

HONORS THESIS SEMINAR
Legal Studies 198
Fall 2008
Wednesdays 8 – 10 AM
179 Dwinelle

Professor Jonathan Simon
592 Simon Hall
(510) 643-5169

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Office Hours: By Appointment Only
To Schedule Contact: Connie Curtin (ccurtin@law.berkeley.edu)

Research Fellow: Brent K. Nakamura
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Office Hours: Tuesdays 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM, or by appointment

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Course Description

This Honors Thesis Seminar (LS198) is a 2-unit credit/no-credit class designed to prepare students to conceptualize, research, and write an honors thesis. This course will meet for two hours on Wednesdays. This course will introduce students to a wide variety of social science, humanities, and legal research methodologies. Students are expected to find advisors for the Spring semester to oversee the completion of the thesis.

Required Materials: None. All materials will be available on the course website on bSpace.

Schedule of Classes

Class 1: Wednesday, August 27th: Course Introduction & What is Research?

Reading: None.

Assignments Due: None.

Class 2: Wednesday, September 3rd: How to do legal research?

Reading: *Griswold v. Connecticut*, 381 U.S. 479 (1965)

Assignments Due: *Griswold* Brief; Brief Statement of Interest (1-2 pages, double-spaced)

Class 3: Wednesday, September 10th: What is a Research Question? Primary vs. Secondary Sources:

Reading: Chapters 1-2, Bruce L. Berg, Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences. 2007. Sixth edition. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Assignment Due: None.

Class 4: Wednesday, September 17th: Using the Library: Meet in Moffitt 450C

Reading: Daniel Dabney. "The curse of Thamus: an analysis of full-text legal document retrieval." 78 Law Library Journal 5 (1986).

Assignment Due: Preliminary Research Proposal

Class 5: Wednesday, September 24th: Research Ethics & Institutional Review Boards:

Reading: Chapter 3, Bruce L. Berg, Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences. 2007. Sixth edition. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Assignment Due: None.

Class 6: Wednesday, October 1st: Developing a Literature Review & Annotated Bibliography:

Reading: Example Literature Review.

Assignment Due: None.

Class 7: Wednesday, October 8th: Finding and Using Existing Data: Library Session (Moffitt 450C)

Reading: None.

Assignment Due: Annotated Bibliography Due (at least ten sources for the annotated bibliography)

Class 8: Wednesday, October 15th: Quantitative vs. Qualitative Methods:

Reading: Hagan & McCarthy, Mean Streets, chapters 3, 9, and 10 [bSpace]

Assignment Due: Revised Research Proposal Due.

Class 9: Wednesday, October 22nd: Quantitative I: Data Analysis Programs:

Reading: Do example data analysis.

Assignment Due: None.

Class 10: Wednesday, October 29th: Archival Research: Library Session (Moffitt 450C)

Reading: None.

Assignment Due: None.

Class 11: Wednesday, November 5th: **NO CLASS:**

Reading: Exit polls, pundit reports, ballot initiatives.

Assignment Due: None.

Class 12: Wednesday, November 12th: Ethnography & Interviewing:

Reading: Excerpts from Elizabeth Mertz, The Language of Law School: Learning to “Think Like a Lawyer” 2007. Oxford University Press [on bSpace]

Assignment Due: Literature Review.

Class 13: Wednesday, November 19th: Dealing with Research Challenges: Note: Class will begin promptly at 8:00 AM. Please be on time.

Guest Presentation: Jurisprudence & Social Policy Graduate Students

Reading: Research summaries.

Assignment Due: None.

Class 14: Wednesday, November 26th: **NO CLASS:** (Talk through research draft sometime between Wednesday, November 19th and Tuesday, November 25th)—meet with Brent or Professor Simon (as assigned).

Reading: None.

Assignment Due: Abstract.

Class 15: Wednesday, December 3rd: Class Presentations:

Reading: None.

Assignment Due: None.

Class 16: Wednesday, December 10th: Class Presentations:

Reading: None.

Assignment Due: None.

Final Research Proposals are due on Wednesday, December 17th at 12:00 PM.