

Mayville State University
Social Science 480s Comprehensive
Spring Semester 2025
Instructors: Lonamalia Smith

Lonamalia Smith

Office: Classroom Building, room 111B

Office hours: M T Th F 2:00pm – 4:00pm or appointment by email

Email: lona.smith@mayvillestate.edu

Credits: 1

Instruction mode: On-campus face-to-face

Meeting Times and Location: By arrangement

Course Description

SOSC 480S SOCIAL SCIENCE COMPREHENSIVE This course fulfills LEAP requirements and must be completed through Mayville State University. The Social Science Comprehensive is a challenging capstone project where the senior student will select at least two social science disciplines to research after attending a series of seminar classes presented by the faculty. The student will then research his/her project, write the paper, according to the guidelines provided by the seminar, prepare a PowerPoint presentation on the paper and lastly defend the paper to faculty and students using the PowerPoint.

Purpose of the Course

The purpose of this course is to provide a final chance for the department to assess your progress as a learner and scholar. This assessment asks you to demonstrate that you can undertake the work of a social scientist with independence and quality. No matter what your future plans within the field are, the ability to conduct research, organize materials in a coherent manner, to present your work clearly, and write with clarity will be essential.

Course Objectives

1. To complete a scholarly paper with independent research
2. To make a presentation of twenty minutes in length and answer questions from faculty and other observers
3. To prepare a PowerPoint presentation that enhances your oral presentation and educates your audience

To successfully complete this course, the learner will be expected to meet the following objectives, as aligned to Social Science Education Program Approval Standards through North Dakota's Education Standards and Practices Board ([ND ESPB](#)):

Standards Alignment (Social Science Education Program Approval Standards-ND ESPB):

15035.2 The program requires study of the structures, key concepts, methodology, and generalizations that connect the various social studies, including the examination of professional standards and expectations for P-12 education.

15035.3 The program requires study of multi-cultural, cross-cultural, diversity, global issues, and multiple perspectives

Program Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) Addressed in This Course

The Academic Program Student Learning Outcomes document can be found in your course shell. It contains all learning outcomes pertaining to Essential Studies courses and all majors and minors. The document has an index, so you can quickly find the degree you are pursuing.

The comprehensive course meets all of the SLOs for Social Science, Social Science Education and History Education: SLO 1: Students will explain and demonstrate content knowledge in various formats; SLO 2: Students will use and apply content knowledge in new contexts that illustrate transfer of learning; SLO 3: Students will utilize concepts from content knowledge to synthesize and create new ideas and work; and SLO 4: Students will compare, critique, and evaluate ideas, theories, and/or outcomes in content knowledge. Through your research paper and presentation, you will demonstrate mastery of all four SLOs. You will also demonstrate mastery of all four Essential Learning Outcomes. They are: conduct independent research; poses content knowledge; poses reading and writing skills; and be able to think critically. The comprehensive also meet the four ELOs for essential studies they are: knowledge of human cultures; intellectual and practical skills; personal and social responsibility; integrative and applied learning. Your research paper, oral presentation, and PowerPoint are used to assess these learning outcomes.

Course Improvements Based on Most Recent Assessment Findings

The comprehensive course students have done an outstanding job in meeting with advisors, choosing unusual and interesting topics, and doing their presentations. Students continue to struggle with the actual paper writing and documentation. Examples for documentation will be placed on Blackboard and will be handed out in the seminars. Also, students will be required to use the writing center as they work on their rough draft to be turned into the advisor. This course will be assessed in the future (based on the 2019-2025 assessment curriculum map) and the findings will be reported in this syllabus.

Required Materials

None.

Instructional Strategies and Learning Experiences

The instructional strategies used in this course reflect the multiple learning-styles of the members of the class. They are: seminar, research, PowerPoint use and presentation, revising drafts to produce the final paper.

Instructional Technologies Utilized in this Course

- Blackboard Ultra

Expectations/Protocols

The Social Science capstone paper should reflect work in a minimum of two of the Social Sciences (Anthropology, Economics, Geography, History, Political Science, Sociology,). The History and Geography comprehensive projects should also relate these fields to the other areas of the social sciences.

The topic should be finalized in consultation with the faculty member under whom the paper is to be written. The topic is largely to be of your choice, subject to the approval of the supervising faculty member. In selecting a topic, we urge you to consider your future vocational plans. Those in the education program should consider the subjects they expect to be teaching as sources for topics. Those who plan to pursue graduate studies or other non-teaching opportunities should consider topics appropriate to those pursuits.

Attendance

Attendance is required most weeks in order to complete the research in a timely fashion. Please see the schedule below. Students are responsible for keeping in contact with their advisor in relationship to topics, and specific details related to the paper.

Style and Notes

All papers should be done in MLA (Modern Language Association) style using a traditional footnote style. The Social Science Department has agreed with the English Department to use the MLA style. Students learn the [MLA](#) system in the introductory English courses. It is then appropriate to follow that system in course work. All materials are expected to be completely documented in this paper.

Long Island University has an on-line version of the MLA Handbook. Access it by clicking here: [MLA](#).

Plagiarism will not be tolerated. The Department will assign a grade of "U" (unsatisfactory) to any paper the Department considers to contain plagiarism. Plagiarism is the claiming of the work of others as your own. This mainly is accomplished through the improper or non-existing citation of sources. It would also cover the submission of a paper written in total, or in part, by another person. In short, all elements of the paper must be your own words, unless they are inside quotation marks and properly cited. If you have any doubts about this issue, consult with your supervising faculty member.

The paper must be word-processed. The use of Microsoft *Word* is recommended given its availability on campus, its footnoting capabilities, and its spelling and grammar checking features. The printer should have a good ink supply. Full devotion to making a quality presentation should be a high priority.

Instructor/Student Communication

The student is responsible for taking the initiative to contact his or her advisor after the opening seminar to set up a standing meeting time to proceed through the research project. Faculty will normally respond to e-mail and voice mail contacts with 24 hours, Monday through Friday.

Method of Evaluation/Grading

The course has two assignments, a research paper of 20 pages in length, excluding the title page and works cited; and a presentation of approximately 20 minutes with a PowerPoint to accompany it. Papers are graded on the Satisfactory "S" or Unsatisfactory "U" scale. Each paper will be read by the student's advisor and on other faculty member on the committee. If they approve or disapprove then the appropriate grade will be assigned. If the readers would like changes to be made before approving, students will have approximately one week to do so.

The paper should have a minimum of six sources of which three or more are web located sources of good reputation. Encyclopedias, source books, and Wikipedia may not be used for material in the paper but can be consulted for background information and additional sources.

Important Student Information

In the Announcements section of the Blackboard Institution Page, you can view and download the Important Student Information document for the current academic year. It includes information about:

- ✓ Land Acknowledgement Statement
- ✓ Academic Grievance Concerns and Instructor English Proficiency
- ✓ NetTutor - Online Tutoring Program
- ✓ Starfish - Student Success System
- ✓ Students with Documented Disabilities
- ✓ Student Learning Outcomes / Essential Learning Outcomes
- ✓ Academic Honesty
- ✓ Emergency Notification
- ✓ Continuity of Academic Instruction for a Pandemic or Emergency
- ✓ Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)
- ✓ Diversity Statement (Title IX)

Course Timeline/Schedule

The following schedule, though tentative, should be used to guide your work:

Week (Dates)	Benchmark	What to have prepared/Deadline
Week 1 1/13	Schedule time for syllabus overview in Week 2	
Week 2 1/20	Go over syllabus; set up individual standing meeting times with advisor	Know your available times for individual meetings
Week 3 1/27	Topics/Questions	Be ready to discuss research topics of interest to you
Week 4 2/3	Draft Research Question(s)	Be ready with prospective research question(s) that you want to answer
Week 5 2/10	Literature/Bibliography	Be ready with a preliminary list of resources you may use to study background on your research topic
Week 6 2/17	Research Instruments	Be ready with ideas/questions concerning how you will collect data to complete your research
Week 7 2/24	Research Development	Be ready to continue to fine tune research questions, research instruments, literature, etc.
Week 8 3/3	Research Development and Paper Outline	Be ready to develop your research questions/instruments and to discuss the outline of your research paper
Week 9 3/10	Outline Draft/ Thesis Statement/Images	Have a rough draft of your outline completed to go over, a draft thesis statement, and any images you may wish to include
Week 10 3/17	Writing Accountability Group/Partner	Spend 1+ hour(s) with at least one other capstone student to write, read, give feedback, critique, and so on.
Week 11 3/24	Writing Accountability Group/Partner	Spend 1+ hour(s) with at least one other capstone student to write, read, give feedback, critique, and so on.
Week 12 3/31	Writing Center	You must schedule an appointment with the Writing Center to examine your research paper
Week 13 4/7	Rough Draft	A rough draft should be sent to your advisor for review; please allow one week for feedback
Week 14 4/14	Final Edits	Complete any edits suggested by advisor or Writing Center
Week 15 4/21	Final Paper/Slides Preview	Final research paper must be submitted at least one week before presentation to advisor; have draft of presentation slides
Week 16 4/28	Presentation	Give research presentation to Capstone Committee and other capstone students and guests

Week 17 5/5	Final Revisions (if necessary)	Complete any revisions required by the Capstone Committee; must be resubmitted to advisor by the completion of Finals Week
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