

**SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH COUNCIL
DISSERTATION PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT FELLOWSHIP
SPRING 2012 WORKSHOP AGENDA**

ECOLOGICAL HISTORY

**Oak Ridge Conference Center, Chaska, Minnesota
May 30th to June 3rd, 2012**

Research Directors: [Stevan Harrell](#), [Peter C. Perdue](#)

This is the first of two workshops designed to help students prepare cogent and fundable dissertation proposals in their chosen fields. 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.

WORKSHOP READINGS AND RESOURCES

Readings and other resources will be placed on the section of the DPDF online workspace devoted to this field. Students will receive separate explanations and detailed instructions about the access and use of the DPDF digital platform.

ASSIGNMENTS TO BE COMPLETED BEFORE THE SPRING WORKSHOP

All written assignments should be uploaded on the DPDF online workspace:

- **Proposal summary:** By 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 23, you should post a 300-500 word revised abstract of the proposal you submitted with your DPDF application. These word limits are absolute; you should be able to describe your project concisely in 500 words or less. You may, in addition to the written summary, include up to three maps, photos, or figures. Your abstract should include the questions you propose to address and the methods you will use to address them. You will also be expected to comment on at least two other fellows' proposals. These summaries and comments will be the basis of discussions, led by the research directors, of some of the questions raised by each proposal, at the first session on May 31.
- **Commentary on two or more other fellows' projects.** By 5:00 p.m. on Friday, May 25, you should post commentaries on *at least two* other fellows' proposal summaries. We will assign specific fellows to comment on specific proposals; you may feel free to comment on additional proposals besides the ones you are assigned, if you are so inclined. These comments may address any aspect of the proposals, substantive or methodological.
- **Research Directors' Comments.** By 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 29, the research directors will post their comments on the proposal abstracts and the fellows' comments. You should have read all the proposals and the fellows' and directors' comments by the beginning of the first session of the workshop, and be prepared to discuss the proposals one-by-one in that workshop session.

ASSIGNMENTS FOR EACH DAY OF THE WORKSHOP

- **Reading assignments:** There will be reading assignments attached to each session of the workshop. For some sessions, you will be asked to post brief comments on some of that sessions' assigned readings; these assignments are set out in the description of each session, below. Since we are all going to be very busy in Chaska, we will try to confine the work you need to do each evening to about two hours' worth. Still, it would be wise to budget your time before the workshop and read some of the assigned readings, and even perhaps draft some of your commentaries, beforehand.
- **Serving as commentator/discussant.** For sessions 2, 3, and 4, each fellow will serve as one of two discussants on research directors' presentations. This will mean going over the presentation slides or outline before the relevant session, and preparing 10 minutes or so of comments, with or without slides. Fellows will be asked to volunteer to be discussants for specific presentations by Friday, May 25; the presentations will be available to discussants by Tuesday, May 29.

WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

Wednesday, May 30th

6 p.m.: **Registration and welcome reception**
Workshop materials will be distributed at registration.
Dinner to follow

Thursday, May 31st

9 a.m. to 12 p.m.: Session #1: Introductions

Objectives: To get to know each other, put faces together with names, and begin discussion of our research projects and the substantive and methodological issues in ecological history that they touch on.

Readings: Review the proposal summaries and the comments by the fellows and directors.

9:00 Peter and Steve will each give a 15-minute introduction to their own work related to the workshop theme, followed by ten minutes each for questions from the fellows.

9:50 Break

10:00 Research directors will organize a discussion of a series of questions that are raised by various projects or combinations of projects, along with the comments posted on each of the project summaries. We will facilitate, but we hope that the fellows contribute the bulk of the discussion.

2 to 5 p.m.: Session #2: What is Ecological History?

Objectives and Format: To develop a shared understanding of the concepts and issues that compose ecological history, and begin looking at the ways in which the fellows' projects are informed by these concepts and contribute to our understanding of these issues. To accomplish these objectives, we will divide the session into two parts. Each part will consist of an introductory presentation by one of the research directors, which includes specific reference to

some of the fellows' proposals, (25 minutes), comments by two fellows on each lecture (20 minutes total) and group discussion moderated by the discussants (30 minutes).

Assignment: by 1:00 p.m., please post 200 words or less on one of the readings for each part of this session. We will have posting spaces open before the start of the workshop, in case you want to get a head start.

2:00-3:15 Part I: Environmental History and its Relationship to the Social Sciences:

Readings:

Agenda:

Presentation by Peter Perdue

Discussant comments by [Fill in names of fellows]

General discussion moderated by [Fill in names of fellows]

3:15-3:30 Break

3:30-4:45 Part II: What's in a Name? Ecological History and Historical Ecology

Readings:

Balée, Historical Ecology: Premises and postulates

Whitehead, Ecological History and Historical Ecology

Agenda:

Presentation by Steve Harrell

Discussant comments by [Fill in names of fellows]

General discussion moderated by [Fill in names of fellows]

4:45-5:00 Introduction to the next day's sessions

Friday, June 1st

9 a.m. to 12 p.m.: Session #3: Scales in Space and Time

Objectives: To examine the ways in which different spatial and temporal scales, as well as cross-scale interactions, influence the course of ecological history and the methods we use to research it. The format is the same as session #2.

Assignment: by 7:30 a.m., please post 200 words or less on one of the readings for each part of this session. We will have posting spaces open before the start of the workshop, in case you want to get a head start.

9:00-10:20 Part I: Social systems and ecosystems: models and meta-models

Readings:

Holling, Gunderson, and Ludwig, In Quest of a Theory of Adaptive Change

Zimmerer, The Reworking of Conservation Geographies

Hornborg, Zero-Sum World

Agenda:

Presentation by Steve Harrell

Discussant comments by

General discussion moderated by

10:20-10:40 Break

10:40-12:00 Part II: Environmental History at the Global, Regional, and Local Scales

Readings:

Agenda:

Presentation by Peter Perdue

Discussant comments by

General discussion moderated by

2 to 5 p.m.: Session #4: Methods and sources in history and social sciences

Objectives: To place the methods of one's own field in interdisciplinary perspective, to look at methods from other disciplines and how they might be useful to one's own project, and to look at the ways methods from different disciplines might be complementary. The format is the same as sessions #2 and #3.

Assignment: by 1:00 p.m., please post 200 words or less on one of the readings for each part of this session. We will have posting spaces open before the start of the workshop, in case you want to get a head start.

2:00-3:15 Part I: Sources for environmental history: textual, visual, quantitative, and natural science data.

Readings:

Agenda:

Presentation by Peter Perdue

Discussant comments by [Fill in names of fellows]

General discussion moderated by [Fill in names of fellows]

3:15-3:30 Break

3:30-4:45 Part II: Field methods in ethnography, ethnohistory, and earth sciences

Readings:

Agenda:

Presentation by Steve Harrell

Discussant comments by [Fill in names of fellows]

General discussion moderated by [Fill in names of fellows]

4:45-5:00 Introduction to the next day's sessions

Saturday, June 2nd

9 a.m. to 12 p.m.: Workshop Session #5: Big Interdisciplinarity

Objectives: To consider how best to collaborate across disciplinary boundaries, particularly between history, social science, archaeology, and the natural sciences.

Readings:

Schmidt et al., A New Model for Training Graduate Students

9:00-10:30: Panel of scholars from other disciplines who have done extensive interdisciplinary work: each will have 30 minutes for presentation plus questions. They will have read your project summaries before the workshop, and will be encouraged where appropriate to use your projects as examples.

[Harvey Weiss](#), Near Eastern Archaeology, Yale University
[Lauren S. Urgenson](#), Forest Ecology, University of Washington
[Amanda Henck Schmidt](#), Geology, Oberlin College

10:30-10:50 Break

10:50-11:50: Discussion among fellows about how they might collaborate with natural scientists, archaeologists, or people from other disciplines that are epistemologically distant from their own. Guest panelists will remain available to take part in the discussion.

11:50-12:00: Assigning times and discussants for the afternoon and Sunday morning sessions

2 to 5 p.m.: Workshop Session #6: Summer plans in light of what you have learned at the workshop

Objectives: To apply the lessons (we sincerely hope there are some!) from our last two and a half days' work to your individual projects and particularly to your plans for summer research. 20 minutes will be devoted to each fellow's project, to be allocated 10 minutes for presentation, 5 minutes for discussant comments, and 5 minutes for general discussion

2:00-3:20: First four fellows' projects.

3:20-3:40: Break

3:40-5:00: Second four fellows' projects

Sunday, June 3rd

9 a.m. to 12 p.m.: Workshop Session #7: Summer plans and Looking Forward

Objectives: Continue with Session #6 on individuals' summer plans, and set clear assignments for the summer and plans for the fall workshop

9:00-10:20: Last four fellows' projects

10:20-10:40 Break

10:20-11:20: We will go over assignments and schedules for the summer and for the fall workshop.

11:20-12:00: General discussion evaluating the spring workshop.

**SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH COUNCIL
DISSERTATION PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT FELLOWSHIP
Radisson Warwick Hotel, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Wednesday, September 12th to Sunday, September 16th, 2012
FALL 2012 WORKSHOP AGENDA**

Ecological History

Research Director: Stevan Harrell [meiguimuga@gmail.com]

Research Director: Peter C. Perdue [peter.c.perdue@yale.edu]

This is the second of two annual DPDF workshops designed to help graduate student fellows prepare cogent and fundable dissertation proposals in their chosen field. The two goals of the second workshop are 1) to help fellows synthesize their summer research; and 2) to develop revised drafts of dissertation proposals, either for committee or funding purposes. The workshop challenges fellows to consider their summer research and proposal development within the context of contributions to their research fields. In this, the goals of the fall workshop are closely related to the project of mapping a research field that began during the spring workshop in Minnesota.

Fellows will come out of the second workshop with supportive networks, consisting of both mentors and cohorts of new scholars carrying out research in their fields, as well as intellectually mature dissertation proposals.

WORKSHOP READINGS AND RESOURCES

Any new readings and other resources will be placed on the section of the DPDF online workspace devoted to this field.

WORKSHOP ASSIGNMENTS

All assignments should be uploaded on the DPDF online workspace unless otherwise noted:

- **Deadline, September 3:** Revised proposal draft due. The proposal should be significantly revised and expanded from the submission of the spring. You may write it either as a dissertation prospectus or a grant proposal, following guidelines for a specific foundation if appropriate.
- **Deadline, September 8:** Read all proposals and compile brief comments in preparation for workshop discussions. We have put each of you in one of four groups with related research themes. For the proposals in your group, write one paragraph that summarizes your understanding of the major contributions of each of the other proposals.
- **Deadline, September 15:** Using student and faculty feedback you've received from this workshop, submit a revision of your first draft.

WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

Note: Steve and Peter will also arrange individual meetings with each of you for more informal discussion, during lunch, dinner, or other available times.

Wednesday, September 12th

6 p.m.: **Registration and welcome reception**
Workshop materials will be distributed at registration.
Dinner on your own

Thursday, September 13th

9 a.m. to 12 p.m.: **Plenary Session on Funding and DPDF Alumni Experiences**

This session, in which all 2012 fellows will attend, includes a roundtable discussion with representatives from major funding sources in the humanities and social sciences. The discussion will involve trends in dissertation funding, best practices in preparing proposals for various funders, and making the transition from dissertation to postdoc opportunities. The plenary will also include a discussion with DPDF alumni about career trajectories following the DPDF fellowship.

2 to 5 p.m.: **Workshop Session #1: Summer Research - Successes and Challenges**

- Describe briefly what you expected to find at your field site, what surprised you, and how you altered your research objectives once you recovered from the shock of reality.
- Discussion of Issues in Ethnographic fieldwork
- Discussion of Issues in Archival Research
- Discussion of how to incorporate the natural sciences into social science and humanistic research.

Friday, September 14th

For each of these review sessions, we will ask you to prepare a short presentation of your revised proposal [10 minutes], and we will appoint commentators from the group to discuss how your revisions have improved or complicated your research project.

9 a.m. to 12 p.m.: **Workshop Session #2: Reviewing Proposals**

Colonial History: David, Sam, Angelo

2 to 5 p.m.: **Workshop Session #3: Reviewing Proposals**

Conservation History at a Local Site: Jenny, Caterina, Paolo

Group Dinner: TBA

Saturday, September 15th

9 a.m. to 12 p.m.: Workshop Session #4: Reviewing Proposals

Political Ecology: Tim, Zac, Laura

2 to 5 p.m.: Workshop Session #5: Reviewing Proposals

Urban and National Ecology: Greg, Nate, Maria

Sunday, September 16

9 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.: Workshop Session #6: Wrapping Up and Next Steps

- Issues of Interdisciplinary Work: Advisors, future Search Committees, and other demons/angels.
- How to talk to a foundation Program Officer
- Qualifying Exams: trying not to let them erase what you have learned.
- Future networking and field building: Facebook, Mendeley, Conferences, and Schmoozing...
- Ave atque Vale!