

CLAREMONT McKENNA COLLEGE - SENIOR THESIS – 2009-2010

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The Writing Center (Bauer 32, Ext. 74142)

Senior Thesis information and syllabus online at <http://registrar.cmc.edu/>

Important dates: one-semester Senior Thesis - Fall '09

9/3/09 REQUIRED intro meeting, 11:00 a.m., Pickford Auditorium
9/14/09 Last day to register for Senior Thesis or to change topic/reader, etc.
11/30/09 Theses and working papers due to Registrar's Office by noon

Important dates: two-semester Senior Thesis - Fall '09/Spring '10

9/3/09 REQUIRED intro meeting, 11:00 a.m., Pickford Auditorium
9/14/09 Last day to register for Senior Thesis or to change topic/reader, etc.;
 last day to request grade of P for first semester
4/26/10 Theses and working papers due by noon in Registrar's Office

Important dates: one-semester Senior Thesis - Spring '10

1/21/10 REQUIRED intro meeting, 11:00 a.m., Pickford Auditorium
2/1/10 Last day to register for Senior Thesis or to change topic/reader, etc.
4/26/10 Theses and working papers due by noon in Registrar's Office

ON THE DUE DATE, THE FOLLOWING MATERIALS MUST BE SUBMITTED:

- a) at least two copies of the thesis - one for the College* and one for each faculty reader to grade the thesis;
- b) working papers, including original outlines, notes, rough drafts, etc. (securely tied together and boldly labeled with your name); Manila envelopes are available in the Registrar's Office for this purpose.
- c) a photocopy of the title page for the Commencement Program (separate, not taped or glued to any other object).

**The College's copies of theses are stored for five years in the Crocker Reading Room in Bauer Center. Theses may be reviewed or checked out through the monitor at the Reading Room or the Registrar's Office.*

INSTRUCTIONS

At Claremont McKenna College, Senior Thesis is a general education requirement, to be completed within a student's major. It is intended to be a serious exercise in the organization and presentation of written material. Students select their own topics, in consultation with their faculty reader. Students pursuing honors within their major(s) should consult their department chair(s) for guidelines pertinent to the senior thesis requirement. Students are responsible for determining their departmental requirements. These instructions apply only to students writing a non-science thesis Science majors must contact the Joint Science department for thesis requirements.

The thesis is a research paper and students are responsible, with the advice of their reader, for the investigation of sources, the accumulation of data, the selection of pertinent material, and the preparation of the thesis in acceptable form. Students submit their topics for thesis, with designated reader approval, at pre-registration or registration. Forms are available in the Registrar's Office. All CMC students must choose a faculty reader who teaches within their major. Only off-campus majors may have a single reader from off-campus. Students are welcome to have an additional reader, if appropriate.

Senior thesis may be a one or two semester project. Students doing a two-semester thesis must register each semester for a two-semester thesis, and must complete the two-semester option in consecutive semesters. Students scheduled to graduate or to leave CMC at the end of the fall semester may do a two-semester spring-fall thesis; all other students must select a one or two-semester thesis during their final year. The option originally chosen may be changed (from a one-semester to a two-semester thesis, or vice versa) no later than the end of the registration period (tenth day of the semester) of the semester in which students start work on thesis. Similarly, students may not change topics or readers after the tenth day of the semester in which they start their thesis.

The following rules will be applied strictly:

- 1) Theses must be original work for this course only.
- 2) A thesis may be an expansion of a previous term paper; if so, however, an explanation must be included with the Senior Thesis Topic Form and approval must have been given in advance by the Faculty Reader. Include the original paper as an appendix or in working papers.
- 3) All theses are carefully checked for originality. Students found to have committed academic dishonesty on their theses are subject to disciplinary measures through the Academic Standards Committee. If the act of dishonesty is a second offense, students are also dismissed from CMC without the possibility of returning to earn a degree. You must learn the proper citation rules and scrupulously follow them. If you have questions about proper citation, make an appointment at the Writing Center.
- 4) A thesis failed for any reason cannot be made up during the same semester.
- 5) All students must submit at least two copies of the thesis on the due date, one to be retained by CMC and the other to be returned to the author after reading and grading. Students with more than one faculty reader must submit additional copies as needed. If departments require a copy of a thesis to determine honors in the major, students are responsible for submitting the extra copy to the department. Readers are required to return their copy of the thesis with the grade to the Registrar's Office.

THESIS REQUIREMENTS

MANDATORY MEETING

A mandatory meeting will be held at the beginning of each semester during which the requirements and standards for the senior thesis will be explained. This is the only such meeting; therefore all questions should be raised at that time. It is each student's responsibility to attend this meeting and to obtain the materials distributed at the meeting.

PROGRESS

Students must meet with their faculty reader on a regular basis throughout the semester(s). Progress, or lack thereof, will be indicated when low grades are due each semester. It is the responsibility of the student to find out what the expectations are of faculty readers and departments to avoid low grades. You should devise a schedule with your reader that specifies when outlines, bibliographies, drafts, etc. are due.

Students writing a two-semester thesis will be graded for the work completed at the end of the first semester. It is their responsibility to find out exactly what the reader wants turned in at the midpoint of each semester, as well as at the end of the first semester.

Here are some suggestions for your thesis progress:

- ▶ Bibliography by week 3
- ▶ Outline by week 4
- ▶ Literature Review by week 7
- ▶ Statement of Methodology by week 9
- ▶ First full draft by week 11
- ▶ 2nd full draft by week 12

LENGTH

There is no set length requirement for either a one-semester or a two-semester thesis. Students must work closely with their reader to determine the appropriate length. The average 1-semester thesis is approximately 50 pages, including notes, charts, and bibliography. Quality of organization and care in editing are more important than length.

FORM

Theses must be typewritten or computer-produced on a letter-quality printer, on good quality bond white paper. Be sure to include a blank sheet of paper between the title page and the table of contents. Use either Times New Roman 12 point OR Courier 10 point font for your thesis.

The thesis will include:

1. binding - Velo back, flat binding, black back cover, clear top cover. **No spiral binding**, unless the copy shop determines your document is too thick for flat binding.
2. title page (a sample is included in this syllabus)
3. table of contents
4. chaptering
5. documentation
6. bibliography

PLEASE NOTE:

Theses being considered for departmental honors may have additional requirements. You must consult your department for details.

WRITING ASSISTANCE

The Writing Center (Bauer 32, Ext. 74142) can provide valuable assistance to thesis writers. Trained and experienced writing consultants can advise on all aspects of thesis preparation from developing a viable thesis statement to using Turabian, MLA and APA. Make an appointment to see a writing consultant early in the semester.

STYLE MANUALS

One of the following style manuals must be followed, as appropriate to the discipline of the thesis:
(Please use the most recent edition).

1. Theses in psychology follow *The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, with the addition of the standard Senior Thesis title page. Do margins according to PMAPA recommendations. Your thesis will have the required CMC Senior Thesis title page, a blank page, then the PMAPA title page.
2. Theses in mathematics follow the American Statistical Association manuscript format or, the American Mathematical Society format, or with the approval of the Mathematics Department and the Thesis Director, the style guide of another appropriate mathematics journal;
3. Theses in literature follow *The MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*;
4. Theses in all other fields follow Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*, (University of Chicago Press). Note the following modifications of Turabian: the rules for first reference to a work in a footnote apply to each chapter: that is, there must be a full bibliographic citation at the first reference to a work in each chapter, regardless of any prior reference in earlier chapters. (see Turabian 8.12 and 8.22). In any case where other manuals are silent, consult Turabian.
5. The University of Michigan Documents Center/Citation Guides is an excellent on-line resource that has links to all of the formatting guides, including Turabian. It also has links to examples of how to cite electronic sources. It is available at <http://www.lib.umich.edu> Type in **citation guides** in the search box.
6. Case Citation Guide: a legal citation primer based on the seventeenth edition of *The Bluebook: a Uniform System of Citation* is available at <http://www.law.cornell.edu/citation>

RETRIEVAL OF THESES AND WORKING PAPERS

Working papers and theses may be picked up when grading is completed in January or May; because of limited storage space, working papers and theses will be discarded if not picked up by the end of the semester following the semester in which the thesis was completed. Theses are not mailed to students, unless students have made arrangements in advance with the Registrar's Office. All mailing expenses must be paid by the students.

GRADING AND PENALTIES

Students registered for a one-semester thesis will receive a letter grade and appropriate credit at the end of the semester. Students registered for a two-semester thesis will receive a grade and appropriate credit for the work completed at the end of the first semester as well as a final grade at the end of the second semester. It is each student's responsibility to find out exactly what the reader wants turned in at the end of the first semester, whether an extensive outline, completed chapters, or chapter proposals. Normally students with two-semester theses will receive a letter grade and credit at the end of the first semester. They may however with the approval of their thesis reader select to receive a grade of P (in progress and without credit) at the end of the first semester. The last day to request this option is the tenth day of classes of the first semester of a two-semester thesis. Forms are available in the Registrar's Office. Letter grades and credit replace In Progress (IP) grades upon completion of the 2-semester project.

Late theses will be penalized as follows:

- one grade point reduction (i.e., A to A-) for theses turned in up to 24 hours late
- two grade points reduction (i.e. A to B+) for theses turned in from 24 to 72 hours late
- three grade points (i.e. from A to B) for theses turned in from 3 days to one week (5 days) late
- additional full letter grade (from B to C) for each subsequent week (5 days) of lateness

CLAREMONT McKENNA COLLEGE

(TITLE OF THE THESIS)

(Sample Title Page
Senior Thesis)
(ALL CAPITALS)

SUBMITTED TO

(FACULTY READER'S (OR READERS') NAME(S))

AND

DEAN GREGORY HESS

BY

(YOUR NAME)

FOR

SENIOR THESIS

(Semester/Year)

(DATE)