

## SS 400 APPLICATION

**Senior Research Thesis Research Seminar • (4) credits:**

Department of Social Sciences • Western Connecticut State University

**APPLICATION DEADLINES: December 1<sup>st</sup> for Spring SS 400 • May 1<sup>st</sup> for Fall SS 400**

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. **This application is a proposal for the Senior Thesis Research Seminar.** The senior thesis allows students to combine research skills with personal and career-focused interests, lived experiences and critical thinking skills. Consider choosing a topic that leans into the professional world in which you might like to build a career or focus graduate study.
2. **Meet with an advisor of your choice or the SS 400 instructor to get help with this application.**
3. **Submit the following to the Social Sciences Department’s secretary:**
  - a. This completed **3+ page application form**
  - b. **An unofficial copy of your transcripts with the following courses circled or highlighted:**
    - i. SS 201 (C or higher)
    - ii. W2 (any level-two writing intensive course)
    - iii. MAT 100 (or higher math course)
    - iv. SS 300 (C or higher is required for Political Science and Economics majors. SS 300 is strongly recommended but not required for Anthropology/Sociology majors).

**4. Student Information:**

Name		Student ID #	
SS 400 Semester	Fall 20_____ Spring 20_____	Major(s) & Minor(s):	
WCSU Email		Personal Email	
Phone#		Grade earned in SS 300	
Expected Grad. Date	month_____year_____	Have you applied for graduation?	yes ____ no ____

5. **Student Pledge:** I pledge to uphold the principles of WCSU’s Academic Honesty Policy and recognize that any form of information fabrication, cheating, and/or plagiarism, including use of artificial intelligence, represents an extremely serious violation that will result in a failing grade and notification sent to the Dean of Student Affairs that will remain on my permanent file. I understand this research proposal is a guideline and that I will finalize my topic and method in SS 400.

**Student Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

6. **Faculty Approval:** I acknowledge the viability of this proposal and that it can be reasonably achieved within one semester.

**Faculty Advisor Name Printed** \_\_\_\_\_

**Faculty Advisor Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Additional comments:

# PROPOSAL

## 1. What type of RESEARCH METHODOLOGY are you considering?

**Circle each method quadrant (1-4) that you are willing to consider doing.** Most students base this decision on whether they want to interact with people, whether they are comfortable doing a statistical analysis, and, ideally, what they find to be the most meaningful experience. No one of these is easier/harder than the other. Where one is difficult at the outset (for example finding enough subjects), the complimentary method is more difficult in the analysis (for example pouring over hundreds of pages of documents). In most cases, students should choose one quadrant/method and do it well. If time allows, doing a mixed method approach may also be considered. Note: methods 1-4 below are the most common methods; feel free to explore additional methods with your advisor.

Check Off Your Preferred Research Methods	OBTRUSIVE (collect data directly from people)	UNOBTRUSIVE (use pre-existing primary source/ unanalyzed data)
<b>QUALITATIVE</b> (more detailed data from fewer subjects)	1. <b>Ethnographic Interviews</b> (Conduct one-hour interviews with about 15 people, or two-hour interviews with 7-8 people. <b>Participant Observation</b> (may include interviews and is a more immersive experience.)  Preferred      Possibly      No	2. <b>Comparative Analysis</b> (Construct an instrument or rubric with which to compare primary sources such as policies, laws or historical events. Inversely, you could use primary sources such as policies, laws or historical events to produce a policy brief.)  Preferred      Possibly      No
<b>QUANTITATIVE</b> (far more subjects, but less overall data from each subject)	3. <b>Survey Research</b> (Collect a sample size of about 300+ subjects in order to approach statistical relevance. Because this method requires statistical analysis, only attempt it if you earned a B or better in a statistics course.)  Preferred      Possibly      No	4. <b>Database Research</b> (Use a pre-collected raw dataset from an approved source such as the General Social Sciences Survey, IPUMS, the Quinnipiac Poll, Roper poll, the US Census, and others. <u>Note that data from journal articles is already analyzed and may not be used as a source of raw data (because it is not a primary source).</u> Databases often have 10K-200K respondents making statistical relevance very achievable. Because this method requires statistical analysis, only attempt it if you earned a B or better in a statistics course.)  Preferred      Possibly      No

Additional comments:

2. **What two TOPICS are you considering for your Senior Thesis?** Consult with either your faculty advisor of choice or the SS 400 instructor.


**Students:** *Keep a copy of this proposal for your records.*

Revised 7/23/24