Tanya Golash-Boza:**  

**August 31**  
**Putting your Plans into Action:** How to get started on daily writing.  
Belcher, Chapter 1  
*Destination Dissertation*, Chapter 9, pp. 265-273  
**From Tanya Golash-Boza:**  
[http://getalifephd.blogspot.com/2010/12/are-you-perfectionist.html](http://getalifephd.blogspot.com/2010/12/are-you-perfectionist.html)

**RESEARCH PROJECT TITLES DUE IN CLASS TODAY**
September 7  Getting Started & Getting Help
Belcher, Chapters 2 & 9
Nagel, Research Paper and Proposal Writing Checklists (handouts)
From Tanya Golash-Boza:

RESEARCH PROJECT ONE-PAGE ABSTRACTS & 10-ITEM BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE TODAY

September 14  Moving beyond Description:  Building an Argument
Belcher, Chapter 3
Destination Dissertation, Chapter 4, pp. 35-46
From Tanya Golash-Boza:

RESEARCH PROJECT THREE-PAGE SUMMARIES & 15-ITEM BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE TODAY

September 21  Selecting a Journal Before, Not After Your Research is Completed
Belcher, Chapter 4
From Tanya Golash-Boza:

RESEARCH PROJECT SIX-PAGE SUMMARIES & 20-ITEM BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE TODAY
TWO JOURNAL DESTINATIONS DUE TODAY

September 28  Finding and Using the Relevant Literature
Belcher, Chapter 5
Destination Dissertation, Chapter 5
From Tanya Golash-Boza:
Discussion with advanced sociology grad students about research writing & using literature
EXCHANGE 6-PAGE SUMMARIES—READ, EDIT, AND DISCUSS

October 5  Organizing Your Paper or Proposal
Belcher, Chapter 6
Destination Dissertation, Chapter 6
From Tanya Golash-Boza:
http://getalifephd.blogspot.com/2011/01/writing-while-researching-interview.html
Have you completed the Human Subjects Certification?  http://www.rcr.ku.edu hscl/hsp_tutorial/001.shtml
RESEARCH PROJECT TEN-PAGE DRAFT WITH HEADINGS AND SUBHEADINGS, A LITERATURE REVIEW SECTION & 25-ITEM BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE TODAY

October 12  Gathering, Analyzing, and Presenting Your Evidence
Belcher, Chapter 7
From Tanya Golash-Boza:
http://getalifephd.blogspot.com/2011/10/how-to-enhance-your-writing.html
RESEARCH PROJECT FIFTEEN-PAGE DRAFT THAT INCLUDES DATA AND FINDINGS

October 19  Introducing with Style and Concluding with Clarity
Belcher, Chapter 8
From Tanya Golash-Boza:
http://getalifephd.blogspot.com/2011/02/five-spelling-errors-that-damage-your.html
RESEARCH PROJECT TWENTY-PAGE DRAFT WITH INTRODUCTION & CONCLUSION

October 26  Revision, Revision, Revision
RESEARCH PROJECT DISCUSSIONS – Authors & Reviewers will be assigned in class

November 2

November 9

November 16  Research Symposium: Power Point Presentations of Research Projects - 706 Fraser

November 23  NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING BREAK

November 30  Research Project Reading & Writing

FINAL RESEARCH PAPERS & PROPOSALS DUE ON WEDNESDAY, 12/12 at 5 pm

COURSE INFORMATION

1. Assignments

There will be four bases for course grades: a) a written research paper, b) presentation and written review of a fellow student’s research paper, c. PowerPoint presentation of your own research, and d) presentation of one or more assigned readings and participation in discussions of all readings during the semester. Late assignments will not be accepted unless prior arrangements are made with me.

a. The goal of this course is a draft of your MA research paper. Final drafts to be graded are due at 5pm on Wednesday, December 12. There are no exceptions and no late projects will be accepted unless prior arrangements are made with me. This final draft will comprise 50 percent of your grade for this course.

b. Each student paper will be presented and reviewed by another student. Reviews will be written and presented in class followed by a class discussion of the paper’s strengths & recommended revisions. Dates for project delivery and review assignments will be decided in class. Presentation and written review of another student’s research project will comprise 15 percent of your grade for this course.

c. Students will make a PowerPoint presentation of their own research project—the presentation will be 10 minutes long and will consist of 10-20 slides; each slide will contain a visual image or graphic and text will be limited to a few words or lines per slide. The presentation will comprise 15 percent of your grade for this course.

d. This class is a seminar, and as such, students will have a central role in the presentation and discussion of reading assignments. Each week specific students will be designated to present analyses and discussion questions of the readings. All members of the class should read and participate in the discussion of all of the readings. Class participation, including the presentation and discussion of readings will comprise 20 percent of your grade for this course.

2. Ethical Conduct Expected from Students:
a. Plagiarism is the use of another person's ideas, writings, or inventions as one's own, and can involve incorrect use of direct quotes, paraphrasing, summarizing, or reconstructing. The best way to avoid plagiarizing is to properly cite all work of others. Proper citation involves the use of quotations marks for quoted material and the inclusion of complete references. References should include: Author, title, issue (for periodicals), publisher, year/date of publication, and page numbers of material used.

b. Cheating. This involves plagiarizing published material, the use of unauthorized materials (e.g., notes) during examinations, copying from another's work during examinations or on assignments, and plagiarizing or copying another student's exam or project assignments.

c. The penalty for student ethical misconduct is a failing grade for the assignment in question or a failing grade for the entire course, depending on my determination of the severity of the misconduct.

3. Grading Procedures:

The following will be the basis for your grade in this class:

a. Final Research Project 50%
b. Written & Presented Review 15%
c. Project PowerPoint Presentation 15%
d. Class Participation (includes reading presentations) 20%

Final Research Project Grading Key (adapted from Professor Greg Cushman, KU History)

10/10 = A+ = Nearly ready for submission to funding agency & ready to start data collection
9/10 = A = Excellent effort, could be submitted & ready for data collection with some revision
8/10 = A- = Very good effort, could be submitted & ready for data collection with significant revisions
7/10 = B+ = Satisfactory effort, has a major flaw
6/10 = B = Satisfactory effort, has several significant flaws
5/10 = B- = Adequate, considered passing work
4/10 = C+ = Inadequate
3/10 = C = Very inadequate
2/10 = C- = This deserves points?
0/10 = F = Oops, I didn't turn anything in

4. Research Skills and Responsible Scholarship

The University of Kansas supports ethical and responsible scholarship. As part of your training in sociological research methods in this seminar, we will discuss a number of issues relevant to conducting research, analyzing data, citing the literature, and reporting the findings. These topics include the protection of human subjects, the maintenance of confidentiality and protection of privacy, the proper storing and reporting of interview data, questions about how we write about and represent historical and contemporary figures who cannot speak for themselves, cross-cultural sensitivity when one is conducting research outside one’s home community, and the ethics of submitting and reviewing research for publication in journals and books. We will take these and other topics in turn as we discuss the various projects represented in this seminar.

Each member of this seminar will be asked to complete training and receive certification in research involving human subjects, and each student presentation will include a discussion of research difficulties and ethical challenges associated with the research and how the student dealt with the difficulties and challenges in the conduct of the research and in the write up of the results.

5. Office Hours
a. My office is 723 Fraser. Hours are Wednesdays, 1:30-3:00 pm and by appointment. I urge you to set up a specific meeting time during these office hours as I often am booked in advance.

b. The best and quickest way to reach me is by email: nagel@ku.edu

c. My phone/voice mail number is 785-864-4114. You can text me at 785-760-1078. The Sociology Department telephone number is: 785-864-4111 and the fax number is 785-864-5280. Please email or text me first and don’t rely on phone calls.

6. Readings

The required books for this course are below and are for sale in student, local, or on-line bookstores: