

Senior Thesis Requirements and Agreement

The Senior Thesis is one of the two capstone requirements, along with the Senior Exit Exam, for candidates for the Bachelor's degree in the Department of History and Political Science. Together these two requirements test the candidate's subject knowledge and skill at conducting, documenting and presenting research.

Preparation for this task begins in History 2310, which is directed toward teaching the student proper research skills and methods that all History/Political Science graduates need. The student will contact Dr. Scarry, who is responsible for the coordination of all senior theses (**two semesters before anticipated graduation**). The student will select a "First" and "Second" reader from within the Department of History and Political Science both of whom must approve the research topic. **The student should assume that their initial submission will require both revisions and improvements in the areas of research, writing and documentation. Please note that students are to make every effort to incorporate primary resources in their thesis.**

The student may select a topic they have recently become interested in or utilize a research paper from another upper level history or political science course to serve as the foundation of the senior thesis. The research product produced must be approximately **20 pages in length and conclude with proper documentation (following the Department of History and Political Science's Requirements for Research Papers and Kate L. Turabian's *Manual for Writers*)**. The two professors selected as readers will evaluate your research project using the attached rubric and evaluation forms.

Students begin the Senior Thesis by submitting, **at the beginning of the second semester prior to the anticipated graduation date**, a Senior Thesis Agreement Application, including a typed one-page Prospectus or Project Description, to Dr. Scarry, the Thesis Coordinator. The Prospectus should include a brief description of the topic, mentioning the major issues to be addressed, and indicating the proposed sources and methods to be used. Although a thesis statement is not expected at this point in the project, the Prospectus should specify a research question to be answered through the project and indicate the project's greater significance in the discipline.

* Students who are seeking teacher certification should complete this requirement prior to student teaching.

* Excellent papers will be submitted to Journals for possible publication. Opportunities are also available for presenting papers at professional meetings.

SENIOR THESIS RUBRIC

Excellent (4 points)	Above Average (3 points)	Average (2 points)	Below Average (1 point)	Unacceptable (0 points)
-------------------------	-----------------------------	-----------------------	----------------------------	----------------------------

Use of Thesis

		Clear thesis.	Unclear thesis.	No thesis.
--	--	---------------	-----------------	------------

Proof of Thesis

Fully developed support for thesis.	Adequate supporting points.	A few supporting points.	Insufficient supporting points.	No support for thesis.
-------------------------------------	-----------------------------	--------------------------	---------------------------------	------------------------

Organization

Entirely clear chronological or topical organization.	Some minor points out of place, but overall clarity.	Numerous points out of place, but overall clarity.	Major sections out of order.	No organization; just random information.
---	--	--	------------------------------	---

Clarity of Thought

Entirely clear, easy to follow, straightforward.	Generally clear with some minor unclear concepts.	Several unclear ideas that limit comprehension.	Generally vague and unclear throughout paper.	Confusing or incomprehensible language.
--	---	---	---	---

Research

Thoroughly researched using appropriate primary and secondary sources	Adequately researched using secondary sources and some primary sources.	Researched using secondary sources but inadequate use of primary sources.	Poorly researched, exclusively using secondary and questionable sources.	Inadequate and unconvincing research, few and inappropriate sources.
---	---	---	--	--

Documentation

Thorough documentation; following approved style (Turabian).	Adequate documentation; generally following correct style.	Adequate documentation; does not follow correct style.	Insufficient documentation; sources cited incorrectly.	Plagiarism; sources not provided.
--	--	--	--	-----------------------------------

Grammar and Style (includes spelling)

Few grammatical or stylistic errors.	Some minor grammatical or stylistic errors.	Several annoying grammatical or stylistic errors.	Numerous grammatical or stylistic errors.	Complete paper revision necessary.
--------------------------------------	---	---	---	------------------------------------

Revision

Significantly improved paper.	Adequate revision.	Passable revision.	Minimal revision.	No revision completed.
Excellent (4 points)	Above Average (3 points)	Average (2 points)	Below Average (1 point)	Unacceptable (0 points)



**Note: Incomplete sentences automatically earn a "1."
 The minimum number to pass in each category is a 2.
 A "0" in any category is an automatic failure.
 Revised August 2006**

Department of History and Political Science
Senior Thesis Agreement Application

Name of Student: _____ Graduation Date: _____

E-mail Address: _____ Local Phone: _____

Thesis Title: _____

Attach a typed one-page description of your project specifying your research question, selected readers, an explanation of primary and secondary sources and methods to be used, and the significance of the project to the discipline.

_____ The project has been approved without modifications or stipulations

_____ The project has been approved with the following modifications or stipulations:

Applicant Agreement

I understand and agree to the suggested revisions of this project.

I will regularly check the e-mail address listed above for information regarding the thesis and will notify the Coordinator of any address or telephone number changes.

I agree to meet regularly (**at least once every two weeks**) with the Thesis Coordinator or my Readers as specified.

I will meet all requirements and deadlines as specified.

I will notify my thesis committee in writing of any changes to the project and will submit a new Agreement Application Form as needed.

Student's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Thesis Coordinator: _____ Date: _____

First Reader: _____ Date: _____

Second Reader: _____ Date: _____