

GRG-390L
RESEARCH IN GEOGRAPHY
Spring 2012, Mon. 5:00-8:00pm
Room: GRG-408

unique number 37465

Prof. Paul Adams, Department of Geography and the Environment
Office Hours Th 1:00-3:00, GRG-414

Doing research is a bit like taking very large dog for a walk. It will outrage, confuse and annoy you. Both you and it will end up messier than you had planned. This course will explore your options with regard to what leash to use, how to appreciate messiness as inseparable from discovery, and how to come across as a professional... no matter what!



In more formal terms: research is structured intellectual exploration. It is variously designed to obtain information, test theories, develop and apply models, describe, explain, predict or improve management and control. Ideally the researcher knows the purpose of a particular project. However, quite often the purpose changes at some point or points during the research process, and this accounts for the "messiness" and the sense that you are not always in charge.

READINGS

- Readings selected by the professor will be distributed via Blackboard.
- Readings selected by the students must be relayed to Prof. Adams for distribution.
 - Since you may need to sift through a large number of articles to get the "right" one for the rest of the class to read, plan to canvas articles on Wednesday and Thursday. Budget your time accordingly.
 - Student-identified readings are forwarded to the rest of the class and they become *required reading*. Files must be sent to Paul Adams by Friday at 9:00 am, so that he can upload them on Friday and others can download them over the weekend.
 - Please don't send out a reading selection unless it is truly useful and appropriate to the topic of the week.

GRADING

Research proposal draft	50 points
Notes and reading presentations	50 points
<u>Final Research proposal</u>	<u>100 points</u>
TOTAL	200 points

SESSION	TOPIC	PREPARATION
JAN 23	How come y'all are here?	none
JAN 30	What is a research proposal? (elements, organization, style, length constraints, picking a methodology, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Przeworski and Salomon ○ Successful proposals by various colleagues in this Department
FEB 6	Epistemologies, Ontologies, & Methodologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading—Hubbard et al. Chapters 2 & 3
FEB 13	Motivations and Rhetoric: on the usefulness of words, to whom, and for what reason, as well as the utility of non-verbal thinking, and non-thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading—Smith “Geographical Rhetoric: Modes and Tropes of Appeal”
FEB 20	Toward a professional identity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where am I relative to existing geographical specializations? • How do I present my research and myself at scholarly meetings? • How do I professionally manage tension, stress and conflicts? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading—Sluyter et al. “The Recent Intellectual Structure of Geography” • Meeting—Meet with the person you would most like to head your grad committee and discuss your research plans. • Notes—Turn in formal, edited notes of this meeting along with a list of at least 10 readings that you will complete in support of your research project. (An article or book chapter counts as one reading while a whole book counts as three readings.)
FEB 27	AAG Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend the AAG meeting in New York and present either a paper or a poster or else complete an alternative assignment involving chi-square analysis of ruminant scat distributions.
MAR 5	Where does inspiration come from? (perspiration, inspiration, and finding your personal muse)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student-Selected Readings—Select and forward to Prof. Adams a research paper or book chapter that <i>inspires</i> you for some reason and be prepared to talk at length about why you found it inspiring.
MAR 12	SPRING BREAK	
MAR 19	What makes for clarity? (organization, writing style, simplification, attention to detail, metaphor, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student-Selected Readings—Select and forward to Prof. Adams a research paper or book chapter that lays out its research methodology and arguments in the <i>clearest possible terms</i> and be prepared to convince your classmates that it really is clear, even if they find it confusing.
MAR 26	Guests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notes—Reading notes for 4 of the readings on your list
APR 2	Guests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notes—Reading notes for 4 of the readings on your list
APR 9	Discussion and critique of preliminary research proposals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preliminary Proposal—Submit a complete a first draft of your proposal by e-mailing it to Prof. Adams for circulation to the rest of the class by <i>Friday the 13th</i>. • Notes—Read your class-mates' preliminary research proposals and take careful, critical, and constructive notes to guide the discussion.
APR 16	How will ethical issues shape my research? (gross violations, minor infractions, and differences of judgment and opinion)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ McLemee “What is Plagiarism?” ○ Bartlett “Professor Copycat” ○ AAG forum on science, policy and ethics Harman et al., Waterstone, Henderson-Sellers, Proctor
APR 23	How can I build my career? Publishing, interviewing, and general survival strategies Faculty Status Trends (chart)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fogg “Grad School Blues” ○ Gifford and Bigelow “Strategies for Journal Publishing” ○ Rubin “Turn and Face the Strange”
APR 30	Final Presentations BE PREPARED TO PRESENT	Final Proposal —Submit a final draft of your research proposal