

**SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH COUNCIL
DISSERTATION PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT FELLOWSHIP
SPRING 2009 WORKSHOP AGENDA**

REVITALIZING DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

<https://workspace.ssrc.org/dpdf/revitalizing>

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**Astor Crowne Plaza, New Orleans, LA
May 28- 31, 2009**

Introduction

This is the first of two workshops designed to help students prepare cogent and fundable dissertation proposals in their chosen field. The two goals of the first workshop are 1) to map the research field with respect to contributing disciplines, methods, sources, and area knowledge; and 2) to help prepare fellows for their pre-dissertation summer research. (The goal of the second workshop will be to focus on the mechanics and methods of writing a dissertation proposal). The two goals stand in close relation to each other: through a sustained and structured discussion of student proposals and their component parts, we hope to contribute to the mapping of the research field itself.

As we wrote in the description of the field, the breakdown of the Washington Consensus in favor of market-oriented reform has left the study of economic development in a state of flux and more open to new and alternative approaches. Scholars and practitioners have increasingly argued against a one-size-fits-all approach to development policymaking. Instead, they maintain that policies and strategies need to be tailored to specific contexts, which in turn requires the careful analysis of existing institutions, social organization, cultural norms, and political processes. Representative questions that animate this debate include: What role does inequality play in fostering or inhibiting growth (reversing the usual question)? What are the variable roles of ethnicity and identity in promoting collaboration or contention in development? Why, despite increasing growth, investment, and education (human capital), does productivity stagnate in so many developing countries? How does “history” (i.e., colonial legacies, path dependence, etc.) influence social and economic development today? And, more generally, what are the non-economic bases of economic success and failure? Prominent among the answers are new perspectives that underscore the importance of factors such as institutions, identities, social networks and capital, local knowledge, and learning in promoting or impeding development. Although these perspectives do not add up to a new consensus, they do share a commitment to looking across disciplines and grounding theory in careful empirical research. One major substantive goal of the workshop is through our collective discussions to try to develop a more coherent, shared understanding of the field of contemporary development studies.

Workshop Readings and Resources

Research Field resources will be placed on the relevant Workspace websites. Students will receive separate explanations and detailed instructions about the access and use of the DPDF digital platform.

WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

ARRIVAL, Wednesday, May 28

Wednesday Evening: *Reception, 6-8 pm.*

Session 1: Introduction and Purpose of Workshops

(Thursday, 9 AM – 12:00 PM)

Plenary Session: Presentations by Program Director Josh DeWind and the Research Directors

Session 2: Introductions, Interdisciplinarity, and Field Building

(Thursday, 2:00 PM – 5 PM)

- Personal introductions
- Discussion of the field of development studies (carried over from the morning session)
- Discussion of the annotated bibliographies on formative works posted by students to Workspace
- Discussion of assigned field methods readings (Schrank, Piore, and Przeworski)

Session 3: Working on Research Proposals

(Friday, 9 AM – 12:00 PM)

- Discussion of research proposals (30 minutes per proposal, discussants in parentheses): Ardanaz (Barandian & Calderon), Ellis (Freytes & Jackson), Kar (Manglos & Ricks), Tarlau (Tejani & Zinda), Barandiaran (Calderon & Ellis), and Freytes (Jackson & Kar)
- Discussants will start the discussion of proposal with five minutes each of commentary and suggestions.

Individual meetings with students (20 minutes each, 1-2pm): Ardanaz, Ellis, and Kar

Session 4: Dissertation Funding and Field Research

(Friday, 2:00 PM – 5 PM)

- Presentation by Aaron Schneider on funding, field research, and non-academic careers in development research

Individual meetings with students (20 minutes each, 5-6pm): Tarlau, Barandiaran, and Freytes

Session 5: Working on Research Proposals

(Saturday, 9 AM – 12:00 PM)

- Discussion of research proposals (continued from session 3, discussants in parentheses): Manglos (Ricks & Tarlau), Tejani (Zinda & Ardanaz), Calderon (Ellis & Freytes), Jackson (Kar & Manglos), Ricks (Tarlau & Tejani), and Zinda (Ardanaz & Barandian)
- Discussants will start the discussion of proposal with five minutes each of commentary and suggestions.

Individual meetings with students (20 minutes each, 1-2pm): Manglos, Tejani, and Calderon

Session 6: Puzzles and Questions: Interdisciplinary approaches to designing research

(Saturday, 2:00 PM – 5 PM)

- Development puzzles. Students will work in groups with a recent news items (to be distributed) to identify development questions and devise appropriate research strategies to answer them.

Individual meetings with students (20 minutes each, 5-6pm): Jackson, Ricks, and Zinda

Session 7: Looking Forward

(Sunday, 9 AM – 11:15 AM)

- Plans for the summer
- What does the field of development studies look like now?

**SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH COUNCIL
DISSERTATION PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT FELLOWSHIP
FALL 2009 WORKSHOP AGENDA**

REVITALIZING DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

<https://workspace.ssrc.org/dpdf/>

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Research Director: Andrew Schrank [\[schrank@unm.edu\]](mailto:schrank@unm.edu)

**Hilton Garden Inn, Philadelphia City Center
Thursday, September 10 – Sunday, September 13**

This is the second of two DPDF workshops designed to help graduate student fellows prepare cogent and fundable dissertation proposals in their chosen fields. The workshop's two goals are to help you (i) analyze the results of your summer research and (ii) draft dissertation and/or funding proposals. The workshop will therefore focus on the philosophy and mechanics of proposal writing but will also challenge you to reflect on both your summer research and the field of development studies more generally. In this, the goals of the fall workshop are closely related to the project of mapping the field that was started during the spring workshop in New Orleans. You should come out of the second workshop with supportive networks of mentors and colleagues as well as intellectually mature dissertation proposals.

At the risk of re-stating the obvious, your field experiences should inform your revised dissertation proposals. Do the questions that piqued your interest when you began the process a year or more ago still seem exciting and relevant? Are they empirically tractable? Are the methods you planned to use to answer them appropriate to the task? Or have you discovered more exciting questions, puzzles, or techniques along the way? You should not only reflect upon these and similar questions when revising your proposals but should explicitly incorporate your summer field experiences—and their lessons—into the revisions.

Workshop Readings and Resources

Please read the following before revising your proposals.

Adam Przeworski and Frank Salomon. "The Art of Writing Proposals." Unpublished manuscript. SSRC. 1995. http://www.ssrc.org/workspace/images/crm/new_publication_3/%7B7a9cb4f4-815f-de11-bd80-001cc477ec70%7D.pdf

Michael Watts. "In Search of the Holy Grail: Projects, Proposals, and Research Design, but Mostly About Why Writing a Dissertation Proposal Is So Difficult." Ch. 10 in S. Curran and E. Peregman, eds., *A Handbook for Social Science Field Research: Essays & Bibliographic Sources on Research Design and Methods* (Beverly Hills: Sage, 2006).

Workshop Assignments

- **7 September. Due on DPDF Workspace site.** Upload a draft of your dissertation proposal. Maximum length 10 pages double spaced or about 3,000 words. The format can follow the specific guidelines of one of the main funding agencies to which you will be applying or the general recommendations by your dissertation committee.
- **9 September.** Read all posted proposals and review Przeworski and Salomon and Watts. Read cvs and/or recent papers by Philip Keefer and Natasha Iskander (to be posted on workspace).

Workshop Schedule

Wednesday, September 9th.

Arrival. Registration packets will be distributed at the Welcome Reception/Workshop Registration.

Thursday, September 10th.

Session 1: Panel – The Dissertation Proposal: Strategies and Funding Sources

(9 AM – 12:00 PM)

- Welcome and Introductions
- Dissertation Funder Presentations

Sessions 2-7: Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday

These sessions will focus on student proposals, which have been grouped into thematic clusters. Fellows should read all proposals and come prepared to discuss them, but they should also think about the groupings. Why did we group the proposals in this way? What other breakdowns were possible? What do the various groupings tell us about the different ways in which a proposal can be framed? Might this influence your proposal writing and revision?

We will allot 40 minutes per proposal. The presenters should start with 5 minute reports on how their summer field research went. This will be followed by two 5 minute commentaries on the written proposals by designated discussants (please check your assignments in parentheses below).

Session 2: Discussion of proposals 1: Natural resources and development.

(Thursday, 2:00 PM – 5 PM)

3 proposals (40 mins. each), 2 bilaterals (20 mins. each)

This session will discuss the proposals by Javiera Bardiaran (Ardanaz, Manglos), Jacob Ricks (Freytes, Tarlau), and John Zinda (Calderón, Kar). While they address distinct countries, development problems, and disciplinary audiences, Javiera, Jacob, and John are united by their concern with natural resources and their protection or exploitation during the course of economic development. Are these issues addressed differently by different disciplines? Is there (or should

there be) a unified “development studies” approach to their study? Will the authors aim their proposals at different targets? And how might they learn from each other by crossing disciplinary divides? These are some of the questions you should be thinking about when reading and preparing your interventions.

Bilaterals: Bardiaran, Ricks

Session 3. Discussion of proposals 2: Finance and development

(Friday, 9 AM – 12:00 PM)

3 proposals (40 mins. each), 2 bilaterals (20 mins. each)

This session will discuss the proposals by Karen Ellis (Jackson, Zinda), Carlos Freytes (Ricks, Tejani), and Sohini Kar (Calderon, Bardiaran). The common denominator is finance. Who gets it? How is it regulated (or deregulated)? Are the answers to these questions shaped by culture, politics, and social structure? And what are the developmental implications? You should be thinking about these questions—as well as the aforementioned disciplinary, inter-disciplinary, and field considerations—when reading and preparing your interventions.

Bilaterals: Ellis, Freytes

Session 4: Research trends in multilateral development agencies

(Friday, 2:00 PM – 5 PM)

Workshop with Philip Keefer, Lead Economist, Development Research Group, World Bank, 2-4pm

Bilaterals: Zinda, Kar

Session 5: Discussion of proposals 3: Social movements and collective action

(Saturday, 9 AM – 12:00 PM)

3 proposals (40 mins. each), 2 bilaterals (20 mins. each)

This session will discuss the proposals by Martín Ardanaz (Kar, Ricks), Nicolette Manglos (Ellis, Jackson), and Becky Tarlau (Freytes, Tejani). Collective action figures into each of these proposals but in different ways, with different motivations, and with different posited impacts. Are the alleged differences products of distinct cultures, social structures, and organizational environments? Or might the alleged differences be products of the distinct disciplinary assumptions of the authors—and thus less real than imaginary? What are the implications for the proposals in question and for the field of development studies?

Bilaterals: Ardanaz, Manglos

Session 6: Lessons of experience

(Saturday, 2:00 PM – 5 PM)

Workshop with Natasha Iskander, Assistant Professor of Public Policy, NYU 2-4 pm. Natasha is a former Fulbright and SSRC fellow who has carried out fieldwork in Africa, Latin America, and the

Middle East. She will discuss her pre-dissertation, dissertation, and post-doctoral experiences with a particular focus on proposals and funding.

Bilaterals: Tarlau, Tejani

Session 7: Discussion of proposals 4: Entrepreneurship and business strategy
(Sunday, 9 AM – 12:30 PM)

3 proposals (40 mins. each), 2 bilaterals (20 mins. each)

This session will discuss the proposals by Gabriela Calderón (Ardanaz, Manglos), Jason Jackson (Bardiaran, Zinda), and Sheba Tejani (Ellis, Tarlau). Gabby, Jason, and Sheba deal with business strategies but with radically different types of businesses (e.g., microenterprises in Mexico, large-scale Indian business groups, offshore service providers). Are their diagnoses of the problems facing developing country businesspeople broadly the same or different? Are the differences, if any, products of the different types of businesses they're studying (i.e., size, sector, nationality) or the assumptions they bring to the table? What are those diagnoses and assumptions and how might they affect proposal writing and research?

Bilaterals: Calderón, Jackson