

**CDSS Dissertation Proposal Workshop
Spring 2026**

Time Several one-day workshops

Place Online & Room B230 in B6, 30-32, building E-F

Description: The goal of this course is to provide support and crucial feedback on writing students' dissertation proposal. Such a proposal is a research outline that delineates the doctoral thesis project, including the motivation for research question(s), the survey of the relevant theoretical and empirical contributions, the development of a theoretical framework, the specification of the methodology and planned empirical analysis. You should be prepared to address the following questions: What makes it an interesting question? Is this question important? What contributions would this question and the answers make to the scholarly literature? What strategies are there to answer your research questions(s)?

10 February	10:15 – 11:45 via Zoom: Kick-off meeting. Bring your calendar!
Thursday, March 12	10:00 – 11:30 Review & Feedback on draft proposal, Group C I
Monday, March 16	9:30 – 12:30 Review & Feedback on draft proposal, Group A I
Friday, March 20	9:30 – 13:00 Review & Feedback on draft proposal, Group B I
Monday, May 11	9:30 – 12:30 Review & Feedback on draft proposal, Group A II
Monday, May 18	9:00 – 12:30 Review & Feedback on draft proposal, Group B II
Thursday, May 21	10:00 – 11:30 Feedback on draft proposal, Group C II

The following rules and procedures apply for all workshops:

- 1) Send your paper draft to me and to your reviewers three days in advance. This means the following deadlines:

Workshop on **12 March**: Let us have your draft by **Sunday, 8 March**

Workshop on **16 March**: draft by **Thursday, 12 March**

Workshop on **20 March**: draft by **Monday, 17 March**

Workshop on **11 May**: draft by **Thursday, 07 May**

Workshop on **18 May**: draft by **Thursday, 14 May**

Workshop on **21 May**: draft by **Sunday, 17 May**

- 2) Each proposal gets 25 minutes, including presentation, discussant comments and general Q&A.
- 3) Take at most 10 minutes (no longer) to present your proposal. Focus less on substance and more on research design, conceptualization and measurement. Remember, we might not be able to fully understand your topic, but we should be able to assess the way you go about answering your research question. If you would like present a ppt or pdf, then send it to me in advance (until 8 a.m. that day). Try to focus on a few crucial issues you might get our opinions on (i.e., do not just present everything). The less you talk, the clearer the presentation is and the more input you can expect to get from the others.
- 4) Without further ado your discussants will have the opportunity to present their ideas and suggestions after you are done. You do not have to defend your previous presentation. Take these comments as suggestions and respond only in terms of clarification. This should take about 5 – 10 minutes at most.
- 5) Then we have at least about 5 minutes for others to jump in. Again, take note of these suggestions. Try not to slip into a defensive mode. Those comments are only made to help you.

*Note. Your Dissertation Proposal is due **15th of June**. Send copies to CDSS (cdss@uni-mannheim.de) and to your mentor / potential supervisor as well as your co-supervisor (please name potential co-supervisor in consultation with mentor).*

Group A: Sociology, **Group B:** Political Science + Maren, **Group C:** Psychology