

SYLLABUS

Workshop on Writing MES Thesis: Essay of Distinction Winter Quarter, 2008

Thursdays, 6:00 – 8:00 PM, at Sem II A3109

Faculty

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Workshop Objectives and Activities

As stated in the MES Thesis Handbook, “The 8-credit Thesis-Essay of Distinction requires a scope of work that can be completed in 2 quarters. This thesis option is written in a structured workshop setting during winter and spring quarters of your final year.” The workshop is intended to help you prepare a high-quality thesis and to increase the likelihood of completion by the end of the spring quarter. It is a means by which students work together in informal groups to review each others’ drafts, share insights about research and writing, critique each others’ public presentation rehearsals, and otherwise motivate, energize, console, applaud and encourage each other during this sustained project. The workshop also provides a chance to meet weekly with the workshop faculty member for guidance.

We will meet as a class for the first three weeks and in week ten (see schedule below). By the second class, participants should have divided themselves into informal writer’s groups of three to five persons each. These groups are expected to meet on a weekly basis, either at the scheduled Thursday evening time and location or at another time and place more convenient to the group. Participation in such groups will provide critical support and momentum for students who would otherwise be engaged in a very demanding, solitary endeavor. The meetings may be run in any fashion deemed suitable to group members but will likely include such elements as sharing news about recent developments in each student’s research and analysis, discussion of successes or setbacks, advice about seeking information and assistance, and collective critique of outlines or short writing samples. In week 6, the group will submit to the workshop faculty member a written report on the progress of the collective work of the group, including a description of the format adopted for the meetings, the accomplishments of the group so far, the level of participation of all members, and objectives for future meetings.

The faculty member overseeing the workshop will be available at the regularly scheduled time on Thursday nights in the scheduled room or in her office, to provide advice, answer questions, read preliminary drafts on the spot and provide other assistance. Of course, the workshop faculty member will in no way replace the thesis reader. All students are expected to maintain regular contact with their own readers for sustained and detailed guidance.

During the first three weeks, classes will focus on the process of research and writing. Students are required to demonstrate progress in this regard through the submission of a detailed thesis writing schedule and a formatted, preliminary bibliography as part of the prospectus, which is to

have been signed by the thesis reader and then submitted in the workshop of week four. The bibliography should demonstrate what has been learned about both bibliographic style and library research. The style should follow reference manuals such as those available in the Writing Center in CAB 108 (<http://www.evergreen.edu/writingcenter/>) and through the campus library (<http://www.evergreen.edu/library/catalog/styleguides.htm>). Each student should select the specific style to be used in consultation with that student's thesis reader. Utilizing the tools of advanced library research (covered in week three), and the reference manager software Endnote (demo in week 2), the bibliography should include a balanced combination of relevant and significant works in all of the following categories: books, peer-reviewed journals, government documents, theses and dissertations, and reliable Internet sources.

We will be using a guide to the production of a master's thesis or doctoral dissertation: *Surviving Your Dissertation: a comprehensive guide to content and process*, by Kjell Erik Rudestam and Rae R. Newton. (Second Edition, 2001, Sage Publications, ISBN 0-7619-1962-7.) This book will be available in the campus bookstore.

SCHEDULE

Week	Date	Activity
1	Jan. 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to workshop and thesis process • Small group brainstorming to refine research question and/or thesis statement for prospectus (as in <i>Surviving Your Dissertation</i>, pp. 15+; see also discussion of problem statement on pp. 64+)
2	Jan. 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop on using Endnote, meet at the Academic Computer Center • Formation of permanent support groups • Support group work: free writing and sharing assignment
3	Jan. 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abstract writing exercise • DUE: thesis prospectus, <u>signed by reader</u>, with preliminary bibliography and timeline for entire project
4	Jan. 31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support group meetings
5	Feb. 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support group meetings
6	Feb. 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support group meetings • DUE: written group progress reports
7 – 9	2/21 – 3/6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support group meetings
10	March 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole class meets to discuss progress and plans for future • Submission of individual summary statements, <u>signed by reader</u>, detailing following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ writing progress ○ schedule for completion of tasks remaining ○ justification for continuing in spring quarter