3rd year Writing Seminar

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Z508/A

**Course Description**:

The aim of this seminar is to help students with the writing of their dissertation. Each student presents at least one (draft) chapter, together with a (draft) table of contents, which will help clarify the function of the chapter in the thesis, and the chapter’s and thesis’s overall arguments.

The seminar’s core requirement, to circulate a substantive dissertation chapter in progress (at the very least: a 10+ page section of such a chapter), is designed to give students a deadline and community to support their independent dissertation writing. The draft chapter and table of contents are to be distributed at least three weekdays before the class session.

The structure of the seminar is that of a writing workshop. This means that members must read the writing of other students and provide thoughtful, productive, and meaningful feedback to facilitate their peers’ revisions. One student prepares a written comment. Feedback will further be provided by fellow Ph.D. candidates participating in the seminar, the student’s Ph.D. Supervisor (who is expected to attend the seminar of her or his advisee) and the professor leading the seminar.

Depending on the number of students enrolled, participants may be able to present more than once a revision of their first submission.

One session will be devoted to academic publishing.

**Learning Goals**:

\* By the seminar’s end, the students should have a clearer idea of what the particular, original contribution of their own research is, what the main argument of their chapter is, and how it facilitates the argument of the dissertation as a whole. This learning goal will be achieved through their individual preparation of a dissertation chapter and presentation, and by the critical questions and feedback of the other members of the seminar.

\* Ideally (but not required), participants should better understand more broadly how the over-arching argument of a dissertation is supported and developed by the sub-arguments and “evidence” (analytical support) within the individual, substantive chapters. This learning outcome would be achieved through analysis of and comparison across the writing of the other members of the seminar.

**Course requirements**:

\* Attendance

\* Presentation of a (draft) PhD dissertation chapter

\* Preparation of written comment on one fellow-student’s work

\* Reading each other’s work and providing feed-back

**The seminar schedule** (who presents when, and who prepares a comment) is distributed separately among the participants after we construct it together.

First meeting of the course: January 12 9:00-10:40