

Syllabus: Senior Thesis

Course Description

This capstone course is for students to use as a culmination of all their learning. Students will prepare an extensive paper on a topic carefully selected by them and agreed on with the instructor. They will defend their positions orally before a panel of experts. Class size is considerably smaller to allow more extensive presentation time and individual attention. Consequently, the course price is higher. This course is eligible for dual enrollment credit for junior and senior diploma students. Homework will average 2 - 3 hours per week.

Attendance and Participation

Both attendance and participation are vital parts of this course; therefore, students are required to attend class sessions and participate actively in discussions. Students are expected to view archives of any missed classes, and are responsible for obtaining any notes or assignments.

Students will be given quarterly grades for both participation and attendance:

- Fifteen percent of the final grade will be attributed to *relevant class participation*. This includes raising one's hand, commenting regularly via microphone/webcam, and using the chat box regularly to contribute to the academic conversation.
- Five percent of the final grade will be attributed to *class attendance*. Being present, being on time, and readiness for class are all factors to be considered in the class attendance grade. *Excused* absences will not detrimentally impact attendance grades.

Grading rubrics are located in the Course Documents folder in each course page.

Assignments & Exams

Reading & Bibliography: Except for The Chicago Manual of Style, there is no formal textbook for this course. However, various short readings will be provided along the way. Since the Thesis represents a major research and writing project on an individually-selected topic, the student will of course be immersed in the primary and secondary works discovered in the research and tutorial process. Access to those texts deemed essential by the instructor and committee (through Internet, library or purchase) is the responsibility of the student. Prior to the formal defense sessions, each student will distribute completed Thesis papers to classmates, who are required to read them in order to participate in the defense.

Writing/Speaking: There are several writing/speaking assignments per semester designed to prepare each student for the final defense. Descriptions of these will be provided during the school year. The student is responsible for distributing preparatory and final drafts to multiple parties in a uniform and timely fashion.

Many of these will come in the form of exercises designed to familiarize students with The Chicago Manual of Style.

There are no formal examinations in this course, the preparatory and final drafts, along with the formal defense, being the major evidence of success. Midterm and final assessments are speeches. Quizzes covering the research methods and rhetorical skills should be expected.

Evaluation

The final grade is determined on the following basis:

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|--------------------------------|-----|
| • Class Attendance | 5% |
| • Relevant Class Participation | 15% |
| • Writing Assignments | 30% |
| • Oral Assignments | 30% |
| • Midterm/Final Assessment | 20% |

Grading Scale

The following grading scale will apply for all assignments and final grades.

100% – 90% = A; 89% - 80% = B; 79% - 70% = C; 69% - 60% = D; 59% - 50% = E; 49% - 40% = F. All grades are rounded to the nearest whole number.

Late Work

If a student fails to submit any assessment by the due date, it is considered “late.”

- Assignments submitted 0-24 hours late will result in a 10 point reduction off earned grade.
- Assignments submitted 24-48 hours late will result in a 20 point reduction off earned grade.
- Assignments submitted 48-72 hours late will result in a 30 point reduction off earned grade.
- Assignments over 72 hours late will not be accepted and the student will receive a zero.
- Parent may request an extension from their child’s teacher *prior to the due date* or in the case of an emergency.

While we love grace and the opportunity to exercise it, we also desire to instill a sound sense of responsibility in our students, hence these expectations pertaining to late work.

Exam/Test Retakes

Any student may retake a failed assessment (except quizzes), but can score no higher than 70% on the retake. Retakes must be submitted within one week of the returned, failed test. If the retake is not submitted within one week, the original failing grade will stand.

Academic Dishonesty

Cheating on any assignment is considered academic dishonesty. This includes plagiarism in any form. Cheating will be dealt with in the following manner:

- If a student is caught cheating, he will receive a zero on the assignment and will be placed on academic probation for the remainder of the school year.
- If the same student is caught cheating again, he will likely be expelled.
- No refunds will be granted for students who are expelled due to cheating.
- A Disciplinary Action Form will be submitted by the student's teacher for any instance of academic dishonesty.

Textbooks

The books needed for the class can be purchased through Veritas Press. It is extremely important that the student has the correct version/edition of these materials.

- The Chicago Manual of Style (305181)

Course Calendar

See Course Assignment Sheet, located on course page, for class dates, breaks and all assignments and assessments. Class dates and breaks can also be found on the current academic year calendar.