

## **Honors Seminar**

**(MW 9:00-10:20, SSB 101)**

Maria Charles  
Office: SSB 492  
Office Phone: (858) 534-2566  
Email: mcharles@ucsd.edu  
Office Hours: Monday 8:00-9:00, Wednesday 10:30-11:30

Congratulations on your admissions to the honors program! This course is designed to help you conceptualize, research, and write a high-quality honors thesis. Honors theses are modeled after professional sociological research papers, and are based on original research – involving either primary data collection or analysis of existing social-scientific data sources. We will hold a special event at the end of Winter Quarter, when you will have an opportunity to present your work orally.

While this process will be demanding, I hope that it will be intellectually rewarding as well. For students considering graduate school, the Honors Seminar also has many practical benefits: It represents a wonderful opportunity to hone research and writing skills, to produce a high-quality sociological “writing sample,” and to establish ties to potential faculty mentors.

**Prerequisites:** Students must be formally accepted into the Honors Program, and must identify a faculty advisor and a thesis topic prior to admittance. Honors students should be capable of independent thinking and of clear written presentation of arguments and results.

**Course Requirements:** A complete thesis must be submitted by the ninth week of Winter Quarter. In addition, you will be required to submit exercises, outlines and paper drafts periodically, meet regularly with me and your faculty advisor, read and comment upon other students’ work, participate in group discussions, and read the following:

Pyrzczak, Fred and Randall R. Bruce. 2005. *Writing Empirical Research Reports: A Basic Guide for Students of the Social and Behavioral Sciences, Fifth Edition*. Glendale, CA: Pyrczak Publishing. [Available at the UCSD Bookstore.]  
Walliman, Nicholas. 2005. “Honesty and Research Ethics.” Chapter 8 in *Your Research Project, Second Edition*. Thousand Oaks: Sage. [To be distributed in class.]

**Grades** will be assigned at the end of Winter Quarter and will be applied retroactively to Fall. They will be based primarily on the quality of the thesis, although some consideration will be given to participation and timely completion of written assignments. Final thesis grades will be assigned based on assessments by the Honors Program Director (i.e., me) and your faculty advisor. Students who receive a course grade of A- or better, and who maintain an overall GPA of 3.2 or better and a major GPA of 3.5 or better will graduate with honors from the Sociology Department. An A- warrants honors “with distinction,” an A warrants “high distinction,” and an A+ warrants “highest distinction.” All writing and research must be completed **independently** unless clearly attributed to another source (e.g., through citations, attributed quotations of published or web-posted materials).

## Tentative Schedule for Fall Quarter

(We will meet as a group on the dates printed in bold type. Please hold other class periods open for possible individual consultations.)

*Week 1 (September 26 & September 28):* Introduction, discuss reading.

- Reading: Pyrczak & Bruce, Appendix B, Chapters 1-4.
- *Due September 28, 9 a.m.:* Pyrczak & Bruce exercises 1A, 2A-2D, 3A-3B, 4A-4B.

*Week 2 (October 3 & October 5):* Presentation of student research statements.

- Reading: Walliman: "Honesty and Research Ethics."
- *Due October 5, 9 a.m.:* Multiple copies of revised research statement (1-2 pages).

*Week 3 (October 10 & October 12):* Individual consultations, literature review.

- Reading: Pyrczak & Bruce, Chapters 5-9.
- *Due October 12, 9 a.m.:* Pyrczak & Bruce exercises 5A-5B, 6A, 7A, 7C, 8A, 8B, 9A.
- Assignment: Meet with MC (by October 17), review literature, draft proposal.

*Week 4 (October 17 & October 19):* Draft proposal.

- Reading: Pyrczak & Bruce, Chapters 10-14.
- *Due October 19, 9 a.m.:* Research proposal and preliminary bibliography (2-3 page draft to MC and faculty advisor), Pyrczak & Bruce exercises 10A, 11A, 12A, 13A, 14 (all).
- Assignment: Review literature, draft proposal, meet with MC and your faculty advisor (by October 26).

*Week 5 (October 24 & October 26):* Individual consultations, revise proposal.

- Assignment: Review literature, draft proposal, meet with MC and your faculty advisor (by October 26).

*Week 6 (October 31 & November 2):* Read and evaluate colleagues' proposals.

- *Due October 31, 9 a.m.:* Multiple copies of revised research proposal (3-4 pages).
- Assignment: Carefully read colleagues' proposals, prepare comments.

*Week 7 (November 7 & November 9):* Evaluation and group discussion of proposals.

- *Due November 9, 9 a.m.:* *Written comments on colleagues' proposals.*
- Assignment: Review literature, revise proposal.

*Week 8 (November 14 & November 16):* Literature review and individual consultations.

- Assignment: Revise proposal, meet with MC and your faculty advisor (by November 21).

*Week 9 (November 21 & November 23):* Individual consultations. Group discussion of writing and research problems.

- *Due November 23, 9 a.m.:* *Multiple copies of Introduction, Literature Review (first draft).*
- Assignment: Revise proposal.

*Week 10 (November 28 and November 30):* Discuss writing problems, research progress.

- Assignment: Write Introduction, Literature Review.

*Due Monday, December 5, 8:00 a.m. (scheduled final examination period): Revised Introduction, Literature Review and Bibliography, and a progress report on your research; please submit copies to me and your faculty advisor.*