GEO 6119 PROPOSAL WRITING IN GEOGRAPHY

3 Credit Hour  Spring 2019

INSTRUCTOR:  Dr. Joann Mossa, Professor

CONTACT INFORMATION:  mossa@ufl.edu, (352) 294-7510

COURSE HOURS:  M: 11:45-2:45 (USUALLY ENDS EARLIER)

OFFICE HOURS:  T-R: 11:30-12:30

COURSE WEBSITE:  http://elearning.ufl.edu

COURSE COMMUNICATIONS: I prefer traditional e-mail to Canvas messaging. If you have a general question of likely interest to other students, feel free to post on the class Course Questions discussion board or ask in class.


MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES FEES:  None

PREREQUISITE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS:  Second year graduate student at UF, have a general plan for a thesis/dissertation

COURSE DESCRIPTION:  Research design, proposal writing and proposal evaluation for geographic studies

COURSE GOALS AND/OR OBJECTIVES:

The course will provide a forum for discussion, shared experiences, and intellectual resources for graduate students to be able to write effective, successful research proposals. The purposes of this course are:

- to examine the early stages of research (research question definition, library research, planning, research design, variable selection, research writing;
- to write a research proposal in National Science Foundation (NSF) format;
- to learn the process of constructive criticism in reviewing other’s proposals (your proposal will be evaluated by three peers and the instructor).
COURSE POLICIES:

ATTENDANCE POLICY: It is expected that you will attend and participate in the course throughout the duration of the term. Students are required to complete assignments and participate in discussion forums of various forms. All assignments will be listed in the course schedule, and specific due dates can be found in the CANVAS calendar. Requirements for class attendance and assignments in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at: UF Catalog 2018-19 Attendance Policies

LATE WORK AND MAKE-UP POLICY: Clemency will be granted for late work with valid excuse. Major assignments turned in late without a valid excuse will be penalized. Please communicate with the instructor regarding any problems and document your problems as best possible (doctor's or ER slip, obituary, etc.)

COURSE TECHNOLOGY: Access to and on-going use of a computer is required for all students. Competency in the basic use of a computer is required. Course work will require use of a computer and a broadband connection to the Internet. For additional information on UF College of Liberal Arts and Sciences policy regarding computer requirements you can visit: http://it.clas.ufl.edu/policies/student-computer-requirement/

For technology related issues the UF computing help desk can be reached at:

- http://helpdesk.ufl.edu (352) 392-HELP - select option

DISCUSSION/PEER REVIEW POLICY: Students should adhere to professional etiquette/netiquette standards (see UF Policies below) in all posts and to engage in CONSTRUCTIVE dialogue. Posts should be thoughtful, detailed responses (i.e., "yes," "no," "I agree," or "I disagree" answer is not sufficient). In most cases, discussions require some research prior to their initial post. Follow-up posts are typically required. For both discussion forums timeliness is critical and due dates should be strongly adhered to. Please check the course Calendar for the specific due dates.

ASSIGNMENT POLICY: Each module has assignments associated with it (combined 50% of overall grade). Due dates are specified on the course calendar, and timely submission is expected. Assignments must be submitted to Canvas via the assignment page and any instructions detailed therein.
UF POLICIES:

UNIVERSITY POLICY ON ACCOMMODATING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: “Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter that must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.”

UNIVERSITY POLICY ON ACADEMIC CONDUCT: UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge as follows: “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Honor Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor of this class.

CLASS DEMEANOR OR NETIQUETTE: Class members must follow rules of common courtesy in all discussions/ electronic communication. Consequences for violating UF netiquette guidelines include zeroes or reporting. See info at http://teach.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/NetiquetteGuideforOnlineCourses.pdf.

U MATTER WE CARE: Your well-being is important to the University of Florida. The U Matter, We Care initiative is committed to creating a culture of care on our campus by encouraging members of our community to look out for one another and to reach out for help if a member of our community is in need. If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu so that the U Matter, We Care Team can reach out to the student in distress. A nighttime and weekend crisis counselor is available by phone at 352-392-1575. The U Matter, We Care Team can help connect students to the many other helping resources available including, but not limited to, Victim Advocates, Housing staff, and the Counseling and Wellness Center. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, call 9-1-1.
**GETTING HELP:**

For issues with technical difficulties for Canvas, please contact the UF Help Desk at:

- [http://helpdesk.ufl.edu](http://helpdesk.ufl.edu); (352) 392-HELP (4357); Walk-in: HUB 132

Any requests for make-ups due to technical issues MUST be accompanied by the ticket number received from the Help Desk when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date of the problem. You MUST e-mail your instructor within 24 hours of the technical difficulty if you need to resubmit.

**GRADING SCALE:** Grading Scale (& GPA equivalent):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Grade Points</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Grade Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>≥ 93</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>70 – 76.9</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90 – 92.9</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>68 – 69.9</td>
<td>1.67</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87 – 89.9</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>66 – 67.9</td>
<td>1.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83 – 86.9</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>60 – 65.9</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80 – 82.9</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>D-</td>
<td>57 – 59.9</td>
<td>0.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77– 79.9</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>&lt; 56</td>
<td>0</td>
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**Note:** A grade of C- is not a qualifying grade for major, minor, Gen Ed, or College Basic distribution credit. For further information on UF’s Grading Policy, see: [https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx#hgrades](https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx#hgrades)

**ASSIGNMENT TYPES:**

**Discussion Postings**

- Detailed commentary on readings, thought-provoking figures, or drafts of others’ work

- Respectful responses to other people’s comments, where you disagree or expand on their comments

**Mini-Assignments, mostly related to proposal development**

- Ask-an-advisor (multiple)

- Gantt chart
How-to Article Reviews

Your main goal is to review the topic, summarize important components and points and present a clear understanding of the topic. It involves:

- Cite journal or report with author, date, title, journal, volume, or website according to a standard convention (APA)

- For each article, compose a very basic two sentence summary to get the major thrust of the paper: "The author's purpose in writing the article was..." "The author concluded...."

- List what struck you as being the four or five most important points in the article using your own words. Go beyond the author’s conclusions or the abstract. News articles should have three points.

- Find one thought-provoking quote from the article that will generate discussion; followed by a brief response, statement, or question of your own about the quote to provoke discussion.

- Select an important figure or table from the article. Briefly state, and be prepared to discuss in class, why you thing the figure or table is especially meaningful or interesting. What is the theoretical and applied significance of this article? What (if anything) was interesting or innovative about the paper? Come up with one thought-provoking question related to each article for your classmates. Be prepared to express your own thoughts about this question.

- Students will declare selection in a Canvas discussion posting when an article is assigned. Look at prior selections before choosing which article to review.

- Students put content except for figure in a discussion thread, copy-paste content in a Power Point, upload presentation into Canvas and also present the Power Point in class
Major Assignments Related to Final Proposal

TOPIC SELECTION AND DEVELOPMENT WITH SUPPORTING REFERENCES (10%)

- Begin by listing potential research topics in your subfield and region of study. Then develop at least four research questions from these. Assess and discuss the viability of each question based on resource, feasibility and other issues discussed in class and then narrow down your list to the top two that would be “doable” within a year and with $12,000 or less of funding (this number is chosen because of NSF DDIG funding constraints). Find a minimum of five articles relevant to each of your top two questions and list the complete citations. Discuss primary data that would be collected and identify secondary data (from the internet, govt. documents) that might complement your proposed study. I will share an example table. Upload your document to Canvas and I will post the papers for everybody to read. We will discuss all ideas, and you will be the discussion leader for the strengths and weaknesses of each of your ideas. Within ~ one month from the start of the semester, you will then have a few possible research questions to investigate. These should be refined and developed over the course of the semester.

- Due Date: Week 5 meeting, FEBRUARY 11, 2019

- The grading rubric is as follows: 20% thoughtfulness and originality of ideas, having set a framework which identifies this as an important and unique research problem by using appropriate narrative and citations from the literature; 20% organization, structure and appearance including use of headings and subheadings, consistency, 20% writing quality and grammar, aiming for coherent sentences, appropriate sequence, use of transitions, free of errors, 20% quality, quantity, completeness of references and citations and coherence with how the three selected relate to your proposed research questions, 20% depth of discussion about primary data to be collected and secondary data used including variables used, scale, spatial character, timing, frequency and length of data, and other relevant data issues.
PROPOSAL SUBMISSION IN NSF FORMAT (30%; 10% DRAFT, 20% FINAL)

- Prepare a 10-12 page proposal with budget according to NSF guidelines for DDIG (2 pages of figures with minimal text can be added to the 10 pages of narrative, font sizes, margins, etc.). A good proposal begins with passion and a good idea, responds to a fundamental need, is informed by the literature, enunciates its goals clearly, poses research questions, has a well-developed research design, speculates about outcomes, discusses significance and relevance, portrays excitement and enthusiasm, follows a coherent structure, and instills confidence. In addition, there should be a 1-page project summary which explicitly includes a section on intellectual merit and broader impacts. The budget page and one page biosketch should be attached and are not counted in the 12 page limit. Use subheadings, bold, italics, to help organize the proposal. The grading rubric is as follows: Intellectual Merit (20%). Is the research topic/problem clearly stated? Is there enough specificity to understand the nature of work planned?; Does it advance knowledge within field or across different fields?; Are the hypotheses clear, concise and specific?; Are creative and original concepts brought forwards?; Literature Review and References (20%) Is the research placed within its proper context or perspective?; Are the hypotheses adequately tied to previous research?; Is there sufficient literature cited to understand the relevant theories?; Is the literature summary adequate in scope, detail and clarity?; Are there at least 20 references from refereed journals?; Organization and Structure (20%) Is the proposal logically organized and structured?; Are bold and italics used to bring attention to key statements?; Are subheadings used so that the reader can find important components?; Are the different facets of the project tied together?

- Methods and Variables (20%) Are both the variables and findings of previous research clearly explained?; Are the variables and concepts of the planned research clearly explained?; Where will the data come from (primary or secondary sources)? How is/will each be measured?; Has the spatial framework been clearly defined? Is it appropriate for the given problem?; Are special instruments required? Are there contingency plans for breakdowns, etc.?; For questionnaires... does each question have a clear purpose and relation to a hypothesis?; What statistical tests and models will be used;

- What are the data requirements of the statistical techniques?; Budget, Timetable and Background (10%) Is the proposed time framework adequate for the
completion of this research?; Does the detailed timeline seem reasonable for the components involved?; Are there any confounding situations associated with the planned time framework?; Is there a contingency plan if problems occur?; Are different components of the budget (salaries, travel, equipment, expense) itemized?; Does the budget seem reasonable? Does it follow guidelines (what NSF requires)?; Does the biosketch support the competence of the researcher?; Broader Impacts (10%) Does this promote teaching, training, and learning?; Does this broaden the participation of underrepresented groups?; Does this enhance the infrastructure for research and education?; Will it be disseminated broadly to enhance scientific and technological understanding?; Are the benefits to society clearly stated?

- DUE APRIL 1, 2018 (DRAFT), APRIL 15, 2019 (FINAL)

**PROPOSAL PANELIST (10%)**

- Everyone will be assigned 3 proposals to review. Make copies of each review and e-mail an electronic version to the instructor. A good proposal review summarizes the proposed project in a few sentences, notes strengths and weaknesses in the fundamental ideas, literature review, data available or to be collected, spatial and/or temporal sampling, methods, proposed analysis and writing. It provides constructive suggestions and specific helpful comments that, if addressed, will improve the proposed project or gives clear advice and ratings in such a way that the author is not deluded about any shortcomings or concerns. Each proposal review should be about one page in length, and written using criteria and ratings discussed in class developed by the NSF (including intellectual merit and broader impacts). A sample form will be distributed electronically. Panelists will participate on an in-class panel where each proposal author leaves the classroom while their project is being discussed by reviewers. One of those reviewers (assigned by instructor) will write the panel summary. Reviewers will not be identified on the comments given back to the proposal authors, and the ratings will be grouped by the instructor to maintain confidentially.

- Due Date: Week 14, DUE APRIL 22, 2019
**GRADING BREAKDOWN AND POLICIES:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Discussion and Discussion postings</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Class discussion. Reflect on reading or videos, figures or comic and share your view, comment on others’ submissions or viewpoints</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal components, synopsis of how-to Article or chapter reviews, Mini-Assignments and Peer Reviews</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Examples: Ask-an-advisor, Step-by-step construction of proposal elements, such as conceptual diagram, data sources, project summary, abstract, bio-sketch, review of other proposals, Gantt chart, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic Selection and development</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Give details for several potential topics with related research questions, data sources, and references</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft Proposal</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Submit a full draft proposal, parts of which will be presented. Feedback will be given in hopes of producing a better final product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Proposal</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>A full written proposal, which will be reviewed by your peers in the panel review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panelist and Peer Reviews</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>You will review other proposals in the panel review, simulating the process at NSF</td>
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</tbody>
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**INFORMATION ON CURRENT UF GRADING POLICIES FOR ASSIGNING GRADE POINTS:**

This course follows policies of the UF Undergraduate Catalog 2018-19 [Grades and Grading Policies page](https://www.undergraduatecatalog.ufl.edu/).
TENTATIVE WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Week 1 INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH (Jan 7)
• Introduction to the class, semester and syllabus
• Background ideas on research
• Good and bad practices in research: A card game
• HW: Reading WSSP: Preface, Note to Reader, C1-Getting Started
• HW: Discussion posting (1 Quote, 2 Questions, 3 Important points)
• HW: Draft Conceptual Diagram

Week 2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS, LITERATURE SEARCHES IN GEOGRAPHY (Jan 14)
• Discussion Conceptual Diagrams
• Effective literature searches and key words
• Writing a literature review
• Secondary data sources
• HW: Reading WSSP: Chap 3, pp 33-45
• HW: Discussion posting (1 Quote, 2 Questions, 3 Important points)
• HW: Ask-an-advisor questions and responses
• HW: Initial list of primary and secondary data sources

MARTIN LUTHER KING HOLIDAY (Jan 21)

Week 3 TOPIC SELECTION AND EARLY CONSIDERATIONS; SECONDARY DATA (Jan 28)
• What did you learn from your 3 questions and advisor's answers
• Early considerations in research
• Topics: scope, feasibility, assumptions
• Research hypotheses and conceptual models
• HW: Read NSF guidelines, Merit Review Principles and Criteria on page III-1
• HW: Prepare for panel review, written synopsis on review form
• HW: Reading WSSP: Chap 4, Developing Conceptual FW, pp 33-45
• HW: Discussion posting (1 Quote, 2 Questions, 3 Important points)
• HW: Write your own significance paragraph draft
• HW: Start working on Topic selection and development asst.
Week 4 REVIEWING, TITLES AND REFERENCES (Feb 4)
- CW: "Panel Session"
- Class discussion of on selecting and developing topics
- Speaker on references?
- Keywords
- HW : Reading WSSP: Chapter 5 Titles
- HW: Reading WSSP: Chapter 12 References
- HW: Discussion posting (1 Quote, 2 Questions, 3 Important points)
- HW: Prospective titles for your proposal
- HW: Topic selection and development asst due next week

Week 5 PROPOSALS: INSIDE PERSPECTIVE (Feb 11)
- Discussion of topic selection and development
- Where to look for funding
- Review DSR FYI & other sources of announcements: UF Office of Research; UF Division of Sponsored Research; UF Research Program Development Office; Proposal Processing and Pre-Award Services;
- HW : Reading WSSP: Chapter 6 Project Summary
- HW: Discussion posting (1 Quote, 2 Questions, 3 Important points)
- HW: Draft Project Summary

Week 6 MORE ON PROPOSALS (Feb 18)
- Discussion about Project Summary
- Variables and levels of measurement
- Conceptual and operational definitions
- Accuracy, precision, validity, reliability
- Data categorization and classification
- Cause and effect, dependence/independence
- HW: Reading WSSP: Chapter 7: Objectives, Hypotheses and Aims
- HW: Discussion posting (1 Quote, 2 Questions, 3 Important points)
- HW: Reading WSSP: Chapter 7: Objectives, Hypotheses and Aims
- HW: Reading WSSP: Chapter 9: Experimental Design
- HW: Discussion posting (1 Quote, 2 Questions, 3 Important points)
Week 7 PROJECT PLANNING AND STUDIES INVOLVING HUMANS/ANIMALS (Feb 25)

- Short discussion about papers and reviews
- Project components and tasks, Gantt charts and timeline
- Spatial and temporal geographic concepts and sampling issues
- Interviewing strategies and pitfalls
- Questionnaire issues and IRBs
- CW: Fill out IRB paperwork
- HW: Reading WSSP: Chapter 8 Lay the Foundation - Introduction
- HW: Discussion posting (1 Quote, 2 Questions, 3 Important points)
- HW: Reading WSSP: Chapter 11 Timeline, Project Management
- HW: Discussion posting (1 Quote, 2 Questions, 3 Important points)
- HW: Gantt chart, youtube video how-to

FIRST WEEK OF MARCH SPRING BREAK (MARCH 4)

Week 8 PLANNING STATISTICS AND INTERPRETATION (March 11)

- Figures: Graphs and charts, maps and other diagrams
- Descriptive statistics; Inferential statistics and hypothesis testing
- HW: Reading WSSP: Chapter 10 Plan for Expected and Unexpected Results
- HW: Discussion posting (1 Quote, 2 Questions, 3 Important points)
- HW: Reading WSSP: Chapter 10 Plan for Expected and Unexpected Results
- HW: Discussion posting (1 Quote, 2 Questions, 3 Important points)
- HW: Make a figure or chart to use in your proposal

Week 9 BUDGETS, JUSTIFICATION AND POLISHING THE PROPOSAL (March 18)

- Approaching draft proposal submission: Questions and Answers presentation
- Grant Proposal Guide: Proposal Preparation Instructions pp II-1 to II-41
- Biosketches, Data Management Plans, Ethics and Budgeting from NSF GPG
- UF F&A (indirect costs) agreement
- HW: Data Management Plans Readings in Canvas
- HW: Reading WSSP: Chapter 13 Preparing a Budget
- HW: Discussion posting (1 Quote, 2 Questions, 3 Important points)
Week 10 WRITING IN GEOGRAPHY (March 25)
- Approaching draft proposal submission: Questions and Answers presentation
- Scientific writing
- Discuss of current status of individual projects
- HW: Readings from Canvas
- HW: Discussion posting (1 Quote, 2 Questions, 3 Important points)
- HW: Produce draft proposal for next week

Week 11 PRESENTATION AND SUBMISSION OF DRAFT PROPOSALS (April 1)
- Uploaded proposals in CANVAS will be shared with the class
- Give and get early feedback
- HW: Give some written feedback on one proposal

AAG WEEK OFF (APRIL 8)

Week 12 FINAL PROPOSALS DUE, PLANNING FOR PROPOSAL EVALUATION (April 15)
- ASSIGNMENT due (Proposals with Biosketches and Budgets)
- Merit Review Principles from NSF Grant Proposal Guide
- NSF Guide to Proposal Reviewers; Parts of pages III-1 to III-5
- Proposal Reviewer Form
- NSF Online Help guidelines for Panelists
- Presentations slides on how to be a reviewer and a panelist pdf file
- HW: Read and review 3 proposals based on instructor’s assignment
- DO NOT DISCLOSE YOUR ASSIGNMENTS/OPINIONS TO OTHERS
- DO NOT DISCUSS PROPOSALS OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

Week 13 PANEL REVIEW (April 22)
- CW: Panel review