

SENIOR THESIS

This course is designed to facilitate your work on a senior thesis in the area of American politics. Although we will meet as a class on a number of occasions, your work in this course will largely develop out of your individual research efforts and through individual meetings with me. I will help you to refine your topic, guide you toward appropriate research resources, and give you written and oral feedback at the various stages of your project. The two-credit nature of this course reflects the Politics Department's expectations about the amount of time, energy and effort (not to say thought) that you will need to put into researching and writing your thesis. You should plan on spending about *twenty hours a week* researching and writing your thesis. Hopefully, the paper you write for this class will be the best piece of work you will have completed at Willamette and thus a fitting culmination of your Politics major.

Schedule of class meetings and paper due dates

1. January 20: First class meeting, ungraded 750 word prospectus due.
 2. January 27: 1000 word report (#1) on progress during past week, due at 9 am on Monday, January 26. Individual meeting required. All progress reports should be submitted via e-mail, saved as a Word document.
 3. February 3: 1000 word report (#2) on progress during past week, due 9 am on Monday, February 2. Individual meeting required.
 4. February 10: Class meeting to discuss revised research prospectus (approximately 2000-2500 words). Prospectus is due at my office Friday, February 6 at 4:00 pm. Prospectus should also be e-mailed at the same time to me and to your two peer readers. (10% of grade; half of grade is for the quality of your written responses to peers' prospectuses). First meeting with writing center must occur sometime before February 6.
 5. February 17: 1000 word report (#3) on progress during past week, due 9 am on Monday, February 16. Individual meeting required.
 6. February 24: 1000 word report (#4) on progress during past week, due 9 am on Monday, February 23. Individual meeting required.
 - 7a. March 3: Class meeting for oral presentations of work in progress. (10% of grade)
 - 7b. March 5: Class meeting for oral presentations of work in progress. (10% of grade)
 8. March 10: Available for individual meetings. First draft (minimum 5,000 words) is due at my office on Friday, March 13 at 4pm (10% of grade). Draft must also be e-mailed to me as a Word document. Before turning in first draft you must have had at least one meeting with the writing center to discuss the draft.
 9. March 17: Individual meetings required to discuss first draft.
- March 24: No class, spring break

10. March 31: Available for individual meetings

11. April 7. Class meeting to discuss second draft (minimum of 8,000 words). Second draft is due at my office on Friday, April 3 at 4:00 pm. (20% of grade; 3/4 is for draft, 1/4 is for quality of comments on the drafts of 2 peers' papers). Also hand in to me at the same time the first draft with my comments on it, as well as any draft(s) commented on by the writing center. Draft should also be e-mailed at the same time to me and to your two peer readers. Before handing in 2nd draft you must have had at least one meeting with writing center to discuss that draft.

12. April 14. Available for individual meetings to discuss 2nd draft.

13. April 21. Individual meetings to discuss abstract of not more than 300 words in which you succinctly lay out the main argument of your thesis. This draft of the abstract is not graded but the final version of the abstract will be graded. Abstract is due April 13 at 4 pm, and should be submitted via e-mail, saved as a Word document.

14. April 28. Available for individual meetings to discuss fine tuning of paper. Between April 7 and May 5 you are required to make at least two writing center visits.

15. May 5. Final thesis, including abstract, due at 5:00 pm (final paper should be a minimum of 12,000 words). (30% of grade). During this session you must turn in the four progress reports and your writing center log, which will each be worth 10% of your grade.

Grading

Your grade will be based on:

- (1) Revised Prospectus: 10% (5% for prospectus, 5% for comments on peers' prospectuses)
- (2) Four Progress Reports: 10%
- (3) Writing Center Log: 10%
- (3) Oral Presentation of Work in Progress: 10%
- (4) First Draft: 10%
- (4) Second Draft: 20% (15% for the paper, 5% for quality of comments on peers' drafts)
- (5) Final Paper: 30% (25% for the paper, 5% for the abstract)

Late work or missed appointments and classes can result in a deduction from your final grade. Writing a passing final paper is not enough to pass the course. Each graded component of the course must be satisfactorily completed in order for you to pass the course.

Writing Center Log

You must make *at least five writing center visits* during the course of the semester. Those who do not visit the writing center the required number of times, at each stage of the writing process, will receive a full grade deduction on the final course grade. You must also keep a writing center log indicating the precise date and duration of the meeting, the name of the writing consultant, a description of what happened at the meeting (what part or parts of your paper the consultant read, the sorts of things the consultant said) as well as an evaluation of the usefulness of each meeting.