

**MDSE 5920: Problem in Lieu of Thesis
Fall 2021**

Instructor: Dr. Tammy Kinley
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Office Hours: By appointment.

Class Meeting: **To be scheduled each week at a time convenient for Dr. Kinley and the student. These meetings will probably be via Zoom.**

Description of Course: The Problem in Lieu of Thesis (PILOT) in CMHT is best designed as a graduate student working on a research project with a faculty member. Usually, the project will be part of the research agenda of the professor. The ultimate goal is an outcome that leads to dissemination of the research, via a presentation to a learned conference or published in an appropriate academic journal. If the student has a project that is already pretty well fleshed out from other tools classes, we may carry that project through to completion.

Required Textbook: *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, latest version.

**** While there are many online resources for APA direction, many seem to add their own details. All of Dr. Kinley's students need to purchase and use the manual.**

Reliance on Microsoft Word to do the formatting is consistently problematic. **Do not employ this tool on any work done for Dr. Kinley.** If you do, you will be asked to **re-type it** in a clean document where the reference tool codes are not employed.

Dr. Kinley's Policies

- Weekly accountability is critical for successful and timely completion. Therefore, weekly meetings have been scheduled.
- Students are expected to work on PILOT pretty much every day. The graduate expectation is that the student work/study 5 clock hours for every credit hour every week. That means, PILOT should have 15 hours blocked in your planner each week.
- When you submit materials for me to read, I ask for at least a calendar week for feedback. While I am reading, you should be working on something else related to the project – not spending a week waiting on me to get back to you.
- Revisions are to be expected. The draft/discuss/revise process is a normal academic research process. It is expected that feedback will be incorporated.

Grade Policies

PILOT is a graded project. The student and Dr. Kinley will work together to develop a plan of work that will result in the dissemination of research.

- **In order to receive an A (Excellent)**, the student will need to complete the plan of work according to the scheduled plan. The PILOT is not a weekend project to be pulled together during the last two weeks of the semester. The following is expected:
 - **Weekly meetings**, either in person or via Zoom (or similar)
 - Top quality final project
 - Adherence to the plan of work – which is a PLAN that may need to be adjusted for a variety of good reasons over the course of the semester.
 - Submission of the project for both presentation and publication. The timeline might not work for presentation, but you will provide the document to submit when the opportunity presents.
- **In order to receive a B (Above Average)**, you must
 - Participate in weekly meetings
 - Turn in a quality project
 - Meet most of the objectives of the project
 - Submission of the project for presentation. The timeline might not work for submission, but you will provide the document to submit when the opportunity presents.
- **A grade of C (Average)** will be posted if you simply do what is asked with limited attention to excellence

Class Meetings: While the PILOT is assisted student research, a commitment to working on the project each week (preferably each day) is critical.

If the only time you work on the PILOT project is “in class,” during our meetings, you will not earn an A, a B, or a C on this project and you will need to repeat the Problem in Lieu of Thesis with another professor for degree credit. You cannot accomplish the objectives of the class if this is the extent of your commitment to the project. It is not the instructor’s role to motivate you or nag you.

Week of:	Assigned Task¹	Points Possible²	Points Earned
Aug 23	Weekly Meeting/ Plan of work	25	
Aug 30	Weekly Meeting/	25	
Sept 6	Weekly Meeting/	25	
Sept 13	Weekly Meeting/	25	
Sept 20	Weekly Meeting/	25	
Sept 27	Weekly Meeting/	25	
Oct 4	Weekly Meeting/	25	
Oct 11	Weekly Meeting/	25	
Oct 18	Weekly Meeting/	25	
Oct 25	Weekly Meeting/	25	
Nov 1	Weekly Meeting/	25	
Nov 8	Weekly Meeting/	25	

Nov 15	Weekly Meeting/	25	
Nov 22	Weekly Meeting/ THANKSGIVING WEEK	25	
Nov 29	Weekly Meeting/	25	
Dec 6	Final Exam Week on campus	25	
	Total points for productive meetings	400	

¹Since this class is dependent on your individual plan of work, you will work with Dr. Kinley to determine what your weekly assignments are. This will manifest as an evolving plan, depending on the goals of the project and the skills of the student. With PILOT, steps generally can't be skipped – the goal is to complete the project.

²10 points are for “showing up” to work or scheduled conference. The remaining 15 points will be assigned to the quality of the work completed that week and adherence to the pre-arranged timeline. If there is no outcome for the week, the grade will be -0-.

The following grade scale will be employed:

- 90.0 – 100% = A
- 80.0 to 89.9 = B
- 70.0 to 79.9 = C
- 60.0 to 69.9 = D
- 59.9% and below = F

If the student earns a D or an F (or perhaps a C, depending on GPA), they will need to repeat the PILOT experience with another faculty member.

I have read the syllabus for MDSE 5920 (Problem in Lieu of Thesis), asked questions when I didn't understand something, and I agree to the timeline and policies herein.	
_____	_____
Student Signature	Date

The Scientific Method:

- I. Define the problem
- II. Literature Review on the topic – what do we already know?
- III. Purpose - what questions remain to be answered?
- III. Methodology – how will you collect data?
- IV. Findings
- V. Conclusions