



Sociology Capstone Module | SOU44100

Year	Senior Sophister
ECTS Credits	20
Contact Hours	12 x 1-hour sessions
Pre-requisite	SOU22011, SOU22012, SOU22061, SOU22062, SOU33011, SOU33012
Semester	1
Module Leader & Lecturer	Prof Richard Layte and Dr. Andrew Finlay
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Module Outline:

The Dissertation Module provides students with additional guidance, tools, and skills to successfully write their final undergraduate thesis. This module spans both Michaelmas and Hilary Terms with the final dissertation consisting of a piece of empirical research of between 12,000-15,000 words (excluding references) to be submitted in Hilary Term. Students work with an individual supervisor from the Department of Sociology or School of Social Policy & Social Work at Trinity College, drawing on a research proposal completed as part of the 'Junior Sophister Researching Society' module.

The module consists of 12 one-hour sessions divided into three parts over two terms:

Part I (Weeks 1-6 in Michaelmas Term) discusses issues that are fundamental to guide the dissertation proposal and its analytical scope including (i) how to formulate research questions, (ii) how to write a literature review, (iii) how to structure a dissertation and a research proposal and (iv) how to deal with ethical issues. During Part I, students develop a research proposal that will be submitted right after study week.

Part II (Weeks 8-12 in Michaelmas Term, i.e., after Study Week). The class is split into two groups based on the methods of the student dissertation: Group 1 (quantitative projects) will be led by Richard Layte and Group 2 (qualitative projects) will be led by Andrew Finlay. Students decide which of these two groups they wish to attend based on topic and methodology used. In these sessions, the groups discuss relevant aspects of research design, access and sampling, data collection and data analysis techniques.

Part III (one 15-minute PowerPoint presentation in Hilary Term). All students are allocated a 15-minute slot during Hilary Term to present their project and receive valuable peer feedback from staff and other students.



Module Learning Objectives:

Having successfully completed this module, you will be able to:

- identify a sociological topic or problem and design a viable research strategy with an appropriate research question or aim;
- critically discuss and synthesise relevant literature and link it with the research problem;
- discuss and reflect on your research methodology including ethical issues;
- analyse data and link new original findings to existing literature and theoretical aspects;
- discuss and reflect on your work-in-progress through individual in-class presentations;
- demonstrate the research skills required to carry out undergraduate research;
- write a dissertation to professional standards.

Assessment:

- 100% Capstone submission.

Recommended Reading List:

The module recommends the following as basic readings:

- Bryman, A., (2016) *Social Research Methods*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- O'Leary, Z. (2017) *The Essential Guide to Doing Your Research Project* (3rd edition), London: Sage.
- Thomas, G. (2013) *How to do your Research Project*, London: Sage. Other weekly readings will be available as PDFs for download on Blackboard.