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Spring 2016

# Masters Research Project

Assefaw Bariagaber Dr.  
*Seton Hall University*

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**Master's Research Project (DIPL 6311)**  
**School of Diplomacy and International Relations**  
**Seton Hall University (Spring 2016)**

Instructor: Dr. Assefaw Bariagaber  
Office: McQuaid 119  
Office Hours: Tuesdays: 10:30 am – 11:30 am  
                  Tuesdays: 3:30pm – 5:00 pm  
                  By appointment at other times  
Office Telephone: 2877  
Email: [bariagas@shu.edu](mailto:bariagas@shu.edu)

### **I. About the Course**

This course is designed to be offered more as a continuation of DIPL 6310, a pre-requisite for this course. Indeed, the aim is to apply and to further develop the principles and practice of empirical scientific research covered in DIPL 6310 to actual research endeavors, and hopefully produce a quality, publishable paper. As in any legitimate research endeavor, therefore, the course begins with the development of a well-conceived and well-developed research proposal. To this end, all students are expected to include, among other things, the following both in the **proposal** and in the **completed** research paper:

- (1) description of the problem/issue and why it is **significant**. This section includes statement of the problem/issue and why it is important, and the research question(s) and hypothesis(es)/proposition(s) formulated.
- (2) literature review and how the study is related to works that have been conducted previously. What will the study **add** to existing knowledge on the issue? In other words, one needs to locate the problem within the extant literature and identify the gap to be filled;
- (3) variable definition/conceptualization, operationalization, and measurement (the latter is especially important if the study is quantitative), design, and data collection methods;
- (4) analysis techniques (statistical or otherwise);
- (5) result interpretation, discussion, and/or conclusion;
- (6) bibliography (of cited works).

This course is may be seen as the Master's program "capstone" course, where students are expected to apply what they have learned in the program (over the last two years) by producing a well-conceived, thoroughly-researched, and meticulously-prepared paper of publishable quality. Therefore, you are required to spend ample time to come up with the best paper you can possibly write.

Note: Students who intend to conduct interviews may have to seek approval from the Office of Institutional Research Board (IRB) located in the Presidents Hall, especially if the data collection procedure(s) involves risk to human subjects and if the findings are to be disseminated outside of the classroom. This is an issue which Seton Hall University, the State of New Jersey, and the Federal Government see with utmost concern, especially if the interview and any other data collection method involve more than "minimal risk" to the research subjects. Since research involving human subjects may not begin without the IRB approval, you need to see the instructor to file the necessary papers as soon as possible. Given the lengthy process and the time needed for IRB approval, it is important to seriously think about the feasibility of conducting research involving human subjects. Completion of the research in one semester may be hard to meet unless IRB approval was granted well ahead of time.

## II. Books

### Required:

Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (8<sup>th</sup> edition). Chicago and London, The Chicago University Press, 2013.

### Recommended:

Booth, Wayne C. *et al. The Craft of Research* (3<sup>rd</sup> edition). Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2008.

Frankfort-Nachmias, C. and D. Nachmias. *Research Methods in the Social Sciences* (7<sup>th</sup> edition). New York: Worth Publishers, 2008.

Berg, Bruce L. *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences* (8<sup>th</sup> edition). Boston: Pearson Education, Inc. 2012.

### Articles for Critical Review:

Salehyan, I. and K. S. Gleditsch. Refugees and the Spread of Civil War, *International Organization*, 2006, 60:335-366.

Vanhanen, Tatu. Domestic Ethnic Conflict and Ethnic Nepotism: A Comparative Analysis, *Journal of Peace Research*, 1999, 55-73.

## III. Course Requirements and Grading

1. Research proposal presentation carrying a maximum of 10 (10%) points to occur as indicated in the section below.
2. PowerPoint presentation of research paper carrying a maximum of 20 (20%) points to occur as indicated in the section below.
3. A well-developed research paper carrying a maximum of 60 (60%) points to be handed on a *hard copy and electronically* on May 3, 2006.
4. Class participation carrying a maximum of 10 (10%) points.

Final course grade will be awarded according to the following scale:

92 - 100 = A  
89 - 91 = A-  
86 - 88 = B+  
82 - 85 = B  
79 - 81 = B-  
76 - 78 = C+  
72 - 75 = C  
69 - 71 = C-  
66 - 68 = D  
≤ 65 = F

### Remarks

1. It is very important that the research paper be an **individual** endeavor. If not, it is plagiarism, and plagiarism is an academic offense of the highest order that must be avoided. Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will be reported to the administration, and may result in a lowered or failing grade for the course and up to possible dismissal from the School of Diplomacy. See university and school standards for academic conduct here:

<http://www.shu.edu/offices/student-life/community-standards/community-standards.cfm>

<http://www.shu.edu/academics/diplomacy/academic-conduct.cfm>.

2. All work must be completed and submitted on **time**. The instructor will deduct significant points or may decline to accept any project not handed on time. In the event the instructor decides to accept a late submitted paper, the amount to be deducted will increase for each day after the due date. No paper will be accepted if submitted beyond 5 days after the due date, and that means zero points for that paper. It is absolutely necessary that students make their presentations according to schedule or risk getting zero because it is virtually impossible to call students to class session outside of those indicated in the course syllabus.
3. The research proposal must be typed (font size = 12) and double-spaced with appropriate margins (one inch on all sides), and approximately 10 pages long, including footnotes/bibliography.
4. Each student must seek approval of the research topic **before** starting the research. The final research paper must be **firmly** based on the approved proposal. You may not change the topic, questions, or methodology unless approved by the instructor, or risk getting zero. In case of an unavoidable need to make changes in the proposal, the student must first secure the instructor's approval **before it is too late**.
5. The research paper must be typed (font size = 12), double-spaced with appropriate margins (one inch on all sides) and 24-27 pages long, including footnotes and bibliography, and must be handed by the due date, both in a hard copy as well as electronically. I am requiring you also submit the electronic copy to *SafeAssign* to guard against any possible plagiarism.
6. Each student is required to periodically update the instructor on the progress of his/her research, and is expected to meet with the instructor at least twice during February 23 to April 5.
7. Each student will make a class presentation of his/her research on the dates indicated below, and must make PowerPoint presentation of the paper on the day of the presentation. The presentation must go beyond simple reading of the material in the PowerPoint presentation.
8. Request for an "Incomplete" grade may be granted only for legitimate reasons. Such requests must be made by the student and, if granted, all paper work must be completed by the student on or before April 22. Please read university policy regarding this.
9. Class attendance and participation are important. Participation will be measured in terms of the contribution a student makes to the overall success of the course. Therefore, class attendance will be taken.
10. **Disability Services Statement.** Under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Civil Rights Restoration Act, students at Seton Hall University who have a disability may be eligible for accommodations in this course. Should a student require such accommodation, he or she must self-identify at the Office of Disability Support Services (DSS), Room 67, Duffy Hall, provide documentation of said disability, and work with DSS to develop a plan for accommodations. The contact person is Ms. Diane Delorenzo at [\(973\) 313-6003](tel:9733136003).

#### IV. Course Schedule

January 12

About the course – readings, timelines, grading, etc.

Introduction to the research process and how this course may be related to DIPL 6310

What are the important components of research proposal?

January 19

Proposal development  
Starting the research project  
Planning the project  
Important components of research paper  
Writing the research paper

Readings:

Booth *et al.*, Ch. 1.  
Booth *et al.*, Ch. 3-5  
Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, Appendix B.  
Berg, Ch. 12.

January 26

Critical review of published research

Readings:

T. Vanhanen and Salehyan/Gleditsch – do they include the items listed on page 1 of the Syllabus?

February 2

Research proposal development  
No formal class will be held. The instructor will observe office hours during 5:00-6:30 pm (NA section) and 7:35-9:00 pm (NB section) to assist any student with issues related to his/her proposal.

February 9

**Student presentation** of proposal (10-15 minutes). The schedule of presenters will follow the alphabetical order of the student list from SHU's Enrollment Services.

February 16

**Student presentation** of proposal (continued)

February 23, March 1, 15, 22, 29, and April 5

No formal classes will be held. The **proposal must be handed latest by February 23 (this will serve as the instructor's copy and will not be returned)**. The instructor will be in his office during 5:00-6:30 pm (NA section) and 7:35-9:00 pm (NB section) on these dates to assist students with issues related to their individual project. Remember, each student is required to schedule an appointment to update the instructor on the progress of the research **at least two times** during these dates. Record of meetings will be kept.

April 12, 19, 26

**Presentation of research findings** (about 20 minutes). The schedule of presenters will follow the student list from SHU's Enrollment Services in the reverse alphabetical order.

May 10 **Research paper due date. You must drop off the hard copy at the instructor's office between 4:00 and 8:00 pm. Electronic copies must be emailed as Word attachment by 8:00 pm.**