

AH4197 Senior Thesis

Senior Thesis and Honors in Art History

To be eligible to write a Senior Thesis and for Honors in Art History, students must have attained, by the end of the junior year, a grade-point average of at least 3.5 in the major and 3.3 overall. By the end of the junior year, students should consult the Director of Undergraduate Studies regarding eligibility and selection of an area of research and the appropriate faculty members to supervise the project. We recommend that students strongly consider taking the full two semesters to complete the thesis. If writing the thesis in one semester, students should consider basing their project on pre-existing research from a previous course. The student will register for AH4197 Senior Thesis, which may count toward an elective in fulfillment of the major. The student will work closely with a Thesis Advisor on the thesis, gaining additional feedback from one or two Readers at the draft stage. A faculty committee will judge whether the Senior Thesis qualifies for Honors.

Learning Objectives

As a result of writing a senior thesis, students will be able to:

1. select and research a specialized area of art history
2. formulate an original argument based on in-depth primary and secondary research
3. develop their abilities to present their findings in oral and written form

Average minimum amount of independent, out-of-class hours expected per week:

- 1 credit: 2 hours, 18 min. per week
- 2 credit: 4 hours, 40 min. per week
- 3 credit: 7 hours per week
- 4 credit: 9 hours, 18 min. per week

University Policy on Religious Holidays

1. Students should notify faculty during the first week of the semester of their intention to be absent from class on their day(s) of religious observance.
2. Faculty should extend to these students the courtesy of absence without penalty on such occasions, including permission to make up examinations.
3. Faculty who intend to observe a religious holiday should arrange at the beginning of the semester to reschedule missed classes or to make other provisions for their course-related activities

Support for Students Outside the Classroom

Disability Support Services (DSS)

Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should contact the Disability Support Services office at 202-994-8250 in the Rome Hall, Suite 102, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information please refer to: gwired.gwu.edu/dss/

Mental Health Services 202-994-5300

The University's Mental Health Services offers 24/7 assistance and referral to address students' personal, social, career, and study skills problems. Services for

students include: crisis and emergency mental health consultations confidential assessment, counseling services (individual and small group), and referrals.
counselingcenter.gwu.edu/

Academic Integrity Code

Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one's own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information. For the remainder of the code, see: studentconduct.gwu.edu/code-academic-integrity

Safety and Security

In the case of an emergency, if at all possible, the class should shelter in place. If the building that the class is in is affected, follow the evacuation procedures for the building. After evacuation, seek shelter at a predetermined rendezvous location.

Thesis Calendar for 2-semester Writers

Second semester junior year: Consult the Director of Undergraduate Studies regarding eligibility and selection of an area of research and the appropriate faculty members to supervise the project. By the end of the semester prior to writing the thesis, the student should have a confirmed Thesis Advisor.

Note: The following deadlines are common to all thesis writers. Thesis Advisors may work with students to develop additional deadlines, depending on the needs of the project.

SEMESTER I

| | |
|----------|---|
| Week 1: | Proposal due to Thesis Advisor |
| Week 2: | Meeting with Thesis Advisor about proposal and plans for year |
| Week 3: | Colloquium with fellow thesis writers: informal 10-minute Powerpoint presentation laying out hypothesis and plan for research |
| Week 5: | Working bibliography due |
| Week 14: | Updated and extended proposal due |

SEMESTER II

| | |
|--------------|---|
| Week 1: | Meeting with Thesis Advisor * Note: Start thinking about whom to ask to be Readers |
| Week 3: | Colloquium with fellow thesis writers: informal 10-minute Powerpoint presentation laying out working argument and state of research |
| Week 4: | Confirm One or Two Readers (may be outside the department) |
| Week 10: | Rough Draft due to Thesis Advisor and Reader/s |
| Weeks 11-12: | Meetings with Advisor and Reader/s to discuss feedback |
| Week 14: | Senior Thesis Colloquium: formal 10-minute Powerpoint presentation on thesis research for public audience |
| Week 15: | Final Draft Due: approximately 25-35 pages (see Format Guidelines) |

Thesis Calendar for 1-semester Writers

Second semester junior year: Consult the Director of Undergraduate Studies regarding eligibility and selection of an area of research and the appropriate faculty members to supervise the project. By the end of the semester prior to writing the thesis, the student should have a confirmed Thesis Advisor.

Note: The following deadlines are common to all thesis writers. Thesis Advisors may work with students to develop additional deadlines, depending on the needs of the project.

| | |
|--------------|---|
| Week 1: | Proposal due to Thesis Advisor * Note: Start thinking about whom to ask to be Reader/s |
| Week 2: | Meeting with Thesis Advisor about proposal and plans for semester |
| Week 3: | Colloquium with fellow thesis writers: informal 10-minute Powerpoint presentation laying out hypothesis and plan for research |
| Week 4: | Confirm One or Two Readers (may be outside the department) |
| Week 5: | Working bibliography due |
| Week 10: | Rough Draft due to Thesis Advisor and Reader/s |
| Weeks 11-12: | Meetings with Advisor and Reader/s to discuss feedback |
| Week 14: | Senior Thesis Colloquium: formal 10-minute Powerpoint presentation on thesis research for public audience |
| Week 15: | Final Draft Due: approximately 20-30 pages (see Format Guidelines) |

FORMAT GUIDELINES

Senior Theses written over the course of one semester should be approximately 20-30 pages long; if written over the course of two semesters, approximately 25-35 pages long.

Bibliography and illustrations are not counted in the page length.

- The text must be printed on standard 8½ x 11" paper, double-spaced and in a twelve-point font.
- The margins should be roughly 1" on all four sides; margins must not substantially exceed or fall under the limit.
- Indent the first line of a new paragraph, and do not leave an extra space or spaces between paragraphs.
- All pages of text must be numbered.
- Use a binder clip to clamp pages together; save the plastic binders for another occasion.

Papers consist of four parts: title page, text with notes, bibliography, and illustrations.

The title page is a cover sheet that bears the title, author's name, and the names of the Thesis Advisor (noted as such) and Reader/s.

The illustrations can be black and white, although color is preferred; each should be labeled as a numbered figure (i.e., Fig. 1, Fig. 2, and so forth) and should carry basic information about the work illustrated: name of artist, title of work, date, dimensions, and the collection in which it is found.

Footnotes and bibliography should conform to the Chicago Manual of Style, which is available on-line through Gelman Library.

GRADING

For the course grade/s for AH4197 Senior Thesis:

20% Participation

Students should be active, engaged participants in meetings and colloquia. Students should meet with Thesis Advisors a minimum of three times per semester and with Readers a minimum of once per semester.

20% Proposal, Bibliography, and any other short writing assignments

60% Final Draft (or, in first semester of 2-semester program, Extended Proposal)

- The Thesis Advisor determines the grade for the course, AH4197.
- Students should discuss with Thesis Advisor what form the proposal, extended proposal, and working bibliography should take.
- The faculty committee as a whole determines whether the Senior Thesis qualifies for Honors.
- All theses are evaluated according to the following rubric.

RUBRIC

CONTENT

SCORE ____

A (Honors---4 points): Presents an original perspective based upon a thorough understanding of relevant readings and convincingly relates both scholarly art historical literature and primary source documents to a thorough visual analysis of art objects and/or critical, historical analysis of theoretical, aesthetic ideas. Demonstrates methodological self-awareness.

B (Pass---3 points): Demonstrates a good, but not excellent, mastery of visual, scholarly, textual analysis. While good and showing promise, a "B" paper manifests certain deficiencies and shows the need for improvement in a few areas: the stated thesis may not be fully developed and/or the paper has some unsubstantiated analysis and/or minor errors of interpretation and/or historical fact.

C (No pass---2 points): A "C" paper demonstrates only minimal adequacy in visual analysis and historical understanding of the material. It lacks a substantiated thesis and/or a meaningful discussion of artworks and their connection to the ideas and themes expressed in the scholarly literature and primary-source readings. The paper may be over-reliant upon the views of secondary-source authors and/or misinterpret their arguments and/or misinterpret primary sources. A "C" paper is minimally researched and/or includes interpretive/factual mistakes.

D (Poor---1 point): Demonstrates a poor comprehension of the material, has no convincing scholarly thesis and lacks both meaningful discussion of the individual artworks and their connections to themes and ideas expressed in the scholarly and primary-source readings. A "D" paper is poorly researched and may include flawed visual analysis, and/or serious deficiencies in historical understanding.

COHERENCE, ORGANIZATION, WRITING STYLE

SCORE____

A (Honors---4 points): An "A" paper is persuasively written and achieves clarity of argument by being cohesively, logically organized around a central, well-stated thesis appearing at the beginning of the paper. Carefully proofread, the paper is largely free of grammatical, spelling, typographical errors.

B (Pass---3 points): B papers are mostly well-written and accomplished but are also flawed by minor organizational, writing problems which diminish somewhat the clarity of argument stemming from the thesis. The thesis itself may need to be stated more clearly and precisely. Stylistic problems may include minor typographical, grammatical, spelling errors.

C (No pass---2 points): A "C" paper has an imprecise, contradictory and/or vaguely stated thesis; organizational problems in persuasively supporting the thesis; grammatical, spelling, typographical errors that diminish the clarity of argument.

D (Poor---1 point): Has serious writing errors, including the lack of a thesis statement; poor grammar and spelling; rambling, incoherent organization, and/or a heavy dependence upon long quotations, strings of quotations and close paraphrasing of secondary source authors.

DOCUMENTATION

SCORE _____

A (Honors---4 points): An "A" paper is fully and properly documented with well-written, accurate footnotes and bibliography. The paper is also fully illustrated with high-quality reproductions that have accurate, complete identifying captions. Footnote and figure numbers properly appear in order where needed throughout the text.

B (Pass---3 points): B papers are mostly well-documented and well-illustrated but are somewhat marred by minor errors and omissions in the footnoting, bibliography, illustrations and captions.

C (No Pass---2 points): A "C" paper has documentation errors/omissions that undermine the persuasiveness of the argument. There may be improperly numbered, missing footnotes and source information lacking for quoted, paraphrased material. Illustrations may be missing and illustration captions may have inaccurate or incomplete identifying information. Illustrations may be unclear or too small to be easily read in relation to textual descriptions. Bibliography may not be complete, may be missing necessary information and may have organizational errors.

D (Poor---1 point): Generally lacks proper documentation and has numerous errors/omissions in footnoting, bibliography, illustrations and captions. Footnotes are frequently missing, misnumbered, and/or incompletely, inaccurately written. The paper fails to attribute quotes and ideas to their authors and textual sources. Illustrations may be missing or poorly reproduced. Illustration captions may be missing or inaccurate and misnumbered. Illustration figure numbers may be missing or misnumbered in the text. The bibliography may be ill-organized, seriously incomplete and inaccurate.

PAPER GRADE:

OVERALL AVERAGE SCORE _____