

Senior Thesis Politics 480

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and by appointment

Purpose: The senior thesis can be the most rewarding part of your undergraduate work and it can be the most difficult. The beauty of working on a thesis is that you get to pursue your own puzzle, work through your own questions, design and execute a project that reflects your own intellectual passions. The frustration is that it is probably unlike anything you have done before and it can seem overwhelming. This course and our work this semester are designed to provide a guide and some structure to your research project. Our class time will be limited so that you can meet with me individually but you will be expected to attend some joint sessions where you will be asked to present your work in progress. It is imperative that you keep to this schedule, meet the due dates, and attend the required classes because it is easy to fall behind on a project of this type. This work should reflect your best effort as the culmination of your investment as a Politics major here at Willamette.

Student Learning Outcomes

- Students will enhance their academic skills: reading and thinking critically; researching effectively; speaking competently; and writing persuasively.
- Students will demonstrate knowledge of a range of explanatory and/or normative theories in political science, specifically in their chosen sub-field.
- Students will make effective and applied use of a variety of types of evidence to support a clear line of analysis and conclusion or thesis.

Course Requirements:

10% Annotated Bibliography
10% Prospectus (8-10 pages)
10% Oral Presentation
20% First Draft of Thesis (20 pages)
20% Second Draft of Thesis
30% Final Thesis (approx. 50 pages)

Please Note: Failure to attend scheduled classes or individual meetings, turn in work on a timely basis, or to participate in peer feedback sessions will result in grade reductions.

Recommended Text: Wayne C. Booth et al., *The Craft of Research*. (University of Chicago Press, 1995).

Class Meeting time: Tuesdays 2:30-4pm

Individual meeting times:

Nikki T 2:30-3:00, Leah T 3-3:30, Melissa T 3:30-4pm

8/27: Three page proposal due (ungraded). Initial class meeting: discuss syllabus and requirements; establish times for individual meetings; share proposals.

9/3: Meeting to discuss sources, annotated bibliographies, and literature reviews. Bring one well-written, peer-reviewed journal articles that you have read and that is relevant to your thesis. Discussion of how to write a prospectus

- 9/10:** **Annotated Bibliography due by 9:30am** loaded onto WISE under Assignments. The bibliography should have at least twenty sources identified and briefly summarized. **No class. Individual meetings this week.**
- 9/17:** **Prospectus Due at 9:30am uploaded to WISE.** Class Meeting for peer feedback. Bring 2 copies
- 9/24:** Individual Meetings this week for feedback on prospectus
- 10/1:** **Work in Progress Report (approx. 750 words) due to WISE by 9:30 am. Class meeting to discuss.** Make sure you have met with a research librarian.
- 10/8:** Individual meetings.
- 10/15:** **First Draft of Thesis Due at 9:30am uploaded to WISE.** Class meeting for peer feedback. Bring 2 copies.
- 10/22:** **Individual meetings--**Feedback on first draft
- 10/29:** **Work in Progress Report uploaded to WISE by 9:30 am.** Meeting to discuss progress. Make sure you take your draft to the writing center at least once.
- 11/5:** **Second Draft of Thesis Due uploaded to WISE by 9:30am.** Class meeting for peer feedback. Bring 2 copies
- 11/12:** Individual meetings-- Feedback on 2nd draft
- 11/19** **Oral Presentations**
- 11/26-11/28 Thanksgiving Break
- 12/3:** **Final Draft Due by 4pm.**