

# SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH COUNCIL DISSERTATION PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT FELLOWSHIP

University of California, Berkeley  
Wednesday, June 3<sup>rd</sup> to Sunday, June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2015

## SPRING 2015 WORKSHOP AGENDA

This agenda is for the first of two workshops that have been designed to help you and other students prepare cogent and fundable dissertation research proposals.

Your participation at both workshops will primarily take place in the *core* and *methods* groups to which you have been assigned. Your core group is your primary group and will address your dissertation proposal overall while your methods group will focus on your approach to conducting the research that you will undertake this summer and will propose for your longer-term dissertation research.

The fall workshop will enable you to build on your spring workshop and summer experiences to prepare dissertation research proposals.

### ASSIGNMENTS

- 1. Deadline, May 24<sup>th</sup>: Complete the DPDF Workbook**  
Complete the DPDF Workbook in its entirety and upload it to the documents area within *both* your core *and* methods group sections on the DPDF Workspace. Instructions on how to complete the workbook are located within the document itself.
- 2. Deadline, June 3<sup>rd</sup>: Critically Read Your Core Group Members' Workbooks**  
Read the workbooks of your *core* group members (to be uploaded by May 24<sup>th</sup>), and prepare at least two suggestions that you think can strengthen the dissertation plans described. Be prepared to discuss your comments during the workshop discussions. You will be asked to post this feedback to your core group's Workspace forum by the end of the spring workshop.
- 3. Deadline, June 3<sup>rd</sup>: Prepare Detailed Comments on One Colleague's Workbook**  
Prepare a descriptive summary and constructive comments about each of the components and overall approach of the core group member's workbook to which you have been assigned. Your core group faculty facilitator will post a list of these assignments to the workspace by May 29<sup>th</sup>. You will present your comments to your core group during the workshop. (Please see Core Group Session #2 in the agenda below.) Additionally, you will be asked to post these written comments to your core group's Workspace forum by the end of the spring workshop.
- 4. Deadline, June 3<sup>rd</sup>: Talk with Your Advisor about Your Project's Disciplinary Roots**  
Discuss with your advisor the disciplinary requirements and intended contributions of your proposed dissertation project. In what ways does your department expect your dissertation to conform to disciplinary standards and traditions? How important does your advisor believe your dissertation's contributions to your discipline will be in shaping your future career options? What does your advisor hope (or fear) you might get from the workshops' interdisciplinary perspectives? Prepare notes summarizing this conversation as background for your core group's discussion of interdisciplinary similarities, differences, and connections.
- 5. Deadline, June 3<sup>rd</sup>: Read the Posted Article for the Opening Plenary**  
As background for the opening plenary session, please read Immanuel Wallerstein, "Open the Social Sciences," *Items* Vol. 50, no. 1, March 1996, pgs. 1-7, which is posted in the documents area of the Workspace's DPDF section.

6. **Deadline, June 5<sup>th</sup>: Evaluate Your and Your Peers' Methodological Approaches**  
Prepare a presentation about the methodological approaches and choices of your dissertation to be presented in your methods group sessions. (See Methods Group Session #1, below.) Be prepared to discuss what, if any, shifts in methodological approaches you are considering based on your conversations within your core group. Also, prepare what remaining questions you have about your plans to conduct your research both this summer and in your dissertation overall. Similarly, read and be prepared to discuss the methodological choices of other group members' plans and how you think they might be strengthened.

## **WORKSHOP SCHEDULE**

*Note: Please refer to the workshop's Schedule of Events for a list of all event and session locations.*

**Wednesday, June 3<sup>rd</sup>**

**6 to 9 p.m.:**

**Welcome Reception and Dinner**

**Thursday, June 4<sup>th</sup>**

**9 to 10:30 a.m.:**

**Plenary Session:  
Interdisciplinarity in the Humanities and Social Sciences**

To help clarify the implications of the interdisciplinary approach of this workshop, this introductory plenary session will explore differences in disciplinary orientations and the constraints and possibilities they pose for research at the dissertation stage and beyond. To do so, we have asked some of the faculty facilitators reflect on their relations to their own and other disciplines throughout their research careers. The article by Immanuel Wallerstein will provide a context for this discussion.

**10:45 a.m. to 12 p.m.: Core Group Session #1:  
Introductions and Disciplinary Orientations**

In this first session within your core group, you will introduce yourselves and your proposed dissertation research to one another. In doing so, we ask that you draw upon the earlier plenary session, your own graduate education, and the assigned conversation with your advisor to describe what you see to be distinctive about the disciplinary orientation of your own research project. To what extent are the questions you ask, the literature you find relevant, and the methods of investigation and analysis you expect to employ based in one or more disciplines?

**2 to 5 p.m.: Core Group Session #2:  
Workbook Critique Sessions**

Your group members will start reviewing one another's workbook entries during this session. Your faculty facilitator will determine the order in which the workbooks will be discussed. Four of your groups' workbooks will be discussed in this session and the remaining four will be discussed in the following session.

Each fellow's workbook will be discussed for 40 minutes:

- The assigned commentator will have 10 minutes to present his/her summary and suggestions on his/her colleague's workbook.
- The floor will be opened for 20 minutes of group discussion.
- The workbook's author will have 5 minutes to ask any clarifying questions or briefly respond to any comments.
- The faculty facilitator will use the last 5 minutes to provide a summary of the discussion and concluding remarks.

**Friday, June 5<sup>th</sup>**

**9 a.m. to 12 p.m.: Core Group Session #3:  
Workbook Critique Sessions, Continued**

The remaining four fellows' workbooks will be discussed in the same manner as in the previous session.

**2 to 5 p.m.: Methods Group Session #1:  
Discussion of Challenges and Strategies**

You will be asked to explain the remaining methodological choices, potential changes, and challenges that you are facing in carrying out your project (e.g. identifying types of necessary information and sources, collecting and recording evidence, preparing evidence for analysis). Additionally, how might your summer research affect your current research strategy?

Each fellow will have up to 10 minutes to present the issues described above. The floor will then be opened for another 15 minutes of group discussion. Your faculty facilitator will determine the order in which the workbooks will be discussed. Four of your groups' workbooks will be discussed in this session and the remaining four will be discussed in the following session.

**Saturday, June 6<sup>th</sup>**

**9 a.m. to 12 p.m.: Methods Group Session #2:  
Discussion of Challenges and Strategies, Continued**

The remaining four fellows' methodological approaches will be discussed in the same manner as in the previous session.

**2 to 5 p.m.: Core Group Session #4:  
Summer Research Plans**

In this session, you will reconvene with your core group and reflect on what you have learned from the suggestions and perhaps the challenges raised in the your core and methods group discussions. How might you modify your summer research plans to strengthen the insights and contributions to be obtained from summer research?

*In-session exercise:* On a blank piece of paper (or new writing document on your computer), take 10 minutes to write down those comments you have received from your core and methods groups that you have found to be the most helpful and challenging. In that same document, write down how those comments might lead you to modify your summer research plans.

**Sunday, June 7<sup>th</sup>**

**9 to 10:30 a.m.: Plenary Session #2:  
How to Use the DPDF Peer Review Platform**

In this session, we will introduce you to DPDF's online peer review platform, which you will use to both upload your own proposal for the fall workshop and critique those of your core and methods groups. Please bring your computer or tablet with you to the session, as we will walk you an exercise where you will test out the platform's commenting features.

**10:45 a.m. to 12 p.m.: Core Group Session #5:  
Expectations and Goals for the Summer and Fall**

The faculty facilitators will outline their expectations for communication and progress reports over the summer, for your writing and commenting on future draft proposals, and for discussions to take place during the fall workshop.