

ISS 4910: PPEL Research Seminar

I. General Information

Class Meetings

- M/W/F, 3:00pm – 3:50pm
- 3 credits
- Attendance: 100% In-Person, No GTAs, 30 Residential
- Period 8
- Location CSE 0461

Instructor

- Jason Kelly
- Office 0534
- Tel: 352-294-7496
- Office Hours: Mondays, 3:50pm-4:50pm; Wednesdays, 2:00pm-3:00pm
- jasonkelly@ufl.edu

Course Description

In this course, seniors will apply the methodological, theoretical, and historical knowledge they have gained in the PPEL major by conducting an original research project about a topic of real-world significance. Class sessions will focus on two main activities. First, the instructor will introduce and guide students through the research and writing process. Students will workshop and peer-review drafts as they progress throughout the semester. Second, in weeks 1-11, a portion of class time will be devoted to a "PPEL Article Club." Students will select and lead discussions of research articles that have recently appeared in the undergraduate PPE journals published by Brown, Penn, Virginia Tech, and the London School of Economics. Discussing these articles in class will not only provide an opportunity to engage with current research at the intersection of philosophy, politics, economics, and law; it will also provide models of outstanding undergraduate research papers that students can emulate in their own projects. The semester will culminate with student presentations on their research papers.

Prerequisite

- PPEL majors

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes

1. Evaluate and critique recently published undergraduate PPE papers
2. Distinguish a research problem from a research topic
3. Write a research proposal
4. Write a thesis-driven, evidence-supported research paper
5. Deliver a persuasive oral presentation of research findings

Required and Recommended Texts

1. Booth et al., *The Craft of Research* (University of Chicago Press, any edition).
2. Patrick Henry Winston, *Make it Clear: Speak and Write to Persuade and Inform* (MIT Press, 2020).
3. Recommended: William Strunk, Jr., and E. B. White, *The Elements of Style* (Pearson, any edition).
4. Student-selected articles from the following undergraduate PPE journals:
 - a. [*The Penn Journal of Philosophy, Politics & Economics*](#)
 - b. [*The Brown Journal of Philosophy, Politics & Economics*](#)
 - c. [*Studies in Philosophy, Politics and Economics*](#) (London School of Economics)
 - d. [*The Philosophy, Politics, and Economics Review*](#) (Virginia Tech)

II. Graded Work

Description of Graded Work

1. **Annotated Bibliography: 10%**
 - a. In weeks 3 and 5 you will submit annotated bibliographies. Each must list at least five sources and include a paragraph about the contents of each source and a description of how it contributes to your research project.
2. **Research Proposal: 15%**
 - a. In week 2 you will submit a statement of your topic and research problem; in week 3 you will submit a rough draft of your research proposal; in week 4 you will submit your final research proposal.
3. **First Draft: 10%**
 - a. In week 7 you will submit an outline and thesis statement; in week 11 you will submit the first full draft.
4. **Final Paper: 35%**
 - a. In week 13 you will submit your revised final draft.
5. **Presentation: 15%**
 - a. In week 13 or 14 you will make a 10-minute presentation (with slides) about your research project.
6. **PPEL Article Club Participation: 10%**
 - a. In weeks 1-10 we will devote some of our class meetings to a "PPEL Article Club." These sessions are a chance for students to select and lead discussions of research articles that have recently appeared in the undergraduate PPE journals published by Brown, Penn, the London School of Economics, and Virginia Tech. During week 1 Students will be asked to sign up to lead a session.
 - b. An exemplary participant shows evidence of having completed the assigned reading before each class, consistently offers thoughtful points and questions for discussion, and listens considerately to other discussants. See participation rubric below. (R)
7. **Class Attendance: 5%**
 - a. Punctual attendance is required for this component of the course grade. You may have two unexcused absences without any penalty, but starting with the third missed class your grade will be affected. Starting with the third unexcused absence, each unexcused absence reduces your attendance grade by 2/3: an A- becomes a B, and so

on. If you miss 10 or ore classes (excused or not), you will miss material essential for successful completion of the course.

III. Annotated Weekly Schedule

WEEK 1: INTRODUCTIONS, PROBLEMS, AND ETHICS (JANUARY 12, 14, 16)

Monday (January 12): Introductions. We will review the syllabus together, paying particular attention to the structure of the course, assignment details, and expectations—both yours and mine.

- New Assignment: Sign up for “PPEL Article Club” presentation slot (due by Friday, January 16)

Wednesday (January 14): Moving from topic to question to problem

- Reading: Booth et al., *The Craft of Research*, ch. 3 (“From Topics to Questions”) and ch. 4 (“From Questions to a Problem”)

Friday (January 16): Ethics in writing and research

- Reading: Winston, *Make it Clear*, ch. 6 (“Essentials of Ethical Behavior”)
- Assignment Due: PPEL Article Club sign-up
- New Assignment: Statement of Topic and Research Problem (due by Friday, January 23)

WEEK 2: SOURCES (JANUARY 21, 23)

Monday (January 19): No class.

Wednesday (January 21): Finding, evaluating, and engaging sources

- Reading: Booth et al., *The Craft of Research*, ch. 5 (“From Problems to Sources”) and ch. 6 (“Engaging Sources”)

Friday (January 23): PPEL Article Club discussion

- Reading: PPEL Article Club selection
- Assignment Due: Statement of Topic and Research Problem
- New Assignment 1: First draft of research proposal (due in class Wednesday, January 28)
- New Assignment 2: Annotated bibliography (five sources, due in class Wednesday, January 28)

WEEK 3: FEEDBACK & CRITIQUE (JANUARY 26, 28, 30)

Monday (January 26): The art of critique

- Reading: Winston, *Make It Clear*, ch. 5 (“Essentials of Critiquing”)

Wednesday (January 28): Workshop – Research Proposal

- Assignment Due 1: First draft of research proposal (due in class)
- Assignment Due 2: Annotated bibliography (five sources, due in class)

Friday (January 30): PPEL Article Club discussion

- Reading: PPEL Article Club selection
- New Assignment: Revised final research proposal (due on Canvas, Friday, February 6)

WEEK 4: RESEARCH

(FEBRUARY 2, 4, 6)

Monday (February 2): PPEL Article Club discussion

- Reading: PPEL Article Club selection

Wednesday (February 4): Workshop – Sharing & Evaluating a Source

- Please bring one of your sources to class to share and discuss.

Friday (February 6): PPEL Article Club discussion

- Reading: Article Club selection
- Assignment Due: Revised final research proposal (submit via Canvas)
- New Assignment: Annotated bibliography (five new sources, due Friday, February 13)

WEEK 5: RESEARCH

(FEBRUARY 9, 11, 13)

Monday (February 9): Workshop – Sharing & Evaluating Source Inventories

- Please bring an inventory of your sources to class to share and discuss.

Wednesday (February 11): PPEL Article Club discussion

- Reading: Article Club selection

Friday (February 13): PPEL Article Club discussion

- Reading: PPEL Article Club selection
- Assignment Due: Annotated bibliography (five new sources)

WEEK 6: RESEARCH – ARGUMENTS & OUTLINES
(FEBRUARY 16, 18, 20)

Monday (February 16): What makes theses, claims, and arguments effective?

- Reading: Booth et al., *The Craft of Research*, Part III (“Making an Argument”)

Wednesday (February 18): How and why should you construct an outline?

- Reading: Winston, *Make It Clear*, ch. 4 (“Essentials of Outlining”)
- New assignment: Paper outline and thesis statement (due Friday, February 27, via canvas)

Friday (February 20): PPEL Article Club discussion

- Reading: PPEL Article Club selection

WEEK 7: STRUCTURE
(FEBRUARY 23, 25, 27)

Monday (February 23): PPEL Article Club discussion

- Reading: PPEL Article Club selection

Wednesday (February 25): Organizing—what goes where?

- Reading: Winston, *Make It Clear*, chs. 17-21

Friday (February 27): PPEL Article Club discussion

- Reading: PPEL Article Club selection
- Assignment due: Paper outline and thesis statement (via canvas)
- New assignment: Begin first draft of paper (due Monday, March 30)

WEEK 8: WRITING – STYLE
(MARCH 2, 4, 6)

Monday (March 2): How to learn by imitation and avoid blunders

- Reading: Winston, *Make It Clear*, chs. 22-24

Wednesday (March 4): Workshop – Adulation and Avoidance in Writing

Friday (March 6): PPEL Article Club selection

- Reading: PPEL Article Club selection

WEEK 9: WRITING – MORE STYLE
(MARCH 9, 11, 13)

Monday (March 9): Principles of Style and Composition

- Reading: William Strunk, Jr., and E. B. White, *The Elements of Style* Longman, 2000): 15-33. (“Elementary Principles of Composition,” see Canvas)

Wednesday (March 11): Workshop – The Passive Voice in Academic Writing

Friday (March 13): PPEL Article Club discussion

- Reading: PPEL Article Club selection
- Assignment Due: Sign up for final presentation (April 17, 20, or 22)

****SPRING BREAK: MARCH 14-22****

WEEK 10: WRITING – CLARITY
(MARCH 23, 25, 27)

Monday (March 23): Workshop – Paragraphing

Wednesday (March 25): Draft anxieties and concerns

Friday (March 27): PPEL Article Club discussion

- Reading: PPEL Article Club selection

WEEK 11: WRITING – PEER REVIEWS
(MARCH 30; APRIL 1, 3)

Monday (March 30): Peer review: B reviews A

- Reading: Student A draft essay
- Assignment due: First draft

Wednesday (April 1): Peer review: A reviews B

- Reading: Student B draft essay

Friday (April 3): Workshop – Greening (*please bring a hard copy of your first draft to class)

- Reading: John McPhee, “Omission: Choosing what to leave out,” *The New Yorker* 91, Iss 27 (2015).
- New assignment 1: Revise first draft
- New Assignment 2: Begin drafting final presentation and slides (slides due Wednesday, April 15)

WEEK 12: PRESENTATION
(APRIL 6, 8, 10)

Monday (April 6): Fundamentals of Presentation

- Reading: Winston, *Make It Clear*, chs. 7-13 (Part II, “Presentation”)

Wednesday (April 8): Essentials of Persuasion

- Reading: Winston, *Make It Clear*, ch. 1 (“Essentials of Persuasion”)

Friday (April 10): Making your presentation stick

- Reading: Winston, *Make It Clear*, ch. 2 (“Essentials for Being Remembered”)

WEEK 13: DESIGN
(APRIL 13, 15, 17)

Monday (April 13): Design in analytical presentations

- Reading: Winston, *Make It Clear*, chs. 25-29 (Part V, “Design”)
- Assignment due: Final Paper due

Wednesday (April 15): Slideshow peer review

- Assignment due: Presentation slides

Friday (April 17): Final Presentations

WEEK 14: FINAL PRESENTATIONS
(APRIL 20, 22)

Monday (April 20): Final Presentations

Wednesday (April 22): Final Presentations

IV. Grading Scale and Rubrics

Grading Scale

For information on UF’s grading policies for assigning grade points, see [here](#).

A	94 – 100%		C	74 – 76%
A-	90 – 93%		C-	70 – 73%

B+	87 – 89%		D+	67 – 69%
B	84 – 86%		D	64 – 66%
B–	80 – 83%		D–	60 – 63%
C+	77 – 79%		E	<60

Grading Rubrics

Participation Rubric

	Excellent (90-100%)	Good (80-89%)	Average (70-79%)	Insufficient (60-69%)	Unsatisfactor y (below 60%)
Knowledgeable: Shows evidence of having done the assigned work					
Thoughtful: Evaluates carefully issues raised in assigned work					
Considerate: Takes the perspective of others into account and listens attentively					

Writing Rubric

	Thesis and Argumentation	Use of Sources	Organization	Grammar, mechanics and style
A (90-100%)	Thesis is clear, specific, and presents a thoughtful, critical, engaging, and creative interpretation. Argument fully supports the thesis both logically and thoroughly.	Primary (and secondary texts, if required) are well incorporated, utilized, and contextualized throughout.	Clear organization. Introduction provides adequate background information and ends with a thesis. Details are in logical order. Conclusion is strong and states the point of the paper.	No errors.
B (80-89%)	Thesis is clear and specific but not as critical or original. Shows insight and attention to the text under consideration. May have gaps in argument's logic.	Primary (and secondary texts, if required) are incorporated but not contextualized significantly.	Clear organization. Introduction clearly states thesis but does not provide as much background information. Details are in logical order but may be more difficult to follow. Conclusion is recognizable and ties up almost all loose ends.	A few errors.
C (70-79%)	Thesis is present but not clear or specific, demonstrating a lack of critical engagement to the text. Argument is weak, missing important details or making logical leaps with little support.	Primary (and secondary texts, if required) are mostly incorporated but are not properly contextualized.	Significant lapses in organization. Introduction states thesis but does not adequately provide background information. Some details not in logical or expected order, resulting in a distracting read. Conclusion is recognizable but does not tie up all loose ends.	Some errors.

<p>D (60-69%)</p>	<p>Thesis is vague and/or confused. Demonstrates a failure to understand the text. Argument lacks any logical flow and does not utilize any source material.</p>	<p>Primary and/or secondary texts are almost wholly absent.</p>	<p>Poor, hard-to-follow organization. There is no clear introduction of the main topic or thesis. There is no clear conclusion, and the paper just ends. Little or no employment of logical body paragraphs.</p>	<p>Many errors.</p>
<p>E (<60%)</p>	<p>There is neither a thesis nor an argument.</p>	<p>Primary and/or secondary texts are wholly absent.</p>	<p>The paper is wholly disorganized, lacking an introduction, conclusion, or any logical coherence.</p>	<p>Scores of errors.</p>

V. Required Policies

Additional Academic Policies and Resources

Up-to-date information about academic policies and campus resources (including make-up policies; accommodations; the UF Honesty Policy; and campus academic, health, and wellness resources) can be found here: <https://syllabus.ufl.edu/syllabus-policy/uf-syllabus-policy-links/>

For writing assistance, you may wish to consult the university's [Writing Studio](#).

Material and Supply Fees: N/A