

**University of Minnesota**

**Interdisciplinary Center for the Study of Global Change**

**Development Studies and Social Change (DSSC) 8211: Doctoral Research Workshop**

**Fall 2024 - 3 credits – S/N grading**

**Wednesday 3:00-5:30pm – 537 Heller Hall**

**DRAFT SYLLABUS - WILL BE REVISED FOR SCHEDULING**

**Instructor: Karen Brown**

**Contact: [kbt@umn.edu](mailto:kbt@umn.edu)**

**Office Hours: By appointment**

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

The Doctoral Research Workshop is designed to meet the needs of ICGC Scholars and other doctoral students who are enrolled in the DSSC minor program courses and writing dissertation proposals as well as preparing for dissertation research. An overarching goal of the course is to develop skills for interdisciplinary scholarship in your own work and in your interactions with other scholars. Several specific learning objectives inform the course content. The first objective of the workshop is the very practical purpose of assisting students in writing successful research proposals or grant proposals to support their dissertation research on themes related to global social change. It provides a forum for students to discuss the elements of a successful proposal, share information on funding sources, and critique one another's proposal drafts. A second key objective focuses on the development of peer review and feedback skills – a crucial element of academic practice - in an interdisciplinary setting. A third objective related to improving dissertation research focuses on discussion of intellectual, practical, and ethical issues in preparing for and conducting research. While these conversations occur in the context of discussing individual research proposals, this workshop also provides space for explicit and focused consideration in some class sessions (e.g., with visiting guest speakers and panelists). The workshop in its entirety comprises an important part of the ICGC community intellectual experience. Participation in this workshop with an interdisciplinary group of colleagues offers the opportunity to learn a great deal amount about other intellectual fields through reading others' proposals and discussing their projects. You can also generate future collaboration with your colleagues – it is invaluable to know people you can turn to in the future for collaborative projects or a friendly critique of your work.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

**(1) ATTENDANCE:** To receive credit for the course, all participants are expected to attend each session. One unexcused absence is allowed. If you need to miss any additional sessions due to illness or other factors, please contact the instructor prior to the class meeting that you expect to miss. See policy section below for details on excused absence policy. Class sessions will be in-person with the possibility of few asynchronous or Zoom components.

**(2) COMMENTS ON PROPOSALS:** Please read each proposal closely and prepare a set of written comments for each author (typically these will be half to one page in length). Comments on the proposals to be discussed **must be posted to the Canvas discussion site prior to the start of the class session** in which they will be discussed. You can also post responses to the comments of others.

To make your comments as coherent and useful as possible, please organize them using the topics listed below under “Proposal Discussion Guidelines” heading. Please address at the six topics on the discussion guidelines as well as any additional thoughts that you may want to share with the proposal writer.

Since proposals are posted to the site the week before review, in most cases you will have a full week to read them and prepare comments. ***Proposal writing and review is the primary work of this course and must be completed in a timely manner.***

**(3) POSTING YOUR PROPOSAL:** You will be asked to provide a draft proposal **three times during the semester for class review and discussion**. Proposals should be posted to the class Canvas site at least one week prior to the date they will be discussed in class. While authors will be able to post responses to the comments of others if they so desire, I don’t recommend it. Authors are encouraged to focus on considering comments rather than responding to specific inquiries. We will have ample time during class sessions to discuss proposal feedback.

In addition to posting your proposal, you are required to post your CV and the guidelines for the proposal(s) you are submitting. Including your CV and the grant guidelines helps us to give you more focused and useful suggestions for improving your proposal.

**In summary, proposal-related items to be posted to the Canvas discussion forum are:**

- Your proposal
- Your CV
- Guidelines/instructions for the grant/proposal if available

**Proposals, CVs, and guidelines are due on the Canvas site one week before they will be discussed. Each week’s course module has discussions labeled with the names of that week’s presenters. Proposal authors post their proposal, CV and guidelines as a reply to the initial discussion post. Respondents (everyone else in the seminar) posts their comments as a reply to the author’s proposal post in the discussion.** If you have trouble posting, please send your proposal to me and let me know you need help posting it to the course site: [kbt@umn.edu](mailto:kbt@umn.edu)

**Proposal authors are not expected to make an oral presentation.** We work from the assumption that everyone is familiar with the contents of the proposal. We devote workshop time to improving the week's proposals. Suggestions and comments from other workshop members will help you to write a more convincing proposal for your selected grant competitions or for your committee.

**(4) REQUIRED READINGS: Readings have been assigned for some class sessions. Participants should read them and post brief comments on them before the class for which they were assigned. If comments are due on readings, there will be a discussion in the week's course module where you can post your comments and respond to others' comments.** Your comments might agree/disagree with the authors, note especially helpful (or not) parts for your own work, or even tell related anecdotes. But be brief! Keep your comments to 1/3 page or less per reading. (It is ok to respond to others' comments, so long as you do the reading, too!) The readings are designed to support your proposal writing process and your preparation for research. We will discuss the assigned readings in class most weeks.

### **PROPOSAL DISCUSSION GUIDELINES:**

During workshop sessions, we will discuss the aspects of each proposal that work well and those that could be stronger, usually in this order:

#### **1) Strengths of the proposal**

**2) Identification of the research question:** What will the author investigate? Are the objectives stated clearly early in the proposal?

**3) Literature review/project context and significance:** What will this project contribute to existing literature/theory/policy? Why is the project important/unique to the body of theory in which it is located, to the field, and/or to academia?

**4) Methodology:** How will the author investigate/research the research question? Why are the methods the author proposes to use appropriate?

**5) Implementation:** What are the specific activities the author will undertake to complete the proposed project? How feasible is the proposed project? What personal credentials qualify the author to undertake this project?

**6) Writing and style:** Please address editing, organization (does it "flow"?), clarity, and presentation of the proposal.

### **Other notes**

**Role of the moderator during proposal discussions.** As instructor, I will act as moderator of the proposal discussions, in addition to offering comments on proposal drafts. The goal is to facilitate helpful and respectful discussions. Occasionally I might intervene to redirect the discussion or

pause to reflect upon a broader issue raised in the conversation. Varied disciplinary traditions of critique make thoughtfulness about tone and language particularly important.

**Confidentiality of proposal drafts.** Proposal drafts and the ideas presented in them should not be shared with others outside the class unless the author gives explicit permission. This principle encourages an atmosphere of trust in sharing your work with the seminar group.

### **PEER REVIEW GUIDELINES**

Please write/give the kinds of comments to others that you would like to receive on your own proposal, remembering that peer review can be a scary process. My expectation for the workshop is that comments on proposals will be made in a supportive and constructive way: you are encouraged to ask difficult questions and to point out strengths and weaknesses of your peers' proposals in a manner that is both honest and kind. Peer review is an important academic skill – expertise in giving and receiving peer critique will serve you well.

When receiving critical feedback on your own proposal, remember that the workshop goal is to help you turn out the most competitive or compelling proposal possible and to secure funding or approval for your own research. ***While the comments and suggestions of other workshop participants do not indicate success or failure, they are also a gift that should not be taken lightly.*** These comments represent opportunities to write a strong and clear proposal that is persuasive for readers both within and outside of your field of study. It is better that your friends make suggestions for improvements to your proposal now, before your proposal is under formal review.

### **PANEL DISCUSSIONS AND GUEST SPEAKERS**

The sessions at which advanced ICGC Scholars and faculty or guest speakers will share their research experience and expertise are intended to provide information on research issues and methods that will be useful in your own research or in understanding and evaluating the research of other scholars. The invited guests will make presentations, followed by discussion. To make these sessions as productive as possible, you will be asked to prepare questions related to the session topic prior to the class session and sometimes to do short readings on the topic. We will provide short readings if suggested by guest panelists in advance of the class session.

### **REQUIRED READINGS**

Some course readings are available in electronic form through the course Canvas site or the University of Minnesota library. Beyond the required readings for each week's class session, there are several other resources I recommend as you write your proposal. ***Please note that this syllabus will be revised during the semester as additional readings become available and***

**proposal discussion dates and guest speaker dates are finalized – check the course site each week for current requirements as proposal discussion dates occasionally shift.**

### ***Additional Recommended Readings and Resources***

Barrett, Christopher B. & Jeffrey W. Cason. 2010. *Overseas Research: A Practical Guide, Second Edition*. NY: Routledge.

Booth, Wayne, Gregory Colomb and Joseph Williams. 2003. *The Craft of Research*. Chicago: University of Chicago.

Turabian, Kate. (2007) *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, 7<sup>th</sup> Edition*, Chicago: University of Chicago.

### **Fall 2024 Workshop Meeting Dates**

***PLEASE NOTE: YOUR PROPOSAL MUST BE POSTED TO THE COURSE CANVAS SITE AT LEAST ONE WEEK BEFORE THE DATE YOUR NAME APPEARS ON THE COURSE SCHEDULE. Comments on proposals and other required readings must be posted by 9:00am on the day of the class session which they will be discussed in class.***

**September 4: Introduction to course**

**September 11: Writing grant proposals: thinking like a reviewer**

**September 18: No class**

**September 25: Proposal Writing**

***Discussion of proposals by***

**October 2**

***Discussion of proposals by***

**October 9: What is a Proposal?**

*Discussion of proposals by*

**October 16: No class**

**October 23: Proposal Discussion**

*Discussion of proposals by*

*Required readings: Lamont How Professors Think (excerpts posted on module - please post reflections in discussion forum)*

**October 30**

*Discussion of proposals by*

**November 6**

*Discussion of proposals by*

**November 13: Practicalities of Research**

*Discussion of proposals by*

**November 20**

*Discussion of proposals by*

**November 27:**

*Discussion of proposals by*

**December 4: Proposal Review and Research Ethics**

*Discussion of proposals by*

*Required reading:*

Millora, C., Maimunah, S., & Still, E. (2020). Reflecting on the ethics of PhD research in the Global South: reciprocity, reflexivity and situatedness. *Acta Academica (Bloemfontein, South Africa)*, 52(1), 10–30. <https://doi.org/10.18820/24150479/aa52i1/SP2>

## **December 11: Course Wrap Up**

### ***Discussion of proposals by***

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## **UNIVERSITY POLICIES RELEVANT TO THIS COURSE - PLEASE REVIEW**

### **Student Conduct Code**

The University seeks an environment that promotes academic achievement and integrity, that is protective of free inquiry, and that serves the educational mission of the University. To support this environment, the University seeks a community that is free from violence, threats, and intimidation; that is respectful of the rights, opportunities, and welfare of students, faculty, staff, and guests of the University; and that does not threaten the physical or mental health or safety of members of the University community.

As a student at the University, you are expected to adhere to Board of Regents Policy: [Student Conduct Code](#). Note that the conduct code specifically addresses disruptive classroom conduct, which means "engaging in behavior that substantially or repeatedly interrupts either the instructor's ability to teach and/or a student's ability to learn." The classroom extends to any setting where a student is engaged in work toward academic credit or satisfaction of program-based requirements or related activities.

### **Use of Personal Electronic Devices in the Classroom**

Using personal electronic devices in the classroom setting can hinder instruction and learning, not only for the student using the device but also for other students in the class. To this end, the University establishes the right of each instructor to determine if and how personal electronic devices are allowed to be used in the classroom. For complete information, please review the Administrative Policy: [Teaching and Learning: Student Responsibilities](#).

### **Scholastic Dishonesty**

As students in a university community, you are expected to do your own academic work, and to cite sources of knowledge that you draw on in completing your assignments and other academic work. Failing to do so is scholastic dishonesty, which includes: plagiarism; cheating on assignments or examinations, including the unauthorized use of online learning support and

testing platforms; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work, including the posting of student-generated coursework on online learning support and testing platforms not approved for the specific course in question; taking, acquiring, or using course materials without faculty permission, including the posting of faculty-provided course materials on online learning support and testing platforms; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering, forging, misrepresenting, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis. When it is determined that a student has cheated, the student may be given an "F" or an "N" for the course, and may face additional sanctions from the University. For additional information, please see: [Teaching and Learning: Instructor and Unit Responsibilities](#).

Additional resources pertaining to academic integrity can be found through the [Office for Community Standards](#) and the [Center for Educational Innovation](#)[Links to an external site.](#).

Beware of websites that advertise themselves as being "tutoring websites." It is not permissible to upload any instructor materials to these sites without their permission or copy material for your own homework assignments from these various sites. When you have additional questions and concerns, please speak with or email your instructor to clarify practices expected for the course. Your instructor can respond to your specific questions regarding what would constitute scholastic dishonesty in the context of a particular class, for example, when and whether collaboration on assignments is permitted, when citing sources is required and what citation method to use, or when and which electronic aids are permitted or prohibited during an exam.

### **Excused Absences and Makeup Work**

Students will not be penalized for absence during the semester due to unavoidable or legitimate circumstances. Such circumstances include verified illness, participation in intercollegiate athletic events, subpoenas, jury duty, military service, bereavement, and religious observances. Such circumstances do not include voting in local, state, or national elections. For complete information, please see Administrative Policy: [Excused Absences and Makeup Work](#).

### **Appropriate Student Use of Class Notes and Course Materials**

Taking notes is a means of recording information and more importantly of personally recording, integrating, and connecting information as part of your educational experience. However, broadly disseminating class notes beyond the current classroom community or accepting compensation for taking and distributing classroom notes undermines instructor interests in their intellectual work product while not substantially furthering instructor and student interests in effective learning. Such actions violate shared norms and standards of the academic community. For additional information, please see: Administrative Policy: Teaching and Learning: Student Responsibilities.

### **University Grading Scales**



The University has two distinct grading scales: A-F and S-N.

**A-F grading scale.** The A-F grading scale allows the following grades and corresponding GPA points:

<b>Grade</b>	<b>GPA Points</b>	<b>Definitions for undergraduate credit</b>
A	4.000	Represents achievement that significantly exceeds expectations in the course.
A-	3.667	
B+	3.333	
B	3.000	Represents achievement that is above the minimum expectations in the course.
B-	2.667	
C+	2.333	
C	2.000	Represents achievement that meets the minimum expectations in the course.
C-	1.667	
D+	1.333	
D	1.000	Represents achievement that partially meets the minimum expectations in the course. Credit is earned but it may not fulfill major or program requirements.
F	0.000	Represents failure in the course and no credit is earned.

**S-N grading scale.** The S-N grading scale allows for the following grades and corresponding GPA points:

<b>Grade</b>	<b>GPA Points</b>	<b>Definitions for undergraduate credit</b>
S	0.00	Satisfactory (equivalent to a C- or better)
N	0.00	Not Satisfactory

For additional information, please refer to: Administrative Policy: [Grading and Transcripts](#).

### **Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, Stalking and Relationship Violence**

The University prohibits sexual misconduct, and encourages anyone experiencing sexual misconduct to access resources for personal support and reporting. If you want to speak confidentially with someone about an experience of sexual misconduct, please contact a confidential resource on your campus. If you want to report sexual misconduct, or have questions about the University's policies and procedures related to sexual misconduct, please contact your campus [Title IX office or relevant policy contacts](#).

Instructors are required to share information they learn about possible sexual misconduct with the campus Title IX office that addresses these concerns. This allows a Title IX staff member to reach out to those who have experienced sexual misconduct to provide information about personal support resources and options for investigation. You may talk to instructors about concerns related to sexual misconduct, and they will provide support and keep the information you share private to the extent possible given their University role.

For more information, please see Administrative Policy: [Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, Stalking and Relationship Violence](#).

### **Equity, Diversity, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action**

The University provides equal access to and opportunity in its programs and facilities, without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status, familial status, disability, public assistance status, membership or activity in a local commission created for the purpose of dealing with discrimination, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. For more information, please consult Board of Regents Policy: [Diversity, Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action](#).

### **Disability Accommodations**

The University of Minnesota is committed to creating learning environments that are inclusive and accessible to all students. If you are experiencing disability-related barriers to learning in your courses, the Disability Resource Center (DRC) is the office that collaborates with students to explore reasonable accommodations, tools, and resources.

- If you are registered with the DRC and have a current accommodation letter please share your letter with me as soon as possible so that we can discuss how your accommodations will be implemented in this course. The sooner I know about your disability access-needs, the more equipped I can be to facilitate accommodations. You may reach out to me or your (access consultant/disability specialist) if you have any questions or concerns about your accommodations.
- If you are **not** registered with the DRC and are experiencing or think you may be experiencing disability related to a mental health, attention, learning, chronic health, sensory, or physical condition, and would like to discuss accommodations and/or resources, please contact the DRC on our campus. Contact information: <https://disability.umn.edu/>, [drc@umn.edu](mailto:drc@umn.edu)
- If you have a short-term medical condition, such as a broken arm, I may be able to assist in minimizing classroom barriers. In situations where additional assistance is needed, you should contact the DRC as noted above.

### **Mental Health and Stress Management**

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance and may reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. University services are available to assist you. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the [Student Mental Health Website](#). As an instructor/University community member, we care about the wellbeing of students. If health, safety, or mental health concerns are conveyed, we may consult with campus support offices to provide support and resources to a student.

## **Academic Freedom and Responsibility**

Academic freedom is a cornerstone of the University. Within the scope and content of the course as defined by the instructor, it includes the freedom to discuss relevant matters in the classroom and conduct relevant research. Along with this freedom comes responsibility. Students are encouraged to develop the capacity for critical judgment and to engage in a sustained and independent search for truth. Students are free to take reasoned exception to the views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled.\* When conducting research, pertinent institutional approvals must be obtained and the research must be consistent with University policies.

Reports of concerns about academic freedom are taken seriously, and there are individuals and offices available for help. Contact the instructor, the Department Chair, your adviser, the associate dean of the college, or the Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs in the Office of the Provost. [Customize with names and contact information as appropriate for the course/college/campus.]

\* Language adapted from the American Association of University Professors "Joint Statement on Rights and Freedoms of Students."