

# Introduction to Doctoral Research & Theory, Part II



Becoming a professional academic means learning how to do research. In this seminar, we will focus on epistemological concepts and processes of theory generation and testing as they apply to the study of information. Our goal is to provide you with the tools needed to advance to the next level in your scholarly career. In addition to learning about the theory and practice of research, you will also develop the professional skills associated with being a working academic, including presentation, publication, networking, and teaching.

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**INF 391D.9 • Spring 2012**

## Course Requirements:

This is a doctoral-level reading seminar with all of the expectations that entails: you will need to do the readings, develop questions and critiques, and be prepared to discuss them with your peers. A large part of becoming a professional scholar is learning to read (quickly, critically, and voraciously) within the relevant literature; equally important, however, is the ability to talk (intelligently, convincingly, and in a manner appropriate to the context). In this seminar we will be developing both skills. Each week you will need to prepare the readings for discussion, meaning that you not only will read, but also take notes, pose questions, make connections, and situate in context. This is the real business of being an academic, and we will practice this process.

For each seminar meeting, you will be responsible for formulating in advance (and delivering in writing) two high-quality discussion questions based on the week's assigned readings. In addition, you must actively participate in class discussions. If for some reason you must miss class, it is your responsibility to inform me in advance, and to follow up with me and your fellow-students to make up what you have missed. Together your class participation responsibilities will comprise 50% of your final grade.

In addition, we will be working towards a final research-based paper that will be of sufficient quality to submit to a relevant peer-reviewed journal, conference, or edited book. While this might sound intimidating, it can be done, and you must learn to publish (or perish!). We will talk in great length throughout the semester about the specifics of this assignment, and you will be matched up with a faculty advisor who will guide you through the process of writing a research paper. Over the course of the semester there are several weeks devoted to the research papers, and you will be responsible at various points for producing proposals, outlines, and drafts. At the end of the semester you will have a polished finished product that will both make you proud and start you off on your future in publishing. Together these elements will comprise 40% of your final grade.

As an apprentice member of an academic community, you will be learning the norms, practices, and conventions of that community, and so in addition to attending seminar, you will be expected to attend at least seventy percent of the departmental research colloquiums. Doing so comprises 10% of your final grade.

The vast majority of the readings will be made available electronically via the course Blackboard site. There are four books that you will want to acquire, either via the library, Amazon, or your favorite local bookstore:

Godfrey-Smith, Peter. *Theory and reality: An introduction to the philosophy of science*. University Of Chicago Press, 2003.

Eagleton, Terry. *Literary Theory. An Introduction*. Wiley-Blackwell, 1983.

Crotty, Michael. *The foundations of Social Research: Meaning and perspective in the research process*. Sage Publications Ltd, 1998.

Kuhn, Thomas S. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. University Of Chicago Press, 1996.

Latour, Bruno, and Steve Woolgar. *Laboratory Life: the Construction of Scientific Facts*. Princeton, N.J Princeton University Press, 1986.

We will talk about other requirements and expectations during the first week of class.

## Course Schedule:

The seminar will meet weekly on Tuesday afternoons from noon–3pm in room UTA 5.428.

### I Practicing Theory

Jan 17: introduction; where theory meets practice; your academic career begins *now*.

### II How we know

Jan 24: positivism; empiricism; understanding the research process

Godfrey-Smith, Peter. *Theory and reality. An introduction to the philosophy of science*. Chapters 1-4.

Rugg, Gordon, and Marian Petre. *The unwritten rules of PhD research*, Chapters 1-2: "So you want to do a PhD?", "The many shapes of the PhD"

### III Who Shifted My Paradigm?

Jan 31: introduction to science studies; Kuhn and his critics; the role of the literature review

Godfrey-Smith, Chapters 4-5.

Kuhn, Thomas S. *The structure of scientific revolutions*.

### IV The Social Life of Truth

Feb 7: the social studies of knowledge; constructivism; geographies of knowledge

Godfrey-Smith, Chapters 7-8.

Shapin, Steven. "The house of experiment in seventeenth-century England." *Isis* (1988).

Rugg & Petre, Chapter 6: "Reading"; Paul Edwards, "How to read a book: Guidelines for Getting the Most out of Non-Fiction Reading"

### V Text me?

Feb 14: interpretivism; hermeneutics; cultural studies

Crotty, Michael. *The foundations of social research*, Chapters 4-5.

Trauth, E.M., and L.M. Jessup. "Understanding computer-mediated discussions: positivist and interpretive analyses of group support system use." *MIS Quarterly* (2000): 43–79.

Rugg & Petre, Chapters 7, 10: "Paper Types", "Writing"

### VI Knowledge = Power

Feb 21: Marxism after Marx; Foucault; the politics of artifacts

Crotty, Chapters 6-7.

Noble, David. "Social choice in machine design: the case of automatically controlled machine tools." In *The Social Shaping of Technology*, Donald Mackenzin and Judy Wajcman, eds.

Fox, Nick ".Foucault, Foucauldians and Sociology." *The British Journal of Sociology* 49, no. 3 (September 1, 1998): 415–433.

Rugg & Petre, Chapter 4: "Supervision"

Phillips, Estelle, and Derek Pugh. *How to Get a PhD. A Handbook for Students and Their Supervisors*. Chapter 9, "How to manage your Supervisors"

## **VII The Holy Trinity**

Feb 28: Race, class, gender.

Godfrey-Smith, Chapter 9.

Haraway, Donna. "Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century" *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (1991): 149–181.

Cohn, Carol. "War, Wimps and Women: Talking Gender and Thinking War." In *Gendering War Talk*, Miriam Cooke and Angela Woolcott, eds.

Eglash, Ron. "Race, Sex, and Nerds: From Black Geeks to Asian American Hipsters." *Social Text* 2, no. 20 (2002): 49–64.

Rugg & Petre, Chapters 5, 14: "Networks", "Conferences"

## **VIII Research Paper I**

March 6: proposals; faculty advisors; future plans

Rugg & Petre, Chapters 11, 12: "Writing Structure and Style", "The Process of Writing"

## **Spring Break**

March 13: Party on!

## **IX Reading the Machine**

March 20: texts; subtexts; artifacts; literature

Eagleton, Terry. *Literary Theory. An Introduction*. Chapters 2-4.

Rockwell, Geoffrey. "Gore galore: literary theory and computer games." *Computers and the Humanities* 36, no. 3 (2002): 345–358.

Rugg & Petre, Chapters 13, 15: "Presentations", "The viva"

## **X Professions, Communities, Disciplines**

March 27: sociology of professions; ethnography; cultural studies

Abbott, Andrew. *The Systems of Professions: An Essay on the Division of Expert Labor*. Chapters 1, 8.

Barley, Stephen. "Technicians in the Workplace: Ethnographic Evidence for Bringing Work Into Organization Studies." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 41 (1996): 404–441.

Gosling, Patricia, and Lambertus Noordam. *Mastering Your PhD. Survival and Success in the Doctoral Years and Beyond*. Chapter 21: "Putting it all together: A PhD ...so what's next?"

## **XI Research Paper II**

April 3: choosing a journal; the importance of a second draft; the review process

Gosling, Chapter 12: "Mastering Presentations and Group Meetings"

## **XII Community & Identity**

April 10: anthropology 101; psycho-biography; culture as practice

Latour, Bruno, and Steve Woolgar. *Laboratory Life: the Construction of Scientific Facts*

Turkle, Sherry. *Life on the screen: Identity in the age of the Internet*. Chapters 1-2

Lenning, Emily. *A guide to surviving a career in academia: Navigating the rites of passage*.

Chapter 2: "Strategies for success on the job market"

## **XIII Does Technology Drive History**

April 17: determinisms, technological and otherwise; causality & change

Smith, Merritt Roe, and Leo Marx. *Does Technology Drive History: The Dilemma of Technological Determinism*. Selected chapters.

Lenning, Chapter 8: "Getting Tenure"

## **XIV Opening the Black Box**

April 24: the social construction of technology

Bijker, Wiebe, Thomas Hughes, and T. J Pinch, eds. *The Social Construction of Technological Systems*. Selected chapters.

Bardini, Thierry, and August T Horvath. "The Social Construction of the Personal Computer User." *Journal of communication* 45, no. 3 (September 1995): 40-66.

Rugg & Petre, Chapter 16: "Sabotage and Salvation"

## **XV Big Finish**

May 1: in which all will be made clear ...

Rugg & Petre, Chapters 17, 18: "What Next?", "Closing Thoughts"