

# CHD BA Honors Paper Preparation

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*CHDV 29900; Fall 2023*

**Instructor:** Dr. Natalie Dowling

**Contact:** [ndowling@uchicago.edu](mailto:ndowling@uchicago.edu)

**Office:** 1155 E 60<sup>th</sup> St. Room 404

**Office hours:** Thursday 3:30pm – 5pm – [Appointment required](#)

**Class meetings (required):** Tuesday 2pm - 3:20pm

**Workshops (optional):** Thursday 2pm - 3:20pm

**Meeting location:** Green 101

## Course Description

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### Course structure

The purpose of this course is to support you as you finish collecting data, analyze your findings, and begin writing your final thesis. It will be loosely structured and highly flexible. While the course outline below includes a timeline of topics to cover in class meetings and plans for supplemental workshops, *this syllabus is an evolving document*. We will check in weekly to talk about what's working, what's not, and how this class can be most useful to you going forward. You are also welcome to share feedback with me privately either via email or in office hours.

**Tuesday class meetings** will always begin with a round table “stand-up” where each student will give a brief and informal progress update. One purpose of these check-ins is to provide accountability, but the primary purpose is for you to discuss any issues that pop up that you'd like to get feedback on. These meetings will also include a mix of mini-lectures, structured activities around data analysis and writing, peer review, and open discussion about meta topics like time management.

**Thursday supplemental workshops** vary week to week. Each Tuesday we will decide as a class what would be most useful for the upcoming workshop. Suggestions are included in the outline below, including extra coding support, writing groups, and one-on-one office hours.

## Important Dates

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October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024 (Friday Week 2):

- Target deadline for progress report meeting with your advisor

October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024 (Friday Week 3):

- Confirm registration in CHDV 299
- Absolute deadline for progress report meeting with your advisor
- *Franklin: Ask thesis advisor to send progress report to Janice*

October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024 (Friday Week 4):

- *Franklin: Submit expense report and receipts to Janice and obtain remaining funds*

December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024 (Friday Week 9):

- Secure second reader and notify preceptor, advisor, and department

## Course Materials & Resources

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### Canvas

Course resources are managed through Canvas. The course Canvas page is organized into modules, so that all readings, assignments, slides, files, and other materials for the week are published in one place rather than using different pages for assignments, readings, files, etc. Please let me know immediately if you have difficulty accessing the Canvas page.

In addition to the modules for course content, the Canvas page includes a module of student resources. Here you can find a variety of links, documents, and other materials that may be helpful as general resources for improving your writing, reading journal articles, navigating university culture, and more.

### Readings & Other resources

There is no textbook for this course. All readings will be posted as PDFs on Canvas or available as free e-books via UChicago Libraries.

Canvas will be updated throughout the quarter with (hopefully) helpful resources, like examples of past theses, writing tips, lecture recordings, and coding guides. There are here for you to use as you see fit. Take what helps and ignore what doesn't.

## Course Requirements & Grading

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Your grade for this course will be assigned by your thesis advisor based on their assessment of your progress. I will provide faculty with an overview of your class participation and performance which they may choose to factor into your final grade. This course is fundamentally about supporting your research and writing. All feedback on assignments and in-class activities will be *formative* rather than summative. That is, assignments throughout the quarter are not intended to assess your knowledge, but instead to develop the skills necessary to complete an excellent honors thesis.

## Course Policies

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### Accessibility and Accommodation

I am committed to making this course accessible to students of all background, identities, and abilities. If there are circumstances that make aspects of this course difficult for you to access,

please contact me so we can discuss how to accommodate your needs. This includes, but is not limited to, accommodations around the format of course materials, the use of Canvas and other digital resources, the classroom and other physical resources, and the structure of assignments.

I will work with you to create an accessible learning environment whether or not you disclose your disability or personal circumstances. If you choose to disclose personal information with me, I will keep those discussions confidential. For certain accommodations you may need to contact Student Disability Services at (773) 702-6000 or [disabilities@uchicago.edu](mailto:disabilities@uchicago.edu).

### **Diversity, Inclusion, and Community**

We will commit as a class to creating a welcoming, respectful, and productive classroom. We will expect each other to be mutually respectful of our meaningful identities. I expect that when we engage with each other in discussion we are considerate of the diversity of our classroom with regards to gender, sexuality, disability, race, ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic status, immigration status, and linguistic background. It is critical that we maintain respectful dialogue, which includes using correct names and pronouns. If a member of our classroom community – including myself – is creating an unwelcome space for you, I hope you will bring this to my attention immediately. If you would prefer to discuss the situation with someone outside our class, I encourage you to take advantage of the [UChicago CARES reporting and conflict resolution processes](#).

### **Attendance and Active Participation**

While your grade for this class will primarily be a reflection of the quality of your thesis, your commitment to attending class and actively participating is critical. This is a very small class, and a large portion of the work highly collaborative. You are expected to attend all Tuesday class meetings and participate in group work and discussion. You are also required to attend one-on-one office hours with me at several points during the quarter. Attendance at Thursday workshops is optional, but strongly encouraged. There is no need to show up simply because you're supposed to; Thursday attendance will not affect your grade in any way. However, students in past years have found the optional workshops and writing/working groups to be as helpful – or even more so! – than the required class meetings. Do not dismiss them as unnecessary.

Please email me to let me know if you will be absent from Tuesday's class meeting. There is no need to defend yourself or prove you've got a good reason – I just want a heads up! Please do not come to class if you are feeling ill. If you are concerned about missing multiple classes, please reach out.

### **Academic Honesty & Plagiarism**

Please read UChicago's (very brief) [Academic Honesty & Plagiarism policy here](#). To add clarity to this general policy, in this class I am using [Oxford University's explanation of plagiarism](#):

*Plagiarism is presenting work or ideas from another source as your own, with or without consent of the original author, by incorporating it into your work without full acknowledgement. All published and unpublished material, whether in manuscript, printed or electronic form, is covered under this definition, as is the use of material generated wholly or in part through use of artificial intelligence (save when use of Artificial Intelligence - AI for assessment has received prior*

*authorisation e.g. as a reasonable adjustment for a student's disability). Plagiarism can also include re-using your own work without citation.*

### **AI Writing Tools**

I recognize that AI tools like ChatGPT have become ubiquitous, and I believe they can be used as productive resources in your writing process. However, some uses of AI constitute plagiarism. Examples of appropriate uses include things like brainstorming, finding sources, proofreading, and revising drafts for conciseness and tone. Inappropriate use generally (but not exclusively) means using large blocks of text with no or minimal editing.

You can find more information about the plagiarism policy in the student resources module on Canvas, including practical suggestions for helpful and honest ways to take advantage of what AI can offer you and guidelines for finding the line between appropriate and inappropriate use.

### **Other Useful Information and Resources**

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The student resources module on Canvas includes many helpful documents and links. In that module you will find resources that offer supports for both your academic success and personal health, wellness, and student life.

I call attention to some critical issues here in the syllabus, but I hope you will explore the available resources and/or come to me if I can offer direct or indirect support.

### **Food and Housing**

I encourage anyone who is having difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, and/or who lacks safe, stable housing, to contact your advisor for support. If you would like me to help initiate that conversation, please let me know.

If you need immediate assistance with food, the Greater Chicago Food Depository offers a directory of resources: [www.chicagosfoodbank.org](http://www.chicagosfoodbank.org).

### **Mental Health**

If you are struggling with stress, anxiety, or any other mental health challenges, please ask for help. There are many forms of support available on campus, including:

- The 24/7 mental health helpline available to all UChicago students. You can speak with a therapist at any time by calling (773) 702-3625. You can remain anonymous if you wish.
- Individual counseling, support groups, and psychiatric services available through Student Wellness. To make an appointment to speak with a clinician, visit <http://wellness.uchicago.edu/login> or call (773) 834-9355.

Please don't wait until you reach a state of crisis to ask for help. My door is open (often literally, but always metaphorically) to check in, but please remember I am not a therapist. I am, however, here to support you in making contact with these or other services.

## **Class Schedule**

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All readings and assignments are subject to change. Be on the lookout for emails and Canvas announcements with important updates, and view the up-to-date syllabus on Canvas.

### **Week 1: Thesis Timelines & Expectations**

*Class meeting: Tuesday, 9/26/23*

- Introductions and class overview
- Round table stand-up (Informal progress reports)
- Micro and macro time management
- Managing advisor expectations

*Homework & reminders:*

- Draft a macro timeline & plan for 1 micro strategy (Canvas assignment)
- Review example BA theses (Canvas module)

*Supplemental workshop: Thursday, 9/28/23*

- Time management and productivity tools

### **Week 2: BA Thesis as a Genre**

*Class meeting: Tuesday, 10/3/23*

- Weekly stand-up
- Mini-lecture: BA Thesis as a Genre
- In-Class Activity: Thesis Outlines

*Homework & reminders:*

- Complete your thesis outline (Discussion post)
- Revise your timeline based on feedback and your new outline (resubmit assignment on Canvas)
- Start thinking about second readers (and talk to your advisor about options when you meet)
- *Franklin: begin preparing expense reports (due 10/13)*
- **Suggested deadline for progress report meeting with advisor Friday 10/6/23**

*Supplemental workshop: Thursday, 10/5/23*

- Peer feedback on outlines and/or timelines

### **Week 3: Data Inventory & Organization**

*Class meeting: Tuesday, 10/10/23*

- Weekly stand-up
- Mini-lecture: Managing Qualitative Data
- Discussion: Applying data strategies

### ***Homework & reminders:***

- Weekly review/revise of outline and timeline (optional resubmission)
- Share data sample “best bits” (Discussion post)
- First-stab coding 1 piece of data (Canvas submission)
- Finalize class plans for weeks 4-6
- Readings on Canvas (\*starred are optional but useful)
  - Charmaz Chapters 3 & 4
  - Ryan & Bernard (26pp)
  - \*Corbin & Strauss (20pp)
  - \*Geertz (15pp)
- **Absolute deadline for progress report meeting with advisor Friday 10/13/23**
  - **Email Dr. Dowling to confirm this meeting has taken place (cc your advisor)**
  - ***Franklin: Remind your advisor to send progress report approval to Dr. Dowling and Janice***

### ***Supplemental workshop: Thursday, 10/12/23***

- Working group or office hours

### **Week 4: Analyzing Qualitative Data**

*Note: Plans for Weeks 4-6 are tentative. We will discuss during Week 3 whether it would be useful to dedicate a week to quantitative (or mixed methods) analysis. If so, we will also decide how to best organize the qualitative analysis, quantitative analysis, and individual check-ins across weeks 4-6.*

### ***Class meeting: Tuesday, 10/17/23***

- Weekly stand-up
- Mini-lecture: Beginning analysis (with grounded theory)
- In-class activity: line-by-line coding

### ***Homework & reminders:***

- Weekly review/revise of outline and timeline (optional resubmission)
- Line-by-line coding of “best bits”
  - Recommended to do this in Dedoose, but not required
  - Canvas submission can be anything that shows your work (a link to the google doc, a .docx or .pdf file, a screenshot of Dedoose, etc.)
- Readings on Canvas
  - Gerson & Damaske (Chapter 6)
  - Catch up on the Ryan & Bernard and Charmaz if you haven’t done them yet!
- ***Franklin: Submit expense report to Janice and obtain remaining funds by Friday 10/20/23. Your report should include:***
  - ***A summary table of all expenses to date and planned future expenses***

- *Receipts for all expenses to date*

***Supplemental workshop: Thursday, 10/19/23***

- Working in Dedoose

**Week 5: Making Connections & Building Theory**

***Class meeting: Tuesday, 10/24/23***

- Weekly stand-up
- Mini-lecture: Deeper coding (focused coding & memo-writing)
- In-class activity: micro and macro reflection and planning

***Homework & reminders:***

- Weekly review/revise of outline and timeline (**required** resubmission of Canvas assignment)
- Write a brief summary or bullet points from today's reflection activity *and* identify at least one way the group can help you in the next few weeks (discussion post)
- Respond to at least 1 of your classmates' posts with (no requirements for what do comment on – just generally be thoughtful and supportive)

***Supplemental workshop: Thursday, 10/26/23***

- Working group or office hours

**Week 6: Individual Check-ins**

***Office hours: Tuesday, 10/31/23 – No group meeting***

- Sign up for office hours during our usual meeting time (+/- some time on either side)
- Feel free to use the classroom space to work or meet together during this time

***Homework & reminders:***

- Keep analyzing your data! No submission, but email me or your classmates for feedback as needed

***Supplemental workshop: Thursday, 11/2/23***

- Working group or office hours

**Week 7: The Writing Process**

***Class meeting: Tuesday, 11/7/23***

- Weekly stand-up
- Mini-lecture: General writing strategies
- Guided discussion: From coding to writing
- In-class activity: Reverse engineering a BA methods section

***Homework & reminders:***

- Weekly review/revise of outline and timeline (optional resubmission)

- Zero-draft methods section (optional discussion post or submission)
  - Zero-drafts are intended to be written with a for-your-eyes-only mindset. You are welcome to submit your drafts if you would like my feedback, but I encourage you to truly write for yourself without self-censoring.

***Supplemental workshop: Thursday, 11/9/23***

- Working group or office hours

**Week 8: Individual Check-ins**

***Office Hours: Tuesday, 11/14/23 – No group meeting***

- Sign up for office hours during our usual meeting time (+/- some time on either side)
- Feel free to use the classroom space to work or meet together during this time

***Homework & reminders:***

- Keep working!
- If you haven't secured a second reader yet, make it your top priority

***Supplemental workshop: Thursday, 11/16/23***

- Writing group or office hours

**Thanksgiving Break**

***11/18/23 – 11/26/23***

No classes or assignments! Get some rest!

**Week 9: Looking Back & Moving Forward**

***Class meeting: Tuesday, 11/28/23***

- Weekly stand-up
- In-class activity: Looking back at your to-done list
- Discussion: Staying on track with independent motivation and group support

***Homework & reminders:***

- Take advantage of your preceptor and cohort members as a group before the quarter ends! Make office hours with me, plan for accountability check-ins over group, share drafts, or anything else that will help you transition into this next highly independent phase of your thesis.
- **Deadline for securing second reader Friday 12/1/23**
  - **Notify Dr. Dowling of your second reader via email; cc your second reader, advisor, Janice, and Dr. Robbins ([kelseyrobbins@uchicago.edu](mailto:kelseyrobbins@uchicago.edu))**

***Supplemental workshop: Thursday, 11/30/23***

- Accountability/working/writing group or office hours