

## GRADUATE RESEARCH SEMINAR: RESEARCH AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

2024-2025

<b>Course code</b>	POLI 681/683/684/685/687 POLI 811/812/813/814/815	<b>Faculty</b>	Arts & Sciences
<b>Department</b>	Political Science	<b>Time</b>	Wednesdays, 09:00-11:15
<b>Instructor</b>	Prof. Alexandra O. Zeitz	<b>Room</b>	H-1226
<b>Email</b>	<a href="mailto:alexandra.zeitz@concordia.ca">alexandra.zeitz@concordia.ca</a>	<b>Website</b>	<a href="#">Moodle page</a>
<b>Office hours</b>	15:00-17:00 on Wednesdays, H1225-07 or on <a href="#">Zoom</a>		

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This year-long pass-fail three-credit course helps students develop their skills and confidence as researchers in political science and political theory. Aimed at first- and second-year research-focused graduate students, the course explains and demystifies core aspects of the professional trajectory of researchers in politics: giving presentations, building academic networks, providing and receiving feedback, publishing journal articles, and applying for grants, PhD programs, and academic jobs. The course encourages students to develop their identities as scholars by presenting work-in-progress to peers and providing meaningful and constructive feedback. It emphasizes peer feedback and exchange to encourage students to learn from one another and build networks of mutual support. The aim of the course is for students to identify their goals for graduate study and to provide them with the knowledge, strategies, and competencies to work toward those goals.

### Learning outcomes

Students who take this course should be able to:

1. *Articulate* their goals for graduate study, *reflecting* on how these change over time
2. *Generate* a plan to achieve those goals by *identifying* appropriate strategies and practices
3. *Support* peers by providing relevant and constructive feedback on research plans and work-in-progress
4. *Receive, integrate, and respond* to feedback on their research plans and work-in-progress

## TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I would like to acknowledge that Concordia University is located on unceded Indigenous lands. The Kanien'kehá:ka Nation is recognized as the custodians of the lands and waters on which we gather. Tiohtià:ke/Montréal is historically known as a gathering place for many First Nations. Today, it is home to a diverse population of Indigenous and other peoples. We respect the continued connections with the past, present and future in our ongoing relationships with Indigenous and other peoples within the Montreal community.<sup>1</sup>

## ASSESSMENT

**Grading:** This course is graded on a pass-fail basis. To receive a passing mark, students must submit writing assignments, deliver a presentation, provide discussant comments on the day assigned, attend a majority of the speaker series events, and consistently participate actively in seminar discussions.

### Assessments:

1. *Draft scholarship application:* You will write and submit a draft scholarship application for an external scholarship competition (provincial or federal). The draft should conform to the requirements of a specific scholarship competition (length, structure, etc.). The proposal can be a draft, since it will be workshopped in class, but it should be a well-developed and carefully written draft.
2. *Draft work-in-progress:* You will submit a research paper you are considering adapting into a research article. This will be a research paper that you have already written for a seminar course you have taken so far at Concordia. You can submit the research paper that you submitted for your other course with minimal changes and a brief note at the beginning explaining how you would change this for a research article. If you have another piece of work-in-progress that you would rather discuss (e.g. a draft journal article, your MA or PhD proposal), let me know!
3. *Presentation of work-in-progress:* You will give a 12-minute presentation in class, using slides, implementing principles of effective presentations learned in class.
4. *Discussant comments:* You will give five minutes of discussant comments based on a peer's research proposal and presentation, implementing principles of effective feedback learned in class.
5. *Attending speaker series:* Attendance will be taken at the department's speaker series events. You must attend a majority of these.
6. *Attendance and active participation:* You will participate actively and constructively in seminar discussion, showing critical reflection on the required readings and offering constructive engagement with other students' contributions.

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<sup>1</sup> This territorial acknowledgement and resources were created by Concordia University's Indigenous Directions Leadership Group (2017). To read the entire territorial acknowledgement and learn more about why it was written this way, please visit <https://www.concordia.ca/about/indigenous/territorial-acknowledgement.html>

## COURSE STRUCTURE

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>
Fall – Week 1	September 4, 2024	Welcome & graduate funding
Fall – Week 3	September 18, 2024	Workshopping funding applications
Fall – Week 5	October 2, 2024	Building a network
Fall – Week 6	October 9, 2024	Giving presentations and giving feedback
Fall – Week 8	October 23, 2024	Developing a writing practice
Fall – Week 10	November 6, 2024	Planning your path through the degree
Fall – Week 12	November 20, 2024	Career paths – Leveraging your MA/PhD in non-academic careers
Winter – Week 1	January 15, 2025	Academic publishing: Journal articles
Winter – Week 2	January 22, 2025	Time management and building a profile
Winter – Week 3	January 29, 2025	Research-in-progress
Winter – Week 4	February 5, 2025	Career paths – Academic jobs
Winter – Week 5	February 12, 2025	Research-in-progress
Winter – Week 6	February 19, 2025	Research-in-progress

## IMPORTANT DATES AND DEADLINES

- Monday, Week 3 (Fall) – Draft scholarship applications due
- Monday, Week 1 (Winter) – Abstracts for research-in-progress presentations due
- Wednesday before assigned presentation – Draft work-in-progress due

## FALL TERM

**Welcome & applying for graduate funding**

- The goals of this course
- Why are you in this degree? Where do you want to be after this degree?
- Applying for graduate funding: Why apply? What are the deadlines and expectations?

## Required pre-class viewing:

- Verwey, Michael “Applying for graduate funding”. Video available at this link: [gpll433 scholarship for SS and humanities 08-09-2022](#). Log in using your mail.concordia.ca Microsoft account. Ideally watch the video in its entirety, but if you are pressed for time, please watch minutes 9:05-47:45. [Note: the eligibility requirements around citizenship have changed for FRQ funding, I will explain in class]

**Workshopping graduate funding applications**

- What does a successful funding application look like?
- How best to bring out your strengths in a scholarship application?

## Required pre-class reading:

- Examples of past scholarship applications (available on Moodle)

**Building your network: Conferences, professional associations workshops, and peers inside and outside your department**

- How do you find your people? What is the value of an academic network?
- Which conferences should you apply to?
- How can you get the most out of a conference?

## Required pre-class reading:

- Kim, Seo-Young Silvia et al. “Networking 101 for Graduate Students: Building a Bigger Table” (2021) *PS: Political Science & Politics*
- Turner, Kimberly, Christina Boyes, Elizabeth Bennion, and James Newman. "[How to Conference](#)." *APSA Preprints* (2022).

**Giving presentations and giving feedback**

- How do you effectively present your research?
- How do you ask good questions at a research seminar?
- How do you receive feedback on work-in-progress?

Guest speaker:

- Prof. Marlene Sokolon

Required pre-class reading:

- o Smith, D., & Salmond, R. (2011). Verbal Sticks and Rhetorical Stones: Improving Conference Presentations in Political Science. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 44(3), 583-588.
- o Pole, A., & Parashar, S. (2020). Am I Pretty? 10 Tips to Designing Visually Appealing Slideware Presentations. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 53(4), 757-762.

**Developing a writing practice**

- How can your writing practice be aligned with your goals?
- How does writing change during different stages of research?
- What makes for clear and effective writing on your research?

Guest speaker:

- Prof. Eric Buzzetti

Required pre-class reading:

- o Silvia, Paul J. (2002) *How to write a lot*. "Specious Barriers to Writing A Lot", pgs. 11-27 (available on course reserves)

**Planning your path through your degree**

- How do you find a supervisor?
- How do you prepare a proposal? How do you defend a proposal?
- For PhD students, how do you prepare for comprehensive exams?

Guest speaker:

- Prof. James Kelly

Required pre-class reading:

- o Chris Macaulay, Mary McThomas, and Alisson Rowland, "[Selecting an Advisor: Professional and Personal Considerations](#)." *APSA Preprints* (2022).

**Career paths – Leveraging your MA/PhD in non-academic careers**

- What are the non-academic career paths for political scientists?
- How can you use the skills of your research training outside the academy?

Guest speakers:

- [Catherine Maertens](#), Consultant, TACT

Required pre-class reading:

- Loleen Berdahl and Jonathan Malloy *Work Your Career: Get What You Want from Your Social Sciences or Humanities PhD*. (2018) University of Toronto Press. Chapter 1 “Get What You Want from Your PhD” (available on Course Reserves)

Further reading:

- Gilbert, Danielle, S. R. Gubitz, Jennifer Kavanagh, and Kelly Piazza. "[Pushing the Boundaries of Your PhD: Exploring Careers Outside the Ivory Tower](#)." *APSA Preprints* (2022).

## WINTER TERM

**Academic publishing: Journal articles and the peer review process**

- The publishing process: How do you get articles published? How does the peer review process work?
- The publishing landscape: Which journals are out there?
- The path from a seminar paper to a journal article

Guest speaker:

- Prof. Francesca Scala

Required pre-class reading:

- Rich, Timothy S. “Publishing as a Graduate Student: A Quick and (Hopefully) Painless Guide to Establishing Yourself as a Scholar” (2013) *PS: Political Science & Politics*

**Time management, communication, and building a profile outside academia**

- How do you allocate time to achieve your research goals? Across the semester? Across the week? Across the day?
- What are expectations of professional communication in the academy?
- How can you build a profile for yourself as an expert?

Guest speaker:

- Prof. Dónal Gill

Reading:

- Vortherms, Samantha A., and Coyle Neal. "[Practicing Effective Time Management](#)." *APSA Preprints* (2022).
- Dónal Gill, *The Montreal Gazette*, Nov. 18, 2023. "[Opinion: Are the Conservatives at risk of winning too many seats?](#)"

Further reading:

- Gabel, Chelse and Nicole Goodman. "[Public Engagement in Political Science: Moving beyond Tweets, Blogs, & Media Interviews](#)". Paper prepared for 2019 CPSA (2019)

**Research-in-progress workshop**

- Discussion of student work-in-progress

Pre-class reading:

- Student work-in-progress

**Career paths -- Academic jobs in universities**

- The landscape of academic positions: Post-docs, lectureships, professorships
- Navigating uncertainty and precarity in the academy
- For MA students: Should you pursue a PhD? What does a successful PhD application look like?

Guest speaker:

- Prof. [Lindsay Larios](#), University of Manitoba

Required pre-class reading:

- o Finnell, Rachel, and Alexandra Middlewood. "[Started From The Bottom, Now We're Here: Navigating the Job Market Without A "Top Tier" PhD.](#)" *APSA Preprints* (2022).
- o Trantham, Austin, Connor J.S. Sutton, Margaret Mary Ochner, and Jennifer E. Lamm. "[A Limited Time Offer: Exploring Adjunct, Visiting, and Fixed-Term Positions.](#)" *APSA Preprints* (2022).
- o Concordia School of Graduate Studies, "[PhD Career Outcomes](#)"

Further reading:

- o Thomas M. Carsey, [Tom's Comments: Advice about Graduate School, Finding a Job, Reaching Tenure in Political Science and other Social Sciences, and All of the Steps in Between](#) (2020), "Ch 2. Picking a Graduate Program" or "Ch. 14 The Academic Job Market"

**Research-in-progress workshop**

- Discussion of student work-in-progress

Pre-class reading:

- o Student work-in-progress

**Research-in-progress workshop**

- Discussion of student work-in-progress

Pre-class reading:

- o Student work-in-progress

## COURSE EXPECTATIONS AND POLICIES

### **Course expectations**

This is a graduate seminar. I expect that you attend seminars having completed the required readings, reflected on them, and prepared questions and reflections to contribute to the discussion. I also expect that you participate in the seminar in a constructive, open-minded, and respectful manner. If you ever feel that the seminar environment is discouraging your participation, please let me know.

### **Accessibility and accommodation**

I am committed to having all students being able to participate fully in this class and get the most out of it. If you require accommodations or modification of any of the following course procedures because of a disability or other condition, please let me know early in the semester. You can contact me via email or speak with me during office hours.

For more information, students can contact the [Concordia Access Centre for Students with Disabilities \(ACSD\)](#).

### **Policy on attendance and absences**

Attendance is essential to getting the most out of this class. For discussion in class, your peers' experience in the class also depends, in part, on your participation. To receive marks for participation, you must attend. If you are ill and unable to come to class, please complete the university's [short-term absence form](#), which does not require a medical note. If you have a medical or personal reason for a longer absence, please let me know as soon as possible. To make sure you do not fall behind, it is important that I know sooner rather than later if you will not be able to come to class, but you never need to divulge personal information about your health or well-being.

### **Behavior**

Everyone in this class is expected to be constructive and respectful throughout the course, including in their communications. Concordia students are subject to the [Code of Rights and Responsibilities](#) which applies when students are physically or virtually engaged in any University activity, including classes, seminars, meetings, etc. Students engaged in University activities must respect this Code when engaging with any members of the Concordia community, including faculty, staff, and students, whether such interactions are verbal or in writing, face to face or online/virtual. Failing to comply with the Code may result in charges and sanctions, as outlined in the Code.

### **Academic integrity and plagiarism**

Submitting someone else's work or ideas as your own (even if you worked together as a group) is plagiarism. Using someone's ideas without citing them appropriately is also plagiarism. You must give a citation when you use someone else's ideas in-text, even if you do not quote them word-for-word. It is completely normal to draw on the ideas of others, but you must acknowledge their intellectual contributions! Develop good note-taking and citation habits to ensure you adequately and appropriately reference others' work. If you have any questions, please get in touch. See the Political Science Department Statement on Plagiarism at the end of the syllabus for more information.

**Changes to the syllabus and the class**

I may change the schedule of meetings and assignments listed in this syllabus as might become necessary based on events throughout the semester. I will announce any changes to the syllabus and the updated syllabus will be available on the course Moodle page.

**Extraordinary Circumstances**

In the event of extraordinary circumstances, the University may modify the delivery, content, structure, forum, location and/or evaluation scheme. In the event of such extraordinary circumstances, students will be informed of the changes.

## Department of Political Science Statement on Plagiarism

The Department of Political Science has zero tolerance for plagiarism.

1. What is plagiarism? The University defines plagiarism as “the presentation of the work of another person, in whatever form, as one’s own or without proper acknowledgement” (Concordia Undergraduate Calendar 2020-2021, section 17.10.3 (<https://www.concordia.ca/academics/undergraduate/calendar/current/17-10.html>)).

Plagiarism is an academic offence governed by the Code of Conduct (Academic). To find out more about how to avoid plagiarism, see the Concordia University Student Success Centre at: <https://www.concordia.ca/students/success.html>

2. What are the consequences of being caught? Students caught plagiarizing are subject to the following sanctions: (a) a written reprimand; (b) a piece of work be re-submitted; (c) an examination be taken anew; (d) a grade reduction or grade of zero for the piece of work in question; (e) a grade reduction or failing grade for the course; (f) a failing grade and ineligibility for a supplemental examination or any other evaluative exercise for the course; (g) the obligation to take and pass courses of up to twenty-four (24) credits in addition to the total number of credits required for the student’s program; (h) suspension for a period not to exceed six (6) academic terms. Suspensions shall entail the withdrawal of all University privileges, including the right to enter and be on University premises; (i) expulsion from the University. Expulsion entails the permanent termination of all University privileges. In the case of a student who has already graduated, the only two available sanctions are (i) a notation on the student’s academic record that he or she has been found guilty of academic misconduct; or (ii) a recommendation to Senate for the revocation of the degree obtained. (Undergraduate Calendar, p. 58)

Complete regulations can be found in section 17.10.3 of the Undergraduate Calendar.

3. See also The Political Science Department's "Resources on Avoiding Plagiarism" at: <https://www.concordia.ca/artsci/polisci/student-life/students.html#plagiarism> and the full (and updated) Academic Code of Conduct here: <http://www.concordia.ca/content/dam/common/docs/policies/official-policies/Academic-Code-Conduct-2015.pdf>