

# Graduate Student 101 Workshop

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# Writing a Paper.....

# Finding a Topic

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- What interests you?
- Initial Exploration
  - [Academic Search Premier](#)
  - [Google Scholar](#)
- Look at your class syllabus
- Talk to your professor!!!
- Read previous research
- Come up with a title and research questions



# Is the research possible?

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- Make sure you can do the research
- Is there data available on your topic?
  - Check previous articles on your topic
  - Check ICPSR [www.icpsr.umich.edu](http://www.icpsr.umich.edu)
  - CFDR Data Holdings
  - Make sure data has variables you will need
    - Dataset's website

# Using Data

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- Make sure to have the correct HSRB training
  - Speak to someone at the CFDR, Dr. Jacoby, or Lauren Rinelli
- Read the codebook
- Read the methodology section and user's guide
  - The CFDR's public drive is very useful

# Finding Previous Research

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- Google Scholar
  - Be careful when using internet sources
- Search Hints
  - Order by most recent
  - And, Or, Not
  - Use "\*"
    - Adopt\* (adopted, adoption, etc)

# Finding Previous Research

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- BGSU Library Webpage
  - Research Databases
    - [Academic Search Complete](#)
    - [JSTOR](#)
    - [Sociological Abstracts](#)
    - [Project Muse](#)
    - [Social Science Citation Index \(SocINDEX\)](#)
  - Electronic Journals
    - Stick to Sociological and related journals
    - CFDR Data Tools

# Finding Previous Research

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- Interlibrary loan
  - You do not have to buy all your books!
  - Get journal articles, books, etc from other libraries

# Writing a Literature Review

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- Include correct citations
  - Beware of plagiarism
- Show holes in current literature
- Include only relevant literature
  - Stay focused on literature that relates to your research question
  - Start broad and end narrow
  - Not a laundry list
- Keep the same tense

# Research Question

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- Clearly state your research question
  - “This research will examine.....”
- What does your research add to current literature?
  - This research is important for the following reasons.....”
- Include testable hypotheses

# Order of Paper

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1. Introduction (3 paragraphs)
  - Brief overview of main points of literature
  - What are you going to be doing – your research question?
  - Why is your work important?
2. Literature Review
  - Relevant literature only
  - No laundry lists
3. Research Question
  - Including hypotheses

# Order of Paper

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## 4. Data and Methods

- What data will you use?
- What is your outcome variable? Focus variable? Control variables?
- What will your analytical sample look like? Sample size?
- What statistical method will you use?

## 5. Results

- Non-significant can be interesting, but spend most time on significant results

## 6. Conclusion

- Include limitations of your study
- Public policy implications

# Record-Keeping of Research

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- Keep GOOD summaries of articles
  - Ongoing knowledge of literature
  - Prelim exam
  - Rest of your life
- Refworks
- Index cards / excel spreadsheet / etc
- Include methods used, dataset, significant findings, limitations



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# The Faculty.....



# Working with Faculty

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- They are here to help you
  - Vitae
  - Letters of recommendation
  - Syllabus when teaching your own class
  - Networking at conferences

# Your Assistantship

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- Get the most out of your education
  - Let them know if you want to teach
  - Ask to work on research projects – show interest and knowledge
  - 20 hours – the majority of the time
  - Your evaluation and personal record

# Finding a Mentor

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- Find out about their vitae / research interests / current projects
- Ask to meet with them
  - Email them first and let them know what it is about
  - Send them reminders, if necessary



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# Graduate Student Life.....

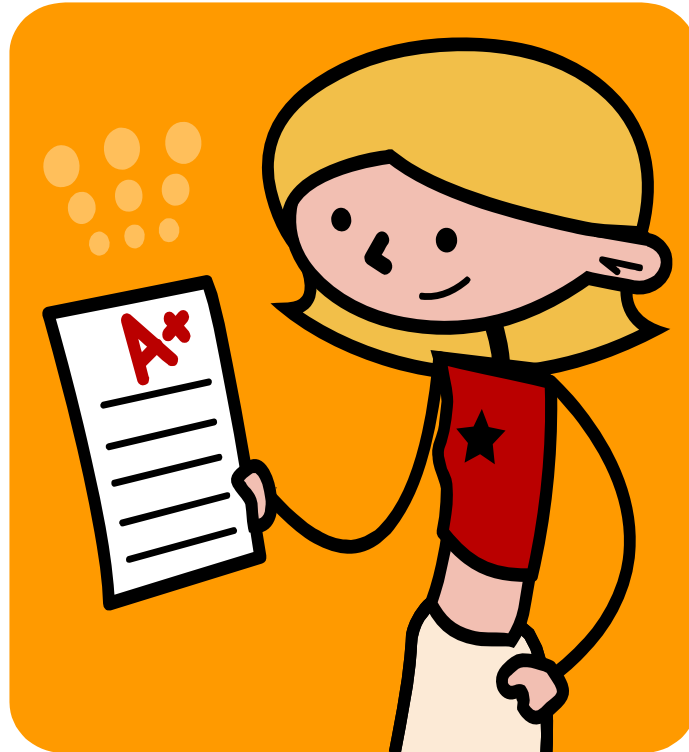
# Graduate Student Life

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- Start papers early
  - No repeat papers, but similar themes are acceptable
  - Possible to do front end one class, data analysis in another
    - Key is discussing with professor
- Join associations (ASA, ASC, PAA, etc)
  - Where do the faculty go?
  - Job announcements
  - Conferences – networking
  - Get free journals
- Make friends with the older students

# It Is Not About The Grade

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# Working Towards The Rest Of Your Life

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- Same area of interest across classes
- Work towards the preliminary exam/thesis/dissertation
- Doing this for the rest of your life, not only this semester
- See the big picture

# Lead a Balanced Life

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- Find a hobby
- Workout
- Eat healthy
- Hang out with friends

# CFDR Help

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- Heidi or Kristy for programming help
  - M 11am-12pm
  - Bromfield
- CFDR webpage
  - Annotated output
  - SAS/SPSS/Stata questions
  - Upcoming conferences and calls for papers
  - Much more....