



McMaster Divinity
College

Dissertation Proposal Tutorial

Course runs Oct–Nov 2018 (see detailed schedule below)

Class time:

- Thursday, October 18, 2018, from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm
- Friday, October 19, 2018, from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm

Professor. Dr. Paul S. Evans

E-mail. pevans@mcmaster.ca

Course Description:

This tutorial will lead students through the process of creating and completing their dissertation proposal. Topics covered will include: writing a clear thesis statement, demonstrating the need for new research, showing proper documentation, building a critical database of primary and secondary sources for the dissertation, the importance of methodology, building a cogent argument, and writing a focused and usable dissertation proposal.

Course Assignments:

1. Dissertation Bibliography: Due: **Oct 27**

Students will create a database of bibliographic resources specific to their dissertation. These resources will be compiled into a bibliography of relevant books and articles that provides the necessary data regarding publication (see MDC style guide). The title page must also note the area of research/research question in view in this bibliography.

2. Dissertation Abstract. 1–2 pages (Double-spaced): Due: **Nov 2**

Students will write a short abstract summarizing their dissertation. This abstract represents a student's formulation of their topic which will be further defined and explored in their research proposal. The abstract must not exceed 150 words for a master's thesis or 350 words for a doctoral dissertation.

3. Research Methodology Section. 6 pages (Double-spaced): Due: **Nov 9**

Students will write the methodological section of their proposal that demonstrates an awareness of issues in the literature regarding their chosen methodology with special reference and application to a student's particular area of research interest.

6. Dissertation Proposal: Preliminary Draft Due: **Nov 16**

Length of Proposal:

- **PhD** – 20-25 pages, double-spaced (not including bibliography).

Students will prepare their dissertation proposal based on the abstract which will describe the thesis and the methodology to be employed. It will include a literature review that critically interacts with relevant secondary literature and shows how your proposal responds to this body of research. The proposal will also summarize anticipated conclusions or outcomes. Proposals must evince logical argumentation, clarity of expression, understanding of the relevant scholarly literature and the methodology employed, and their potential to contribute to the chosen academic field.

Students must complete draft on time and arrange a meeting with their supervisor(s) to discuss and receive feedback and critique.

7. Dissertation Proposal: Final Draft: Due **Dec 7**

After meeting with supervisor(s) students will revise their preliminary proposal in light of the feedback received, making the required changes and then submit the final draft of the proposal.

Course schedule

This course is in a hybrid format and will include online interaction as well as face-to-face class meetings which will include the virtual participation of those working remotely through WebEx.

The tutorial schedule is as follows:

Date	Class experiences	Assignments	Meet with Mentor
Oct 18	Period 1 A. Bibliographies B. Databases C. Situating your work amongst others' work		
Oct 19	Period 1 A. Formulating a Research Question B. Creating room for your research C. Writing an Abstract Period 2 D. Role of methodology in a research project E. Writing a methodology section Period 3 F. Putting the parts of the proposal together G. Creating a timeline for completion		
October 27		Bibliography due Oct 27	Meet with primary mentor or supervisory committee before Nov 1 to discuss abstract and dissertation ideas
Nov 2		Dissertation Abstract due Nov 2	
Nov 2-7	Meet with Professor Evans for one-to-one tutorial		

Nov 9		Research Methodology due Nov 9	Meet with primary mentor or supervisory committee before Nov 9 to discuss methodology and dissertation ideas
Nov 16		Full Preliminary draft of dissertation proposal due Nov 16	
Nov 16- Dec 6			Meet with primary mentor or supervisory committee to receive feedback on Preliminary draft of proposal
Dec 7		Final written proposals due Dec 7	Meet with primary mentor or supervisory committee in early December to discuss submission of proposal to the faculty

As noted in the schedule, students must arrange two meeting times with the professor for one-to-one interaction regarding the proposal

- Students must meet (face-to-face or via WebEx video calling) with the professor to discuss aspects of assignments/sections of the dissertation proposal.
- Prior to each meeting students will send the professor a draft of the assignment or dissertation section via email and come prepared to discuss their research

Role of Supervising Committee/Mentors

As outlined in the schedule, students must meet with their primary supervisor/mentor or committee to discuss their research. This will entail planning ahead with their mentor to arrange dates to meet that fit with the schedule outlined.

**** n.b.** Although professor Evans will be providing guidance for student proposals, it is important to remember your research is done under the supervision of your assigned mentor and committee and they must approve your work before it is submitted to the faculty for approval.

Style

All stylistic considerations (including but not limited to questions of formatting, footnotes, and bibliographic references) must conform to the McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses
<http://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/sites/default/files/documents/MDCStyleGuide.pdf>
 Failure to observe appropriate form will result in grade reductions.

All papers and assignments are to be submitted in electronic format (a pdf file) only. Email to pevans@mcmaster.ca. Include your last name in the file name of your attachment (e.g., evans.bibliography.pdf).

Academic Honesty

Academic dishonesty is a serious offence that may take any number of forms, including plagiarism, the submission of work that is not one's own or for which previous credit has been obtained, and/or unauthorized collaboration with other students. Academic dishonesty can result in severe consequences, e.g., failure of the assignment, failure of the course, a notation on one's academic transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the College.

Students are responsible for understanding what constitutes academic dishonesty.

Please refer to the Divinity College Statement on Academic Honesty ~

<http://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/programs/rules-regulations>

Policy Concerning Late Assignments

Extensions for assignments **will not** be given by the instructor. Late assignments may result in the student being put on Academic Probation.

Disclaimer

This syllabus is the property of the instructor and is prepared with currently available information. The instructor reserves the right to make changes and revisions up to and including the first day of class.