1-21-15 MES Faculty Meeting (Kevin, Shangrila, Kathleen, Erin, Peter, Dina)

**Upcoming faculty meetings/agenda items:**

Wednesday, 2-11-15, 3-5 pm, Fishbowl:

Continued discussion of Case Studies with emphasis on alternate models that might address some of the problems with this course. Peter and Kathleen will discuss a previous model for Case Studies (and distribute reading prior to meeting).

Nomination of student speakers for graduation

Nomination of graduation speaker—Kathleen, do you want our input?

Review mini-prospectus. I think we previously discussed making this option available to students by the end of ESS (Kathleen and Dina)

Thursday, 3-12-15, 1-3 pm, Fishbowl:

Discussion of difficult cases in candidacy process. ESS faculty will identify borderline cases and read their papers prior to meeting. We will not have portfolios at this point.

Continuation of Case Studies discussion, assuming that we have not fixing everything.

 **Discussion of Case Studies / Thesis**

Clarification: Some faculty, especially Erin and Dina, have some students use a “manuscript thesis” option, which includes three main chapters: lit review, manuscript, interdisciplinary context of work. (Good for me to know so that I can incorporate and group students for workshops with this in mind.)

We discussed some things that we can do with this year’s students to address problems that arise in Case Studies:

1. Talk more non-thesis components of Case Studies to manage expectations during the first year.
2. Include a thesis day or thesis week during RDQM to help students generate ideas and possible research designs for their thesis topics.

We also discussed (and reached consensus on?) several things that would improve Case Studies and the overall thesis project:

1. Revise prospectus to make it more apparent, right away, what a student is proposing. Also, make it more inclusive of qualitative research.
2. Require completion of prospectus sooner in the quarter. Maybe a draft prospectus early in quarter, lit review, final prospectus later in quarter that’s approved prior to winter break so that students have a green light to start research before the break.
3. Assign readers earlier in the quarter and have students meeting regularly with them by, say, Week 5 or 6. Readers would become main faculty responsible for evaluating thesis work (prospectus, lit review) responsible for providing some kind of feedback language for student evaluations.
4. Continue to have a curriculum alongside thesis development—that’s what we need to focus on as a faculty group: what’s included and also how it’s framed for students. Dual structure with readers evaluating more material will help make Case Studies manageable for two faculty.
5. Create a schedule that allows all faculty to watch the presentations of their thesis students at the end of fall quarter.
6. Incorporate more non-academic professionals (or not)
7. Incorporate more outside faculty to discuss their research process (or not)