

INDEV 490A: Honours Thesis: Project Preparation

Instructor

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Schedule

FORMAT: The course will be delivered asynchronously online.

OFFICE HOURS: Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10:30am – 12:30pm. You can book an appointment time at:

<https://outlook.office365.com/owa/calendar/OfficeHourswithProfWood@uofwaterloo.onmicrosoft.com/bookings/>. If the days or times of day are not convenient for you, please contact your instructor by email to find an alternative time to meet.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The Honours Thesis/Project provides students with an opportunity to pursue a specific research topic or applied project of their choosing relating to the study of International Development. The paper will be prepared over two semesters. 490A involves the guided Preparation of a research/project proposal.

Course ID: 014687 Credit 0.5

DELIVERY OF COURSE MATERIAL

1. The course syllabus - the contract between the instructor and student - will be discussed in our week of the course.
2. All readings, podcasts, videos, and other materials for this course will be accessible through the LEARN system. Go to <https://learn.uwaterloo.ca/>. There is no textbook required for this course.
3. The weekly content will be delivered primarily by narrated PowerPoint Presentations. The content for each given week will be posted by Monday at 8am for the week the content is scheduled to be covered. A detailed weekly schedule can be found [here](#).

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

1. Login to LEARN frequently.
2. Review all materials.
3. Ask questions.
4. Complete all assignments to the best of your ability.
5. Pace yourself.
6. Plan ahead: check when deliverable (e.g., assignments) due and plan accordingly.
7. I highly recommend the online workshops being facilitated this Fall by the Writing and Communications Centre. Click on the following link to see a list of workshops and their timings (<https://uwaterloo.ca/writing-and-communication-centre/workshops>). In particular, the session titled, *Getting it Done: Productive Writing Strategies for Big Projects*, on October 22, 2020, at 9 am is great!

GRADE

- 490A Upon completion of the six deliverables listed below and having achieved a "Pass", and having completed three supervisory milestones, the student will receive an In Progress (IP) grade symbol on their transcript.
- 490B The final grade for the thesis will be provided to the instructor at the end of the Winter 2020 term and will be reflected on the student's transcript.

FINAL COURSE GRADE FOR INDEV 490A and 490B

The grade earned for the thesis (490B) will be applied to INDEV 490A and will replace the IP symbol.

COURSE ASSESSMENT

This course is taken in sequence with INDEV 490B in the Winter Term. The course is, therefore, the first of two parts. In this course, the key deliverable is a completed research proposal that will form the basis of your research and thesis preparation under INDEV 490B in the next term. This will be done under the instructor's guidance and in cooperation with the student's thesis supervisor.

SUPERVISORY MILESTONES

Students identify their supervisors	Sept 25 th , 2020
Students complete and submit the supervisor and student form to Dropbox	Oct 9 th , 2020
Supervisors provide a brief progress report to Prof. Wood	Dec 4 th , 2020

Deliverable	Weighting	Due:
1. Topic Phenomenon	Pass/Fail	Sept 20 th by 11 pm to Discussion
2. Reading Someone Else's Thesis	Pass/Fail	Oct 4 th by 11 pm to Dropbox
3. Preliminary RQ and Thesis Description	Pass/Fail	Oct 25 th by 11 pm to Discussion
4. Literature Review	Pass/Fail	Nov 1 st by 11 pm to Dropbox
5. 3-Minute Thesis Presentation	Pass/Fail	Nov 22 nd by 11 pm to Dropbox

6. Research Proposal	Pass/Fail	Nov 29 th by 11 pm to Dropbox
FINAL GRADE	In Progress*	Final Thesis Grade Achieved in INDEV 490B

***IMPORTANT NOTE: In Progress (IP) will be achieved only by passing all six deliverables and completing all three supervisory milestones listed above.**

1. Topic Phenomenon

Imagine a close friend or family member, unfamiliar with the field, asked you what you were researching for your thesis. What would you say? The purpose of this assignment is to answer, in layman's terms and without literature, the following question, *what is the phenomenon you are interested in researching for your thesis?* The assignment is to be no more than 300 words, and no less than 200 words. The assignment is to be submitted to the Discussion titled "Topic Phenomenon".

I would appreciate it if each student were to review their colleagues' submissions and provide comments of support and guidance as appropriate.

2. Reading Someone Else's Thesis

The purpose of this exercise is to read through a thesis written by someone else but on a similar topic to what you will be doing for your own thesis. Write a 2-page reflection (12-point Times New Roman font with 1.5 spacing 1" margin on all sides) on the thesis. To help structure your reflection, the assignment description, which can be found on LEARN, provides a set of questions (by thesis section) to help guide your reflection. It is important to consider how this thesis example will be similar or different to what you envision for your thesis.

3. Preliminary Research Question and Thesis Description

The purpose of this assignment is to have you articulate your research question(s) and present a refined research topic to that which was presented for the first deliverable. This assignment should be no less than 200 words and no more than 300 words, and is to be posted to the Discussion, titled, "RQ and Thesis Description."

4. Literature Review

Students will prepare a literature review based on a selection of **at least eight** journal articles. These articles will be directly related to your chosen research topic. The assignment requires students to write a minimum of 5 pages (12-point Times New Roman font with 1.5 spacing 1" margin on all sides) not including references or title page. This assignment will provide the foundation for the literature review in your final research proposal (and ultimately, your thesis).

5. 3-Minute Thesis Presentation

Communicating your research topic effectively to a general audience is an essential component of academia. The purpose of this assignment is to convey the details of your research topic in a way that can be easily understood. Particularly important in this presentation of your research is a strong rationale for your topic as well as the contributions of your study. Your assignment will consist of 1-slide, with associated narration for up to three minutes. The assignment is to be submitted via the associated Dropbox. A detailed assignment description can be found on LEARN.

6. Research Proposal

You will be required to produce a research proposal as the foundation for your thesis, which you will complete during INDEV 490B (Winter term). This will be developed on the basis of the learning in this class (490A) and in cooperation with your thesis supervisor. The research proposal will be a minimum of 10 pages (12-point Times New Roman font with 1.5 spacing 1" margin on all sides), not including appendices and a reference list. Students will need to use APA formatting consistently throughout the proposal. Details of structure and content are provided in the assignment description on LEARN.

DETAILED WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Week	Theme	Description	Activities
Week 1 Sept 8 - 13	Welcome!	Welcome to the Course and Syllabus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the Syllabus
Week 2 Sept 14 - 20	Setting the Scene	Laying the groundwork for your thesis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion: "Topic Phenomenon" – post 200-300 word description of thesis topic (Due: Sep 20th)
Week 3 Sept 21 - 27	Establishing your thesis topic	Finding a research problem and rationale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify your supervisor (by Sep 25th)
Week 4 Sept 28 - Oct 4	What's the secret recipe?	What to expect when you're researching and writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading Someone Else's Thesis – Dropbox (Due: Oct 4th)
Week 5 Oct 5 - 11	RQs and Title	Developing your RQs Coming up with an Effective Title	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student's complete and return the supervisor and student form to Prof. Wood (by Oct 9th)
READING WEEK – October 10-18			
Week 6 Oct 19 - 25	Defining your literature scope	Conducting a focused review of the literature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post a preliminary research question with a description of the thesis topic (Due: Oct 25th)
Week 7 Oct 26 - Nov 1	What's in a proposal?	Overview of proposal structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literature Review (Due: Nov 1st)
Week 8 Nov 2 - 8	Mastering academic writing	Writing effectively Tips from the experts	-
Week 9 Nov 9 - 15	What's most important?	Presenting academic work effectively to a general audience	-
Week 10 Nov 16 - 22	Moving right along!	Troubleshooting ideas, frameworks and methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3MT Presentation (Due: Nov 22nd)
Week 11 Nov 23 - 29	Avoiding pitfalls	Organizing the thesis: upfront and behind-the-scenes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thesis Proposal (Due Nov 29th)
Week 12 Nov 30 - Dec 7	Wrap-up and Next Steps	Keeping the momentum.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supervisor Provides Progress Report (by Dec 4th)

COURSE POLICIES

Addressing Your Instructor: When addressing your instructor either verbally or in writing, a good rule of thumb to follow is to use the title "Professor" followed by the last name. However, this is a small, upper year seminar-style class and adopting a first name basis may be appropriate. The general norms of respect pertain.

Course Materials: Supervisors may assign relevant readings to individual students. These are to be undertaken under the guidance of the supervisor.

Late Submissions: Submissions received after the due date and time will be graded as 'Failed'. Exceptions will be made in extraordinary circumstances (e.g., medical emergencies supported by documentation). Students anticipating that their assignment will be submitted late are encouraged to contact their supervisors and/or course instructor at the earliest possible time to make appropriate arrangements and avoid a 'Failed' grade.

Digital Submissions: Only digital submissions in MS-WORD will be accepted. Any other format will not be graded. All assignments must be submitted through Dropbox on the course website.

Protocol for Contesting Graded Assignments: Upon receipt of your graded assignment (thesis in this course), should you wish to contest the grading of your assignment the following protocol must be followed:

Submit an email to the course instructor detailing why your assignment warrants a review. Please be sure to provide specific examples and justification as to why you feel your grade should be reconsidered. Be sure to include a copy of your graded assignment in the email.

The supervisor and/or instructor will then review the stated reasons and then decide whether re-grading of the assignment is warranted.

Should the supervisor and/or instructor deem that re-grading is warranted, the instructor will then ask the student whether they would like their assignment re-graded, recognizing that the student's grade could go up or stay the same depending on the supervisor's and/or instructors' assessment.

The student can choose to either have the instructor go ahead with re-grading the entire assignment or opt to remain with their original grade. **Mental Health:** The University of Waterloo, the Faculty of Environment and our Departments/Schools consider students' well-being to be extremely important. We recognize that throughout the term students may face health challenges - physical and / or emotional. **Please note that help is available.** Mental health is a serious issue for everyone and can affect your ability to do your best work. Counselling Services <http://www.uwaterloo.ca/counselling-services> is an inclusive, non-judgmental, and confidential space for anyone to seek support. They offer confidential counselling for a variety of areas including anxiety, stress management, depression, grief, substance use, sexuality, relationship issues, and much more.

Religious Observances: Students need to inform the instructor at the beginning of term if special accommodation needs to be made for religious observances that are not otherwise accounted for in the scheduling of classes and assignments.

Unclaimed assignments: Unclaimed assignments will be retained for ... [period of time*; or: "until one month after term grades become official in quest"]. After that time, they will be destroyed in compliance with UW's [confidential shredding procedures](#).

Communications with Instructor and Teaching Assistants: All communication with students must be through either the student's University of Waterloo email account or via Learn. If a student emails the instructor or TA from a personal account they will be requested to resend the email using their personal University of Waterloo email account.

Recording lecture: Use of recording devices during lectures is only allowed with explicit permission of the instructor of the course. If allowed, video recordings may only include images of the instructor and not fellow classmates. Posting of videos or links to the video to any website, including but not limited to social media sites such as: facebook, twitter, etc., is strictly prohibited.

Intellectual Property: For further information on IP related to teaching, please see https://uwaterloo.ca/legal-and-immigration-services/sites/ca.legal-and-immigration-services/files/uploads/files/volume_1_issue_3_winter_2018.pdf and the Guidelines for Faculty, Staff and Students Entering Relationships with External Organizations Offering Access to Course Materials, <https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/faculty-staff-and-students-entering-relationships-external>. The following text is recommended:

Students should be aware that this course contains the intellectual property of their instructor, TA, and/or the University of Waterloo. Intellectual property includes items such as:

- Lecture content, spoken and written (and any audio/video recording thereof);
- Lecture handouts, presentations, and other materials prepared for the course (e.g., PowerPoint slides);
- Questions or solution sets from various types of assessments (e.g., assignments, quizzes, tests, final exams); and
- Work protected by copyright (e.g., any work authored by the instructor or TA or used by the instructor or TA with permission of the copyright owner).

Course materials and the intellectual property contained therein, are used to enhance a student's educational experience. However, sharing this intellectual property without the intellectual property owner's permission is a violation of intellectual property rights. For this reason, it is necessary to ask the instructor, TA and/or the University of Waterloo for permission before uploading and sharing the intellectual property of others online (e.g., to an online repository).

Permission from an instructor, TA or the University is also necessary before sharing the

intellectual property of others from completed courses with students taking the same/similar courses in subsequent terms/years. In many cases, instructors might be happy to allow distribution of certain materials. However, doing so without expressed permission is considered a violation of intellectual property rights.

Please alert the instructor if you become aware of intellectual property belonging to others (past or present) circulating, either through the student body or online. The intellectual property rights owner deserves to know (and may have already given their consent).

UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC POLICIES

Academic integrity: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. [Check [the Office of Academic Integrity](#) for more information.]

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read [Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4](#). When in doubt, please be certain to contact the department's administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity to avoid committing an academic offence, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. [Check [the Office of Academic Integrity](#) for more information.] A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about "rules" for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course instructor, academic advisor, or the undergraduate associate dean. For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to [Policy 71, Student Discipline](#). For typical penalties, check [Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties](#).

Appeals: A decision made or penalty imposed under [Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances](#) (other than a petition) or [Policy 71, Student Discipline](#) may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to [Policy 72, Student Appeals](#).

Note for students with disabilities: [AccessAbility Services](#), located in Needles Hall, Room 1401, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with AccessAbility Services at the beginning of each academic term.

Turnitin.com: Text matching software (Turnitin®) may be used to screen assignments in this course. Turnitin® is used to verify that all materials and sources in assignments are documented. Students' submissions are stored on a U.S. server, therefore students must be

given an alternative (e.g., scaffolded assignment or annotated bibliography), if they are concerned about their privacy and/or security. Students will be given due notice, in the first week of the term and/or at the time assignment details are provided, about arrangements and alternatives for the use of Turnitin in this course.

It is the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor if they, in the first week of term or at the time assignment details are provided, wish to submit alternate assignment.

Writing and Communication Centre: The Writing and Communication Centre (WCC) works with students as they develop their ideas, draft, and revise. Writing and communication specialists offer one-on-one support in planning assignments, synthesizing and citing research, organizing papers and reports, designing presentations and e-portfolios, and revising for clarity and coherence.

You can make multiple appointments throughout the term, or you can drop in at the Library for quick questions or feedback. To book a 25- or 50-minute appointment and to see drop-in hours, visit uwaterloo.ca/wcc. Group appointments for team-based projects, presentations, and papers are also available.

Please note that communication specialists guide you to see your work as readers would. They can teach you revising skills and strategies, but will not change or correct your work for you.

Grading Expectations

SEED grading expectations. Consistent with SEED policy, assessments are designed to provide fair evaluation of undergraduate performance and avoid grade compression.

Grade (%)	Qualitative description	Expected distribution
90+	Exceptional – in the sense that grades above 90 should be the exception and granted only where the student performance clearly exceeds the course expectations and shows full mastery of the subject matter of the course	10-20%
85 -90	Outstanding – demonstrates excellence and an insightful grasp of the subject matter. Marks here should be awarded to students that clearly exceed the expected performance in the course relative to other students.	
80-85	Excellent – demonstrates a strong grasp of subject matter in all or most areas of the course and ability to produce work of consistently high quality	60-80%
75-80	Very good – demonstrates strong grasp of subject matter across most areas of course and good or satisfactory knowledge in others, as well as ability to produce work above expected level.	
70-75	Good – demonstrates good knowledge of fundamental concepts and satisfactory understanding of more advanced ideas within course. Has ability to produce work at required level.	
65-70	Satisfactory – demonstrates basic understanding of fundamental concepts within course, but lacks advanced understanding of application. Inconsistent quality of work, but overall at required level.	10-20%
60-65	Minimally satisfactory – student achieves minimum expectations in most areas, and produces work that rarely exceeds minimal requirements	
50-60	Marginal performance – student demonstrates superficial grasp of subject matter in many areas of the course.	
Below 50	Fail	