Sex, Drugs and Vodou Spirits
ECFS 490 | Spring 2012 | 1:00 – 2:15 T/Th | 401 Emerson Hall

Course Instructors:
Whitney Peoples  whitney.peoples@gmail.com  Women’s Studies
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Office Hours: Please contact any of the instructors to schedule an appointment.

Course Description
This course is divided into five 3-week modules, taught by instructors from five different disciplines. Each instructor will detail their specific discipline and how it fits into the scientific method. We will discuss the process of formulating research questions and writing a proposal to answer those questions from the point of view of different fields of study. Throughout the semester, you will construct a research proposal for a competitive grant, such as NSF or NEH, with individual guidance from one of the teacher-scholars. Each module will provide relevant insights into the research process and how it applies to writing a successful grant proposal.

Each instructor will present information on their field as well as their original research. We examine these topics as a basis for conducting research to answer our questions as well as yours! The course will include reading, discussions, field trips, and demonstrations. Specific steps of the research process will be emphasized by the teacher-scholars.

Module Assignments and Grades
The syllabus below outlines the readings and assignments for each module. You will be responsible for all of the assignments and readings of the course and will earn a grade from each of the instructors based on their module.

Assignments
As mentioned, each instructor will not only present his/her research but will also emphasize a particular element of the research process. This will help guide you in each stage of your research proposals, in addition to providing a broader knowledge of research in general for the transitional steps after your degree. Along with individual assignments and readings, each module will have an assignment that focuses on the aspect of the research process that the instructor is emphasizing. These assignments will serve as particular sections of your proposal. Each assignment will receive comments from a group of peers and will be graded by your individual mentor.

Blackboard
You will be automatically added to the course in Blackboard (ECFS 490). We will be using this site for course administration, distributing readings, grading, submitting assignments, and for you to post discussion questions to the instructors and the rest of the class. A blog will be used to interact amongst yourselves and the module teacher-scholars, and can be found through the Blackboard course page.
Late Assignments

In fairness to all the students in the class, we expect that you turn in all assignments when they are due; therefore, assignments that are turned in after the class period in which they are due will have 25 percent deducted from them for each 24-hour period they are late. Instructors will not accept papers or projects that are turned in after the conclusion of the module in which the paper or project was assigned.

Research Proposals

Your final paper will consist of a 10-15 page single-spaced research grant proposal in your primary discipline. Your mentor will help you to identify the most appropriate granting agency for your project, which will determine the specific guidelines of your proposal. Examples include:

- Fulbright-Hayes (for research abroad, note: this is different from Fulbright mentioned below): http://www2.ed.gov/programs/iegpssdrap/index.html
- Social Science Research Council: http://www.ssrc.org/fellowships/idrf-fellowship/

Grant programs that require shorter proposals, such as Fulbright IIE or the NSF Graduate Research Fellowship, are not appropriate for this course. However, your individual mentor will be happy to work with you on adapting your proposals for these institutions if you plan to apply.

The Final Project will consist of two parts:

- A 10-15 page proposal, based on the individual assignments
- A 5 min. presentation that should incorporate:
  - An overview of your proposal
  - A creative interpretation and exposition of your proposal’s specific aims and expected results

Peer Feedback

The final report will be accumulated in multiple steps. The specific elements of each assignment will depend on the granting agency you choose and will be decided in conjunction with your mentor.

- Assignment 1: Granting agency and research question/s
- Assignment 2: Introduction, aims, hypotheses
- Assignment 3: Literature review
- Assignment 4: Methods
- Assignment 5: Complete proposal draft

Writing and re-working your proposal throughout the semester will allow you to develop a more thorough, well-constructed research design. Additionally, you will receive feedback throughout the semester from a group of peers and from your mentor. This collaborative structure is intended to introduce you to the
process of scientific inquiry, which involves multiple iterations, feedback, and critique. Peer review is intended not only to provide feedback on proposals, but to expose students to the process of critically examining others’ work. These skills are all essential for a successful researcher. In order to encourage critical reading and productive feedback, peer review feedback will be graded. Each response may include any specific comments on sections of the document as deemed appropriate, as well as a one-page response detailing:

- At least 2 things you liked about that section of the proposal
- At least 2 things you did not like about that section of the proposal
- Recommendations for ways the author can strengthen that section of the proposal

**Grading**

Grading for the course will be as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Final Project</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignments</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer feedback</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module Homework</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Final Project**

There will be two main components to your final project: a written proposal and an oral presentation. Throughout the semester, you will turn in assignments which will help you complete the final project. A substantial portion of your final proposal grade will be based on evidence of improvement based on incorporating comments.

- Final research proposal: 20% (May 1)
- Final presentation: 10% (May 9)

**Assignments**

You will make progress toward your proposal throughout the semester through individual assignments. Each assignment will be worth 5% of your grade and will be graded by your mentor. A portion of your grade will be evidence of incorporating comments from your peers.

1. Granting agency and research question/s (Jan 29)
2. Introduction, aims, hypotheses (Feb 23)
3. Literature review (Mar 22)
4. Methods (Apr 12)
5. Complete proposal draft (Apr 24)

**Peer feedback**

There will be 3 rounds of peer feedback, each worth 5% of your grade.

**Module Homework**

Homework grades will be divided among the individual assignments within each module. Each module will account for 4% of the overall grade.

**Participation**

You are expected to attend all class sessions and participate in discussions and activities.

Final grades are assigned as follows:
A ≥ 93%  C = 73 - 76%
A- = 90 - 92%  C- = 70 - 72%
B+ = 87 - 89%  D+ = 67 - 69%
B = 83 - 86%  D = 60 - 66%
B- = 80 - 82%  F = < 60%
C+ = 77 - 79%

**Final Proposal Support**

**Teacher-Scholar Mentor**

After you have decided on your research question, you will be assigned one of the five teacher-scholars to offer support throughout the semester. This mentor will serve as an expert within the particular area. Your mentor will answer any questions that you have about the course and help develop your final project. The teacher-scholar will meet with you frequently to get to know you as well as offer assistance throughout the semester in developing the proposal. You are free to consult with other teacher-scholars in the course if you would like.

**Emory Writing Center**

Sometimes it can be very difficult to take a great idea and put it onto paper. Even with a lot of training in our own disciplines, sometimes the hardest part of developing a research proposal can be writing it all down in a clear and concise way that others can easily understand. Your mentors can help you overcome some of these challenges; however, you may also benefit from outside help to improve your overall writing skills. Emory University offers a writing center for all undergraduate students. This is an excellent service that helps strengthen the grammatical and mechanical aspects of any written work (from class assignments to applications for graduate school). Therefore, we strongly encourage you to visit the Emory Writing Center at least once so that the specialists there can also help you write a clearly written proposal. To schedule an appointment, you can either go to the Writing Center, located in 212 Callaway North, 537 Kilgo Circle, or call (404) 727-6451. It is imperative that you visit the writing center early in the course, as it will become more difficult to get an appointment the closer it gets to finals. For more details visit [http://writingcenter.emory.edu/](http://writingcenter.emory.edu/)

**Classroom Conduct**

One of our biggest goals this semester is to create an environment where everyone's ideas and opinions are valued and where we can learn a lot from each other; therefore, when people speak they should feel respected by everyone in the class. So, please do not talk over other students or instructors and practice being an active listener by devoting your attention to the class material, lectures, and discussions. In addition, all students will be required to stand on one leg for a brief period of time every second Tuesday.
Students are free to switch legs from week to week, or concentrate on one leg for enhanced asymmetric strength training purposes.

**Participation**

This is a discussion-based course, and your active participation is essential to its success. Please be on time. Since this is a small seminar course, coming to class late can cause disruptions for everyone. Therefore, lateness will influence the participation portion of your grade for the course.

In this course we will engage some very challenging material that will be difficult to grasp if you miss class lectures and discussions. Your attendance is essential to your success in this course. Therefore, you must come to regularly scheduled class periods and your attendance will impact your final grade. You are allowed 2 missed classes. All students who miss 3 or more classes will lose 2 percentage points off their final grade for each class session they miss beginning with the 3rd absence.

**Cellular Phones and Tardiness**

Please silence all cell phones before class begins. And please be on time for class. Any person who has an electronic device that sounds an alert during class or comes in late to class will have the following options: 1) 1% will be deducted from the person’s participation grade, or 2) the person will bring a gift of her/his creation to share with everyone during the following class period. This gift of restitution can range from a poetic or musical composition to your favorite snack for everyone in the class. Please refrain from using computers and cell phones as a means of distracting yourself (and those around you) from the class lectures, activities, or discussions. This includes checking/returning email, text messaging, surfing the web, or playing computer games. We can tell when you are doing other stuff, even if we do not mention it to you in class, and we will take this into consideration when calculating your participation grade for the course.

**Academic Honesty**

When you submit work, you are responsible for documenting any incorporation of another writer’s words, thoughts, and/or ideas. This means that you must always document all sources with formal references and complete citations. Failure to follow these guidelines is a violation of the Emory University Honor Code and will result in disciplinary action. If you are not already familiar with what constitutes academic dishonesty, please consult the Honor Code online [http://college.emory.edu/home/academic/policy/honor_code.html](http://college.emory.edu/home/academic/policy/honor_code.html)

**Questions & Concerns**

We do not assume that you have a background in our individual fields. However, sometimes we may unintentionally use unfamiliar jargon. If you catch us talking about something that we did not define well or explain sufficiently, then please raise your hand and ask us to slow down or to clarify what we said. We would much rather repeat or restate something than have anyone in the class lost or confused. Should questions, comments, or concerns about the course or our areas of research in general arise, do not hesitate to let us know. Our contact information is listed above. Keep in mind that we may not check our email immediately after you email us and that we may not be able to schedule individual appointments without some notice; therefore, make sure that you ask questions and/or for clarification well in advance of an upcoming deadline. Also, remember that other students in the class may have questions similar to yours; feel free to ask about class content, scheduling, or assignments during class times. Before emailing us, be sure to check the blog/discussion board to see whether we have already answered your question if it
was asked by another student. If your question has not been previously posted on the blog, you should consider posting it to aid discussion and group cohesion.

**Students with Disabilities or Special Needs**

Emory University complies with the regulations of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and offers accommodations to students with disabilities. If you are in need of a classroom accommodation, please make an appointment with an instructor to discuss this as soon as possible. All information will be shared only with the other instructors and will be held in the strictest confidence. Please remember that for the purposes of assignment accommodations, University policy requires that you register with the Office of Disability Services (404-727-9877), or visit [http://www.ods.emory.edu/](http://www.ods.emory.edu/). You must provide paperwork to us by the end of the second full week of class.