

**SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH COUNCIL
DISSERTATION PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT FELLOWSHIP
SPRING 2008 WORKSHOP AGENDA**

**SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY POLICY
WORKSPACE SITE**

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**Crown Plaza Hotel St Louis Downtown, Conference Room #
Wednesday May 28- Sunday June 1, 2008**

This is the first of two workshops designed to help students prepare cogent and fundable dissertation proposals in their chosen field. The two goals of the first workshop are 1) to map the research field with respect to contributing disciplines, methods, sources, and area knowledge; and 2) to help prepare fellows for their pre-dissertation summer research. (The goal of the second workshop will be to focus on the mechanics and methods of writing a dissertation proposal). The two goals stand in close relation to each other: through a sustained and structured discussion of student proposals and their component parts, we hope to contribute to the mapping of the research field itself.

Students will study key aspects of international science and technology policy, the major types of research issues and questions that arise within each, and the methods for investigating these questions.

- **The social contract for science** in different nation-states, conceptualized primarily as the relationship between S&T, government, and the public, but also looking at the role of corporations. This segment will describe and exemplify the governmental and non-governmental actors that participate in S&T policy. Basic theoretical issues will include (1) the relationship between public and private, the state and the market; (2) notions of expertise and expert accountability; (3) ideas of rationality, evidence, and proof; and (4) notions of ethics and morality.
- **National similarities and differences** in policymaking, understood as culturally variable mechanisms for framing issues, creating new social roles and identities, distributing risks and benefits, and co-producing forms of knowledge and social life. Students will be introduced to the sources, expressions, and policy consequences of these normative and philosophical differences in diverse political contexts.
- **Cross-national controversies and breakdowns** in international regulatory systems, e.g., with respect to GM foods, modeling and evaluating climate change, trade disputes at the WTO, ethics of stem cells, and environmental accounting. Controversies underscore the need to examine the institutional and cultural contexts of policymaking, particularly through comparative analysis across technological sectors, policy environments, and institutional cultures.
- **The social contract for science at supranational and global scales**, as emerging in international contexts such as the European Union, the WTO, UN organizations, international NGOs, and international science and engineering organizations. Of particular importance are problems concerning global environmental, economic, and social sustainability. Students will examine processes of redefining and renegotiating the contract between science and society at both the international and global levels, with associated challenges for S&T, policymaking, and democratic participation.

Workshop Readings and Resources

Research Field resources will be placed on the relevant Workspace websites. Students will receive separate explanations and detailed instructions about the access and use of the DPDF digital platform.

Workshop Readings and Resources

ARRIVAL, Wednesday, May 28: Reading handouts / packets will be distributed at registration along with other materials.

Wednesday Evening: *Reception, 6-8 pm.*

Session 1: Introduction and Purpose of Workshops

(Thursday, 9 AM – 12:00 PM)

Plenary Session: Presentations by Program Director Peter Sahlins and the Research Directors

Session 2: Mapping Fields

(Thursday, 2:00 PM – 5 PM)

We will begin on Thursday afternoon with a broad characterization and contextualization of the field of critical studies of science and technology. We will each introduce ourselves and our research interests. We will describe science and technology policy as an area of study, its history and evolution, and the role and contributions of comparative, cross-national and international analysis. We will also identify and discuss key concepts in cross-national policy comparison. Building on students' initial presentations of their work, we will begin to discuss common themes and methodological issues in attempts to study science and technology policy: what are the boundaries of the topic; what counts as policy; what makes formal and informal policy processes differ for research purposes; what challenges are posed by attempts to study non-state policy actors; how can ongoing controversies and processes be delimited for study.

Session 3: Theory / Question / Method

(Friday, 9 AM – 12:00 PM)

This session will begin by analyzing 3 canonical works of international science and technology policy and compare and contrast their theoretical frameworks, research questions, and methods of analysis. Students will be divided into groups to present and critique these works. We will then turn to student work, where students will take the lead by describing how they came to choose their topic and their key questions. One purpose of the session will be to explore how to use theoretical studies to frame important questions in areas of ongoing policy debate. The session will also help students understand how different fields frame and delimit a topic for research. What is a researchable question? What is a good question? How do interdisciplinary approaches complement and enrich disciplinary perspectives? Finally, the session will discuss the problem of linking theory and questions to research methods.

Session 4: Topical and Thematic Foci

(Friday, 2:00 PM – 5 PM)

A key challenge for students is often fully anticipate the variety of data and observations they may encounter and make sense of them in the context of an evolving project. This can be facilitated by developing a richer, more nuanced conceptualization of projects by bringing distinct problem contexts into comparison with one another. We will pursue two such comparisons. First, we will group student proposals by topic and discuss how particular research clusters can enhance one another's work. Then, we will take a thematic cross-cut through the research proposals, identifying common thematic clusters and how they are being elaborated by the different proposals. Students will then be asked to reflect on how these comparisons change their view of their own work.

Session 5: Learning from Experience

(Saturday, 9 AM – 12:00 PM)

This session will discuss the practicalities of developing a research plan. How does one identify sources and interviewees in other countries? What is a realistic timetable for various components of research? Students will develop a preliminary research plan by the end of the session that they will elaborate in the next section.

Session 6: Research plan development

(Saturday, 2:00 PM – 5 PM)

Students will work individually to revise their projects in the light of what they have learned thus far. Research directors will be available for one-on-one consultation, in informal office hours.

Session 7: Looking Forward

(Sunday, 9 AM – 12:30 PM)

This session will begin with presentations of revised research plans from students, with students describing what they want to get out of summer field research and focusing on specific research strategies. We will also examine some of the kinds of challenges inherent in coming out of the field with a mass of notes and moving towards a dissertation proposal. Finally, we will take stock of the research field as a whole. Based on evolving understandings of student research, what can we say about what is exciting and important about the field as a whole and what kinds of activities might be valuable during the fall workshop. Students will be informed about communication strategies, deadlines, and assignments due over the summer and will be given their summer readings lists and assignments, with a specific assignment for the beginning of the fall workshop.

**SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH COUNCIL
DISSERTATION PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT FELLOWSHIP
FALL 2008 WORKSHOP AGENDA**

CRITICAL STUDIES OF SCIENCE and TECHNOLOGY POLICY

<https://workspace.ssrc.org/dpdf/>

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**Hilton Milwaukee City Center
Milwaukee, WI**

Thursday, September 11 – Sunday, September 15

This is the second of two annual DPDF workshops designed to help graduate student fellows prepare cogent and fundable dissertation proposals in their chosen field. The two goals of the second workshop are 1) to help fellows synthesize their summer research; and 2) to draft proposals for dissertation funding. The fall workshop focuses on the mechanics and the philosophy of proposal writing. The workshop also aims to challenge fellows to reflect on their summer research in ways that link meaningfully to their research field. In this, the goals of the fall workshop are closely related to the project of mapping a research field that was started during the spring workshop in St Louis, MI.

Fellows will come out of the second workshop with supportive networks, consisting of both mentors and cohorts of new scholars carrying out research in their fields, as well as intellectually mature dissertation proposals.

ARRIVAL, Wednesday, September 10th: Pick up Welcome Folders

Thursday, September 11th

Session 1:

(Thursday, 9 AM – 12:00 PM)

Plenary Session

The Dissertation Proposal: Strategies & Funding Sources

Session 2:

(Thursday, 2:00 PM – 5 PM)

Proposal Review Session I

In this session, we will discuss the ground rules for review of each draft proposal and review four proposals. We will group the proposals once we have seen them and send you a list ahead of the meeting.

Optional Trip to Milwaukee Art Museum (6 PM)

Session 3:

(Friday, 9 AM – 12:00 PM)

Proposal Review Session II

In this session, we will review four more proposals.

Session 4:

(Friday, 2:00 PM – 5 PM)

Proposal Review Session III

In this session, we will review the final four proposals.

Session 5:

(Saturday, 9 AM – 12:00 PM)

Individual Discussions

On, we will hold individual meetings with students, and you will have time to work on revisions of your proposal.

Session 6:

(Saturday, 2:00 PM – 5 PM)

Cross-Exchange

During this time, we will meet jointly with the environment group to discuss interdisciplinary research and proposal writing.

DPDF Reception at Rock Bottom Brewery (7 PM)

Session 7:

(Sunday, 9 AM – 12:30 PM)

Mock Review Panel