Research Perspectives in the Social Sciences  
SPRING 2012  
SSCI 5023 Section: 001  
Myra Bookman, PhD

Meeting Days and Time: Thursdays, 5:00-7:50 pm  
Room: King 201  
Websites: CU online Blackboard  
(www.blackboard.cuonline.edu)  
Office: UCD MC-01  
Office Hours: T, Th 1:30- 4:30 and by appointment  
Email: myra.bookman@ucdenver.edu  
Ph.: 303-556-2496

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Introduces interdisciplinary social research through a critical examination of various methodological approaches. Each student formulates a research proposal which includes a research question, a review of the literature, and methods of study.

This course presents an overview of key theoretical issues currently emerging across academic disciplines. We will examine questions about reality, knowledge, and ethics that affect social research and writing in social thought. Readings explore how contemporary philosophical and cultural discourses have altered theory and method.

Examining the relationship of fiction and fact, word and world, subjectivity and objectivity, we will consider whether the assumptions of "science" are applicable, appropriate, or trustworthy for the social/political sciences. Gender, race, class, age, power, and "historical moment" form lenses to illuminate contending views of "social reality" and to understand the political-psychological forces that guide people's lives--both authors who pen their findings as well as the individuals whose lives are studied. Course objectives include not only creating your proposal but also to increase critical abilities to assess social theory and research and to interpret/analyze writing in social and political thought in order to develop insights into your own voice, identity, and mind.

COURSE OBJECTIVES: As the final core course for the Master in Social Science, this course provides students a frame for preparing for their final writing projects and exams. It familiarizes them with important research and writing practices to assist in this effort. Students will primarily consider formal research and practical issues such as proper citation style, library research, book reviews, and techniques for formal presentations. Upon completion, they must exhibit an ability to interpret data meaningfully and independently in class presentations and written work, and they must demonstrate an understanding of formal research practices in their class assignments.

CLASS FORMAT: Class will be conducted in a variety of formats. Typically class will open with discussion of the assigned reading before moving on to a prepared exercise employing some aspect of the readings or assignments of the day. Group discussion of each member’s project/thesis topic will also feature regularly in the class. Assignments will focus on both critical evaluation and analysis of readings, and on student’s own project progress.

For many of our meetings, we will meet with the HUMN 5924 class, Directed Readings and Research in the Humanities. These joint class meetings are noted on the class schedule below. We will take regular breaks in each class. Certain classes will end early to allow for students to meet with me one-on-one in my office.

Bookman, 1/20/12
REQUIRED TEXTS: Available at Auraria Bookstore:

- Turabian, Kate. A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations. 7th rev. edition, Univ. of Chicago Press. Please bring to each class.
- All other readings will be available at least one week before they are due and will be located on our course Blackboard web site: http://www.blackboard.cuonline.edu/
- Nota Bene: Readings are due for the class day on which they are listed.

SUPPLEMENTARY TEXTS:


ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION: Because this is a graduate seminar, discussion of assigned readings and topics is key to a full and enriching experience for all participants. Additionally, we will regularly work together on project ideas, so please read carefully and thoughtfully all assigned texts and be prepared to discuss these and your peers ideas in class. Non-participation in class can impair your final grade.

Because this is a graduate course, attendance is required. Please be prompt. Avoid arriving late. Unexcused absences--e.g., non-medical or emergency related--can incur a letter-grade drop in your final average. What constitutes a valid emergency is at the discretion of the instructor. Students who miss one or more classes should consider withdrawing from the course. It is the responsibility of the student to withdraw according to university rules. Please read all materials, and complete all assignments each week in order to participate in class.

CLASS ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING: There are four areas into which class assignments fall.

The following is a breakdown of assignments and their value:

1. **Short assignments:** These exercises are designed to help you think creatively and critically about how to approach and execute your research topic, to consider methodological approaches. There are 10 items marked with an asterisk (*) below, altogether worth 25% of the final grade. Short **analysis** of readings **must not exceed 300 words** and should open with an expository statement of the reading’s main goals and/or points and proceed with a succinct critical commentary on them.

   - **Annotated Bibliography:** The annotated bibliography should present at least 12 bibliographic sources related to your topic **culled from reputable, refereed resources**. It must include at least 5 books, and 4 articles from refereed journals. Of these 12 sources, at least 2 should be primary sources. The annotation for each should consist of a brief
• **650-750 word statement of the question** should explain the question or idea you intend to consider. It should explain why this is a significant issue and why your study will elaborate, challenge or innovate on an issue in this area of inquiry/scholarship. It should describe what you see as the dominant position(s) of extant scholars in the field on this issue (who’s writing about it, what does s/he say about it) and where you stand in relation to those critical voices.

• **250-word abstract** should reduce your previous assignment of the 750-word project draft to an abstract of 250 words or less. You must still retain the content and include the main points of the draft.

• **The 650-750 word methodological statement** should provide a statement of the scholarly mode in which you will investigate the topic and explain why it is an appropriate approach.

• **Book Review Project:** A three-page (750 words maximum) analysis of a book seminal to your research. A guide for writing book reviews will be available on Bb and in class before the review is due. This exercise is designed to assist you in assessing the bibliographic materials for your study.

2. **Final Class Presentation:** The last classes will focus on student presentations of their topics. Length for each will depend on number of students enrolled and will conclude with question and answer time. Presentations should introduce your topic, explain its relevance and its contribution to the general study of the topic. Students will discuss their research strategies in detail. Three weeks before you present, you will need to supply me with an article to post to Bb that will introduce your peers to your subject so that they will be able to comment on your presentation. This exercise is designed to prepare you for your final oral examination at the end of your thesis or project writing. Assignment is worth 25% of the final grade.

3. **Final Proposal:** The culminating project for the class. This will define your project/thesis. Details will unfold in class. Assignment is worth 25% of the final grade.

4. **Class participation:** In class contributions worth 25% of the final grade.

**NOTE** The internet can be a valuable resource but proceed with caution. You must evaluate the merit of information accessed by determining the credentials and affiliations of the author and by checking all quotes and references. (Include this information in parentheses after the web citation in your bibliography.)
GRADING

Short Assignments 25%
Final Class Presentation 25%
Final Proposal 25%
Class participation 25%

Grading of Short Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Meaning of grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Check+</td>
<td>Excellent; innovative; good connections among ideas; well-written; includes ideas from all assigned readings; succinct critical commentary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check</td>
<td>Very good; good; satisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check (OK)</td>
<td>Acceptable for now but cursory; too brief; lacks depth; and/or poorly or not clearly written</td>
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<tr>
<td>Check-</td>
<td>Unacceptable; should be rewritten</td>
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Your grade for all of your assignments will be based on the following criteria:

1. Conformity to assignment as described on the syllabus
2. Organization
3. Quality and correctness of writing
4. Accuracy
5. Quality of analysis and critical commentary as appropriate

Course Policies

- Contact professor in advance concerning absences whenever possible; no make-up work will be assigned for absences; weekly response papers are due the night of class even in the case of unavoidable excused absences.
- Snow policies: when possible, you will be contacted by phone or through Blackboard if class is being cancelled for a major snowstorm or for other significant reason. You can also call 303.556.2401 for weather closures.
- The standard of conduct essential for this class is that of professionalism with a high level of integrity. Be sure to cite any words not your own. Plagiarism means putting forth others' work as your own; plagiarism is not tolerated in this course; the penalty for plagiarism is failing the assignment in which it occurs, with a high probability of failing the entire course.
- Classroom policies: please turn off cell phones; eating during class time is okay; discussion should be professional and courteous at all times toward all persons; confidentiality of personal information obtained during classes should be permanently maintained.
- It is your responsibility to have an official ucdenver email address. Otherwise you will not receive critical course and university correspondence.
- **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:** Any student with a disability requiring accommodations in this course is encouraged to contact me after class or during office hours. Additionally, students should contact UCD disability support services.

Students must satisfactorily complete all assignments in order to pass the class.

**PLEASE NOTE MY POLICY:** Assignments are due in class on the day they are listed in the schedule below. I will accept *no assignments in electronic form unless otherwise noted, and I will accept NO LATE final proposals.* Please plan well!

**CLASS SCHEDULE:** The following is a *tentative* list of weekly readings, exercises, and discussions subject to change at the whim or discretion of the presiding professor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLASS DATES AND THEMES</th>
<th>CLASS READINGS, AND DUE DATES: READINGS ARE DUE ON THE DATE THEY ARE LISTED</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 19</td>
<td><strong>Reading for Today:</strong> None</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Due Today:</strong> Nothing</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Class Format:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Welcomes and introductions, syllabus, course review and logistics</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Class discussion will focus on getting oriented to student needs and goals for the research project.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Students present initial ideas for proposal topic.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 26</td>
<td><strong>Reading for Today:</strong></td>
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### Due:

- **Short Assignment 1:** Short analysis of one or more of the readings (maximum 300 words).* (required)

- Helpful hints for writing a critique from:  
  [http://www.chesapeake.edu/asc/CritiqueHandout.pdf](http://www.chesapeake.edu/asc/CritiqueHandout.pdf)

### Class Format:

- Class discussion will focus on readings and student commentaries

- Graduation packets and proposal document discussed (I will provide)

### Suggestion for staying on track with research:

- Begin developing a bibliography for your topic by looking for at least three general overviews and one detailed critical study.

### Feb. 2

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<tr>
<th>Combined Class</th>
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### METHODS AND MODELS FOR RESEARCH II: IDEOLOGY/IDEOLOGIES

### Reading for Today:


- Readings are designed to get you thinking about what it means to do develop a critical approach to social sciences work, what this world of academia is and who the audiences for your work might be.

### Due Today:

- **Short Assignment 2:** Short analysis of one or more of the readings.* (required)

### Class Format:

- Discussion of reading

- Discussion of individual topics in relation to the themes in the readings

- In class exercise: initial stab at defining the topic: sketching a statement of
**Suggestion for staying on track with research:**

- Find a general overview of your topic from the bibliography you started gathering and read one item for breadth. Consider: What are the standard approaches to your topic? Who are the big scholars working on your topic? What are its principle disciplinary terms?

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### Feb. 9

**Combined Class**

**Methods and Models for Research III: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on Interpretation**

**Reading for Today:**


- Bentz & Shapiro, Key Ideas of Positivism.

**Due Today:**

- **Short Assignment 3:** Short analysis of one or more of the readings.*

- Make a list of potential committee members to discuss in class

**Class Format:**

- Discussion of readings

- Discussion of how readings might benefit student’s topic

**Suggestion for staying on track with research:**

- Continue reading towards broad knowledge of your topic.

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### Feb. 16

**Combined Class**

**Methods and Models for Research IV: Writing History and Historically-**

**Reading for Today:**


**Due Today:**

- **Short Assignment 4:** Short analysis of the reading.*
### ORIENTED WORK
- Begin working on a bibliography for your topic.

**Class Format:**
- Discussion of reading
- Discussion of how reading might benefit student’s topic

**Suggestion for staying on track with research:**
- Contact prospective committee members

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#### Feb. 23:
**Combined Class**

**CRITICAL SOCIAL THEORY**

GETTING STARTED: ORGANIZING FOR RESEARCH AND GATHERING INFORMATION

**Reading for Today:**
- Critical Social Theory reading: TBA

**Due Today:**
- **Short Assignment 5:** Short analysis of the reading.*

**Class Format:**
- Discussion of reading.

**Suggestion for staying on track with research:**
- Did committee members reply?
- Begin quick reads of of the references in your bibliography in preparation for your annotated bibliography due in a few weeks.
- Keep reading: one article from your biblio or one book (its introduction?)

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#### March 1
**QUANTITATIVE METHODS; HUMAN SUBJECTS; GETTING STARTED WRITING**

CLASSES MEET SEPARATELY IN HOME CLASS ROOMS

**Guest Faculty:**
- Dr. Tony Robinson, Human Subjects
- Dr. Virginia Fink, Quantitative Methods

**Reading for Today:**
- Reading from Schutt book on quantitative methods TBA
**Due Today:**

- **Short Assignment 6:** Note this is a two-part assignment. **Part a:** Annotated Bibliography. This exercise will form the basis of your Literature Review in the final proposal. **Part b:** Provide me a clean hard copy of one review article from at least one of the topics you are engaging.*

- Working out a question and thesis: Following the guidelines in Booth, ch. 3, create a list of critical questions based on your topic. What are four principle problems and/or questions that your topic raises for you? Frame these in terms of one of the methodological or theoretical concepts we discussed in earlier classes. Come prepared to defend your methodological approach.* **Graded on a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory basis toward your participation grade.**

- Come prepared to explain to your peers what your review article encompasses.

- Provide names of three faculty who might be on your committee. Who will be the chair? Who are the 2nd and 3rd readers? Do they Graduate Faculty Status?

**Class Format:**

- Guest lectures
- Discussion of reading

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**March 8**

**Combined Class**

**WRITING AND EDITING**

**Reading for Today:**


- Finish reading through Shields material.

**Due Today:**

- **Short Assignment 7:** Initial 750-word draft of your research topic detailing the statement of the theme in the scholarly literature, a statement of the question you will pose, what the significance of this inquiry is. **Bring two copies of your assignment to class.**

**Class Format:**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 15</td>
<td><strong>COMBINED CLASS</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>GUEST LECTURE:</strong>&lt;br&gt;David Hildebrand, UCD Philosophy Dept., on Researching, Writing and Publishing</td>
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<td><strong>Reading for Today:</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Explore Dr. Hildebrand’s web site, especially the research links at <a href="http://davidhildebrand.org">http://davidhildebrand.org</a>&lt;br&gt;• Continue reading towards your topic using the items in your bibliography</td>
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<td><strong>Due Today:</strong>&lt;br&gt;• <strong>Short Assignment 8: Descriptive Abstract</strong> of your topic: This exercise asks you to reduce your previous assignment of the 750-word project draft to an abstract of 250 words or less. You must still retain the content and include the main points of the draft. <em>For assistance in writing an abstract, explore the links below.</em>&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;<strong>Useful links for abstract writing:</strong>&lt;br&gt;• <a href="http://leo.stcloudstate.edu/bizwrite/abstracts.html">http://leo.stcloudstate.edu/bizwrite/abstracts.html</a>&lt;br&gt;• <a href="http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/abstracts.html">http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/abstracts.html</a></td>
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<td><strong>Class Format:</strong>&lt;br&gt;Guest lecturer: Dr. David Hildebrand will discuss the process of planning, researching, and writing a book.</td>
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<td>Mar 22</td>
<td><strong>Spring Break: NO CLASS</strong></td>
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<td>Mar 29</td>
<td><strong>COMBINED CLASS</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>WRITING AND EDITING</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Reading for Today:</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Booth, et al., <em>The Craft of Research</em>, chs. 7-10. pp. 105-151.&lt;br&gt;• Read towards your individual topic and methodological approach. Readings to be determined in conjunction with your instructor.</td>
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Due Today:

- **Short Assignment 9**: Methodological analysis, 250 word maximum. Having spent the first part of the course reading towards methodology, you should be thinking about how you are developing your approach. What methods are you using, why are they appropriate for your topic?*

- **Please email me a pdf of a seminal article on your research topic.** I will post this on Bb so your peers can read and be prepared for your final presentation. See above section, “Class Assignments and Grading, no. 2” for details.

Class Format:

- In class exercise: TBD
- Group work on each students topic and proposal.

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<tr>
<th>APRIL 5</th>
<th><strong>COMBINED CLASS</strong></th>
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<td><strong>FINISHING TOUCHES</strong></td>
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Reading for Today:

- Booth, et al., *The Craft of Research, chs. 12-17, pp. 177-270.*
- Book for book review

Due Today:

- **Assignment 10**: Book Review*

Class Format:

- Discussion of Booth reading and books for book review and how they fit into the larger project.
- Class exercise TBD

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<tr>
<th>APRIL 12:</th>
<th><strong>READING DAY</strong></th>
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<tr>
<th>APRIL 19</th>
<th><strong>COMBINED CLASS</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CLASS FINAL PRESENTATIONS</strong></td>
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Class Presentations

- Each student will teach his or her topic to the class in a ca. 30-minute oral presentation designed to mimic that oral exam experience.
### APRIL 26
**COMBINED CLASS**
**CLASS FINAL PRESENTATIONS**

<table>
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### MAY 3
**COMBINED CLASS**
**CLASS FINAL PRESENTATIONS**

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Each student will teach his or her topic to the class in a ca. 30-minute oral presentation designed to mimic that oral exam experience.</td>
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### May 10, Monday
(Finals Week—Not a class meeting day)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Not a Class day, BUT I will accept Final Proposals as late as 5 pm today in my office, UCD MC-01</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>HAPPY SUMMER!!!</strong></td>
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Please observe the following CLAS Key Registration and Academic Deadlines and Policies:

#### Spring 2012 CLAS Academic Policies

The following policies pertain to all degree students in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS).

- **Schedule verification**: It is each student’s responsibility to verify online that his/her official registration is correct: verify before classes begin and prior to the drop/add deadline. Failure to verify schedule accuracy is not sufficient reason to justify a late add or drop.

- **E-mail**: Students must activate and regularly check their official student e-mail account for CU Denver business: [http://www.ucdenver.edu/student-services/Pages/WebMail.aspx](http://www.ucdenver.edu/student-services/Pages/WebMail.aspx). Those who forward email must check CU Denver e-mail regularly for messages not automatically forwarded.

- **Waitlists**:
  - Students are not automatically notified if they are added to a class from a waitlist.
  - Students are not automatically dropped from a class if they never attended, stopped attending, or do not make tuition payments.
  - Waitlists are purged after the 1st week of classes, after which a paper Schedule Adjustment Form (drop/add form) is required. It is the student's responsibility to get the form (online or at the Advising Office, NC 4002), have it signed, deliver it to the Registrar (Annex 100) or the Student Services Center (NC 1003), and verify her/his schedule online.

- **Late adds** (after 1 February) will be approved only when circumstances surrounding the late add are beyond the student’s control. This will require a written petition and verifiable documentation. Petition forms are available in NC 4002. The signature of a faculty member on a Schedule Adjustment Form does not guarantee that a late add petition will be approved.

- **Late drops** (after 1 February) will be approved only when circumstances surrounding the late drop have arisen after the published drop deadline and are beyond the student’s control. This will require a written petition and verifiable documentation. The signature of a faculty member does not guarantee that a late drop petition will be approved.

- **Tuition**: Students are responsible for completing arrangements with financial aid, family, scholarships, etc. (depending on tuition plan selected) to pay their tuition prior to Census Date (1 February). Students who drop after that date are (1) financially responsible for tuition and fees, (2) academically responsible and will receive a "W" grade, and (3) are ineligible for a refund of COF hours or tuition.
**Graduation:**
- Undergraduate students wishing to graduate in spring 2012 must complete the online Intent to Graduate Form and meet with their academic advisor to obtain a graduation application. This application must be submitted by Census Date (1 February). You can obtain an application only after meeting with your advisor. There are no exceptions to this policy.
- Graduate students wishing to graduate in spring semester 2012 must complete the online Intent to Graduate form and have a Request for Admissions to Candidacy on file with the CU Denver Graduate School (LSC 1251) no later than 5 PM, February 1, 2012.

**Important Dates and Deadlines**

- **January 17, 2012:** First day of classes.
- **January 22, 2012:** Last day to add or waitlist a class using the UCDAccess student portal.
- **January 23, 2012:** Last day to drop without a $100 drop charge--this includes section changes.
- **January 24, 2012:** Waitlists are dropped. Students are no longer automatically added from a waitlist (and names not on the official course roster are not registered for the course). Adding a course now requires the completion of a Schedule Adjustment Form. This is the first day an instructor may approve a Schedule Adjustment Form to add a student to a closed course.
- **January 24 - February 1, 2012:** Students are responsible for verifying an accurate spring 2012 course schedule via the UCDAccess student portal. Students are not notified of their waitlist status by the University. All students must check their schedule prior to February 1 for accuracy.
- **February 1, 2012:** Census date.
  - **2/1/12, 5 PM:** Last day to add structured courses without a written petition for a late add. This is an absolute deadline and is treated as such. This deadline does not apply to independent studies, internships, project hours, thesis hours, dissertation hours, and late-starting modular courses.
  - **2/1/12, 5 PM:** Last day to drop a spring 2012 course or completely withdraw from all spring 2012 courses using a Schedule Adjustment Form and still receive a tuition refund, minus the drop fee. After this date, tuition is forfeited and a “W” will appear on the transcript. This includes section changes. This is an absolute deadline and is treated as such.
  - **2/1/12, 5 PM:** Last day to apply for spring 2012 graduation. Undergraduates must make an appointment and see their academic advisor before this date to apply for graduation. Graduate students must complete the Intent to Graduate and Candidate for Degree forms.
  - **2/1/12, 5 PM:** Last day to request pass/fail or non-credit option for a course.
  - **2/1/12, 5 PM:** Last day to petition for a reduction in Ph.D. dissertation hours.
- **February 13-22, 2012:** Faculty can use the Early Alert system.
- **March 19-25, 2012:** Spring break (no classes/campus open).
- **April 2, 2012 at 5 PM:** Last day for non-CLAS students to drop or withdraw without a petition and special approval from the academic dean. After this date, a dean’s signature is required.
- **April 16, 2012 at 5 PM:** Last day for CLAS students to drop or withdraw with signatures from the faculty and dean but without a full petition. After this date, all schedule changes require a full petition. Petition forms are available in NC 4002 for undergraduates and LSC 1251 for graduates.
- **May 7 - 12, 2012:** Finals Week. No schedule changes will be granted once finals week has started. There are NO exceptions to this policy.
- **May 21, 2012:** Final grades available on UCDAccess (tentative).