

Institute for Doctoral Studies in the Visual Arts
901.2 Dissertation Seminar I, Part 2: Methods / Developing Research

Course Number: 901.1
Course Name: Dissertation Seminar I, Part 1: Pre-Dissertation Seminar
Dates: July 13-18, 2020
Format: Online
Instructors: Prof. Simonetta Moro; Prof. Dejan Lukic
Visiting Faculty: Prof. Paul Armstrong (Brown University)
TA:
Credits: 1 Credit

Course Number: 901.2
Course Name: Dissertation Seminar I, Part 2: Methods/Developing Research
Dates: September 21 - December 12, 2020
Format: Online & Conference
Instructors: Prof. Dejan Lukic (Sept 21-Oct 26); Prof. Simonetta Moro (Nov 2-Dec 12) and Dr. Kathe Albrecht, IDSVA Post-Doc Writing Fellow
Visiting Faculty: Prof. Grant Farred
Credits: 4 Credits

SYLLABUS

Dissertation Seminar I, Part 2: Methods/Developing Research Fall 2020

Course Description:

Dissertation Seminar I, Part 2 continues the conversation begun at the Dissertation Residency (online in July 2020) and its Pre-Dissertation seminar.

In his opening lecture, Prof. Paul Armstrong spoke about the perception and experience of the work of art from the perspective of phenomenology and hermeneutics, providing a historical overview of these two key methodologies, in relation to his own work in the critical interpretation of literary texts and neuroaesthetics.

In the seminar that followed, professors Simonetta Moro and Dejan Lukic led discussion about the unfolding tensions and overlaps between formalism, phenomenology, and hermeneutics, in relation to theories of knowledge, subjectivity, form, and the way ‘meaning’ happens in the work of art. The Pre-Dissertation seminar also introduced a discussion on methodologies and approaches to thinking, looking at and writing about art. These studies together prepared the ground for a more extended discussion on methods in the fall semester.

This seminar’s goal is twofold: on the one hand, it is intended to help students develop a comprehensive, in-depth understanding of the conceptual and methodological debates that have defined contemporary aesthetic theory. On the other hand, it aims to help students start the process of developing their independent researches into a roadmap for the dissertation, to be completed by the end of the spring semester next year in the form of a ‘Written Exam’ and corollary documents to be presented at the Qualifying Exams.

To this end, the seminar is structured in two parts: the first five weeks (or first half of the semester) will be devoted to the discussion of specific texts that exemplify some key methodological approaches in art theory and philosophy, namely: phenomenological ontology; psychoanalytic theory and feminist critique; Marxist and post-colonial critiques; structuralism, poststructuralism, and postmodernism; and intertextuality. Two pillars of IDSV’s methodology bookend the discussion: ‘formulating the question’ and ‘intertextuality’. The former will be explored through Heidegger’s Introduction to *Being and Time* (and through a dedicated series of lectures on *Being and Time* lead by Visiting Professor Grant Farred; see schedule for details); the latter through Kristeva’s and Bakhtin’s excerpts on the poetic language and the concept of heteroglossia.

In the second part of the semester, students will be focusing on developing independent research toward their dissertation topics, starting with a review of the initial statement produced before the start of the semester, and getting the chance to refocus on their initial proposals in class discussions. The main goal will be for students to develop a thesis statement, outline, written exam/Introduction, and bibliography, which will guide their research projects throughout the third year. Dr. Kathe Albrecht will join this section of the course, to further help students refine their writing skills and formulate a cogent argument.

Within the larger scope of the IDSV curriculum, the Dissertation Seminar courses I and II (fall and spring semesters) may be considered an extension of the Independent Studies and the quasi-Independent Studies previously undertaken. However, while the IS aimed at honing particular scholarly interests as

well as cultivating research skills and scholarly writing skills, the Dissertation Seminar courses are designed to help students further advance a suitable topic and argument for their dissertations, and stabilize a list of fifteen titles that will guide the Preliminary Oral Exam, while also establishing a broader bibliography of books to be explored in the process of research.

Now is the time, in anticipation of the oral exam and the dissertation, to look back and assess the debates to which the curriculum has introduced you. What are the theoretical causes and consequences of the major disputes in aesthetics today, how have they evolved, and what are the methodological and conceptual implications of these disagreements for the work ahead of you?

A central goal of this seminar will be to help you develop a clearer, more rigorous understanding of where you stand (and why) in these controversies so that you can better demonstrate your readiness to participate in them. The aim is to help you negotiate the transition from understanding others' theoretical positions to articulating your own independent contributions to debates that will matter to your future work.

Learning Objectives:

Main goals for Dissertation Seminar I, Part 2 are:

- To prepare the student for the process of initiating a long-term, large-scale research project.
- To stress the importance of organization and step-by-step planning.
- To have you gain an understanding of different philosophical perspectives and the ways in which they interact with each other.
- To realize how to implement these insights in your own philosophical orientations which are exemplified in your dissertation projects.
- To sharpen the methodologies that you learned in the previous years, and potentially use a combination of them in your own singular way.

By the end of the Fall course each student will have produced:

1. **Overview** (max 3 pp.), including: 1) topic, 2) thesis statement, 3) main points in support of argument; 4) methodological approach (with specific references to key texts read in the first five weeks).
2. **First half of the written exam** (ca. 12-15 pp.), consisting of an Introduction to your proposed dissertation project (see Umberto Eco, *How to Write a Thesis*, Chapter 4: "The Work Plan and the Index Cards," especially pp. 107-115 for a good explanation of what the Introduction is supposed to do at this stage).
3. **Bibliography** intended to act as a roadmap for ongoing dissertation research (12-15 titles). Of these titles, at least half will be annotated this semester.¹ Books and essays from the course of study should be part of your bibliography; in fact, you should make sure that *at least half the texts* in your list come from the core seminar list. You will read and annotate the remaining titles in your bibliography in the spring semester.
4. **Detailed Outline** of Dissertation (follow the **IDSVA Writing Guide** model! And see Eco's Chapter 4 already mentioned for extra guidance).

Due date for the final submission of the above documents is **Dec. 14, 2020**.

¹ For basic information about annotated bibliography, see: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/614/01/>

These documents will provide a starting point for subsequent revisions and research development in the second semester of the third year, leading to the Written Exam that will be presented in the Oral Exam in the summer. The Introduction and related documents will be completed in the spring semester, in the Dissertation Seminar II course.

Course Requirements:

Starting on the second week of the semester, we will conduct videoconferences involving all students in the seminar, for a total of **four** conference weeks distributed in the course of the semester – two for the ‘methods’ section and two for the research section. In these conferences, students will either discuss reading materials, or present their current state of the dissertation, in order to receive feedback. Each student will get the chance to present once in the course of this semester (and more often in the course of next semester), and to engage in discussions on topics of common interest. These presentations should not be viewed as limited to each specific case, but as a way to provide guidance to the whole class on the basis of common problems that may arise in the process of writing the dissertation.

By the time class starts, you should have submitted your initial topic proposal (see scaffolding template distributed prior to semester start). You will have a chance to rework this statement by the time your 3-pp. Overview is due at the end of week 5 (see below).

Open Class Forum: Starting the first week of the course, members of the class will lead Open Class Forum (OCF) discussions every three weeks (details below). OCF is a focused conversation with the readings and one another (not a social-media style forum for scattered musings). In the first 5 weeks there will be three OCFs. Each OCF will be guided by one study group which will post a couple of intertextual questions based on the assigned readings.

- Replies to questions should be **thoughtful and succinct (under 200 words)** in order to keep the conversation lively and to the point.
- Replies should (i) address at least one of the questions, and (ii) engage productively with other student comments.
- You are welcome to reply to more than one question, but please post the replies separately.
- Every student is required to answer a question in OCF-designated weeks. Try to reply to at least one question by the end of the week; posting replies sooner will enable more fruitful discussion.

In the second part of the semester, due to the workshop nature of the seminar, Open Class Forum (OCF) will be dedicated to posting the most recent draft of the dissertation documents, to pose questions of common interest, and for peer reviewing and feedback exchange. This is an opportunity to use the powerful research resource known as ‘your cohort’. On the following conference call, each of the selected students will give 10-minute (or less) presentations on their recent postings, framing the ideas and avenues of inquiry with which they are most concerned. Presentations should be “seminar-style” – not formal conference presentations, but more informal, conversational presentations of research directions. Each presentation will be followed by a discussion with the entire class. Conferences will be scheduled in two-hour slots to allow enough discussion time.

Prior to our meeting on **week 7** (week of November 2), each student will submit a three-page overview (including a Thesis Statement) of their intended dissertation project, in the OCF section of the course (due 10/28). By **week 9** (week of November 16), each student should have completed at least 6 pages of the Introduction and submitted it to Canvas in the discussion section (due 11/20).

A revised overview, detailed outline, first half of the Introduction (12-15 pp), and (partly) annotated bibliography should be submitted to Assignments in Canvas by **December 14**. Late submissions will be accepted only in exceptional circumstances and not without prior agreement

with Prof. Lukic or Prof. Moro. Extensions are granted on a case-by-case basis in response to special circumstances, and may be subject to grade reduction.

Submitted documents must be titled according to the following format:

Familyname, Givenname_901.2_assignmentname_yymmdd
(e.g., Jones, Sally_901.2_bibliography_181208).

Please use a Times New Roman or serif font, point 12, double-spaced, leaving a 1” margin on top and bottom, and 1” on right and left sides. No other fonts or formats are acceptable. Make sure all your documents (including drafts) are editable: files should have a word .doc or .docx extension - no .pdf will be accepted. Clearly mark your name, seminar and assignment on the front page of your document, and number your pages.

Please use MLA style in your papers, including drafts.

Assessment:

Grades will be determined by assessment of contributions to discussions on Seminar Video Conferences and Individual Calls with Prof. Lukic and Prof. Moro (25%); OCF contributions (15%); and Written assignments (Overview, Detailed Outline, First ½ Introduction, and Bibliography) (60%).

Submission Guidelines:

- 1) Overview/Scaffolding of your dissertation project: 1-3 pp. or approx. 500-1200 words, describing:
 - a) Topic of your paper.
 - b) Thesis statement / argument* (approx. 300 words – see below).
 - c) Three (or more) main points in support of your argument: who are the key thinkers contributing to your argument? What are the key ideas you will engage, and based on which specific texts?
 - d) What methodology(-ies) will you employ, and why? Please make specific references to key thinkers and texts.

*1) Thesis statement: approximately 300 words, describing:

- a) The ideas, works, thinkers, history, you plan to engage.
- b) The problematic of your dissertation research: what questions will you answer?
What differences of opinion will you negotiate?
- c) The approach you plan to take in order to address your problem.
- d) The existing work on this or similar subjects (this may be succinctly summarized and developed in the chapter)

Please use the “Dissertation Scaffolding” template as a reference (see Canvas, 901.2/“Files”)

- 2) Detailed Outline of dissertation (projected; you will be able to change it and complete it by the end of next semester)
 - a) 3 -5 pages
 - b) Formatted like this document, with chapters, sections, and sub-sections. The outline should contain:
 - i) 5 – 6 chapters
 - (1) Each chapter broken into a minimum of three manageable sections, with anticipated number of pages for each section (be realistic).
 - (a) Questions and prospective issues for each section should be dealt within sub-sections.
- 3) First half of Introduction (Written Exam)

- a) 12-15 pages (or approx. 4200 words), introducing your topic, argument and main points of evidence (you may revisit your initial outline for this part), with specific reference to existing literature in the field and gaps in the current scholarship.
Please follow the step-by-step approach outlined in the IDSV Writing Guide, and use the Dissertation Scaffolding” template as a reference (see Canvas, 901.2/“Files”)

Please see Umberto Eco’s chapter 4 in How to Write a Thesis on the importance of preliminary introduction, TOC, etc.

4) Bibliography

- a) Twelve to fifteen titles specific to your dissertation research, for which you will be responsible at the Preliminary Oral Examination. **At least half of these titles should come from the Course of Study reading list.**
- i) You will read the first 6 or 7 of these titles this semester, and the remaining 6 or 7 next semester in Dissertation Preparation II: Work Planning, Sustainable Research, and First Chapters.
 - ii) Group of essays may be bundled and count as one of your fifteen titles, provided the total page count is equal to a book-length text (approx. 150 pages or more).
 - iii) The 6 or 7 titles you read this semester should be annotated.

Required Texts:

All texts are listed in reading order. Please order listed editions.

Note: **PDFs**, when available, are indicated at the end of the bibliographical listing, and shared in Canvas/Files. §= Texts are page-limited, not the whole book.

Heidegger, Martin. *Being and Time*. Trans. Joan Stambaugh. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2010. ISBN-10: 1438432763, ISBN-13: 9781438432762.

(Please start reading this book as soon as you can; it will be discussed in a series of extra lectures and seminar sessions on October 17, 22, and 24. See schedule for details.)

Heidegger, Martin. *Basic Writings*. Ed. David Farrell Krell. San Francisco: Harper, 1993. (ISBN-10: 0060637633). § pp. 38-87; 427-449.

Cassin, Barbara. *Jacques the Sophist: Lacan, Logos, and Psychoanalysis*. Trans. Michael Syrotinski. Fordham University Press, 2020. (ISBN-10: 082328574X). § pp. 1-5; 23-58; 127-133. **(PDF)**

Dufourmantelle, Anne. *Power of Gentleness*. Trans. Katherine Payne and Vincent Salle. New York: Fordham University Press, 2018. (ISBN-10: 082327960X). § pp. 38-70. **(PDF)**

Dussel, Enrique. *The Invention of the Americas*. Trans. Michael D. Barber. New York: Continuum. (ISBN-10: 082640796X). § Chapters 2, 4, 6. **(PDF)**

Cesaire, Suzanne. *Writings of Dissent*. Trans. Keith L. Walker. Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 2012. (ISBN-10: 0819572756). § pp. 11-49. **(PDF)**

Barthes, Roland. *The Responsibility of Forms*. Trans. Richard Howard. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985. (ISBN-10: 0520072383). § pp. 157-175; 237-244. **(PDF)**

Foucault, Michel. *The Foucault Reader*. Ed. Paul Rabinow. New York: Pantheon Books, 1984. (ISBN-10: 0394713400). § pp. 1-36; 76-100. **(PDF)**

Bois, Yve-Alain & Rosalind Krauss. *Formless: A User's Guide*. New York: Zone Books, 1997. (ISBN-10: 0942299442). § pp.13-40; 73-78; 169-172. **(PDF)**

Kristeva, Julia. *The Kristeva Reader*. Ed. Toril Moi. New York: Columbia University Press, 1986. (ISBN-10: 0231063253). § pp. 34-62; 301-321. **(PDF)**

Bakhtin, Mikhail. *The Continental Aesthetics Reader, Second Edition*. Ed. Clive Cazeaux. New York: Routledge, 2011. (ISBN-10: 0415481848). § pp. 270-294. **(PDF)**

Eco, Umberto. *How to Write a Thesis*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2015. (ISBN-10: 0262527138).

Course Schedule

Specific Readings are listed below by week. PDFs will be shared in Canvas “Files”.

Part 1: Methodologies for Research

Prof. Lukic

Week 1: Sept 21-27 – OCF

1. Formulating the Question: Phenomenology & Hermeneutics:

- **Martin Heidegger**, “*Being and Time*: Introduction.” *Basic Writings*. 38-87 (You can also read the Stambaugh edition of *Being and Time*’s Introduction).
- **Martin Heidegger**, “The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking.” *Basic Writings*. 427-449.

Week 2: Sept 28- Oct 4 – VC: Thursday, Oct 1, 7-9pm EDT

2. Psychoanalytic theory & Feminist critique:

- **Barbara Cassin**, *Jacques the Sophist: Lacan, Logos, and Psychoanalysis*. Prologue, chapters 2, 3, Epilogue.
- **Anne Dufourmantelle**, *Power of Gentleness*. 38-70.

Week 3: Oct 5-Oct 11 – VC: Thursday, Oct 8, 7-9pm EDT

3. Marxist & Post-colonial critiques:

- **Enrique Dussel**, *The Invention of the Americas*. Chapters 2, 4, 6.
- **Suzanne Cesaire**, *Writings of Dissent*. 11-49.

Optional:

Interview with Spivak and video interview with Said:

<https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/critical-intimacy-interview-gayatri-chakravorty-spivak>

<http://www.openculture.com/2013/09/edward-said-final-interview.html> (For a discussion of Orientalism, skip to 1:05:18)

Fisher, John A. “High art vs. low art.” *The Routledge Companion*. 527-540. (1-7 **PDF**)

Week 4: Oct 12-18 – Calls

4. From Structuralism to Poststructuralism & Postmodernism:

- **Roland Barthes**, *The Responsibility of Forms*. “Cy Twombly, Works on Paper” (157-175) and “Right in the Eyes” (237-244).
- **Michel Foucault**, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History.” *The Foucault Reader*. 76-100 (1-36 PDF)
- **Yve-Alain Bois & Rosalind Krauss**, *Formless: A User’s Guide*. “Introduction: The Use Value of ‘Formless’” 13-40 (13-40 PDF); “Entropy” 73-78 (73-78 PDF); “Qualities (Without)” 169-172 (169-172 PDF).

Week 5: Oct 19-25 – OCF

5. Intertextuality:

- **Julia Kristeva**, Introduction; “Word, Dialogue and Novel”; “Psychoanalysis and the Polis”, in *The Kristeva Reader*.
- **Mikhail Bakhtin**, “Heteroglossia in the Novel.” *The Continental Aesthetics Reader*. 270-294. (1-14 PDF)

Extra: 2 lectures and one seminar session on Heidegger lead by Visiting Prof. Grant Farred will be scheduled on the following dates:

Saturday, Oct. 17, 2-5 pm EDT. Prof. Grant Farred, lecture/discussion 1 (school-wide):
Reading Heidegger’s *Being and Time* (details TBA)

Thursday, Oct. 22, 1:30-3 pm EDT. Prof. Grant Farred
seminar session meeting (class group only): Reading Heidegger’s *Being and Time* (details TBA)

Saturday, Oct. 24, 2-5 pm EDT. Prof. Grant Farred, lecture/discussion 2 (school-wide):
Reading Heidegger’s *Being and Time* (details TBA)

By 10/28 everyone posts their 3-pp Overviews in ‘Discussions’

Week 6: FALL BREAK Oct 26 - Nov 1

(*EDT in the U.S. ends Nov. 1 (clocks are turned back 1 hour at 2 am)

Part 2: Developing Research

Prof. Simonetta Moro; Dr. Kathe Albrecht (IDSVA Post-Doctoral Fellow)

Week 7: Nov 2-8 – VC:

Group 1: Monday, Nov 2, 7-9pm (Laura Graveline visit + student presentations)

Group 2: Tuesday, Nov 3, 7-9pm EST (student presentations)

Week 8: Nov 9-15 – Calls

Umberto Eco, *How to Write a Thesis*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2015. Print.

<https://mitpress.mit.edu/books/how-write-thesis>

Chapters 1-4 (focus in particular on 3 & 4).

3-4 new pp Introduction in ‘Discussions’ by 11/10

Week 9: Nov 16-22 – VC:

Group 1: Tuesday, Nov 17, 7-9pm EST (student presentations)

Group 2: Thursday, Nov 19, 7-9pm EST (student presentations)

Sam Ko. (presenting)

Umberto Eco, *How to Write a Thesis*. Chapters 5-6

Week 10: Nov 23-29*: OCF (*Thanksgiving Holiday, 11/26-27)

4-5 new pp Introduction in ‘Discussions’ by 11/25

Week 11: Nov 30 - Dec 6: Calls

Week 12: Dec 7-12

Writing Period

**Final documents, including 12-15 pp of Introduction, due 12/14
 (“Assignments” in Canvas)**