

ESSAY OR THESIS REQUIREMENTS

The program defines an Essay as a research study that synthesizes the literature, while a Thesis is research with an original contribution. The exact nature of the Essay or Thesis is to be arrived at in consultation with the individual essay/thesis advisor. The topic may develop out of a research or seminar paper, but the candidate embarking on the Essay or Thesis should have had at least one course with the instructor supervising the final paper.

The length and structure of the Essay or Thesis will depend on the type of material involved and be arrived at in consultation with the essay/thesis advisor. It should generally be approximately fifty pages for the Thesis but may be less for the Essay (but not less than thirty pages). While a rigorous approach to research and writing is expected for both the Essay and Thesis, a shorter length for the Essay reflects the fact that the Essay is 3 credits while the Thesis is 8 credits. This project, whether Essay or Thesis, is the culminating work of the MA candidate and should demonstrate mastery of the methodology of the field. Both the Essay and Thesis must include the normal scholarly apparatus of footnotes, list of works cited, list of illustrations, and illustrations. The basic formal requirements are outlined below

1. Prerequisites

All course requirements, as well as language requirements and the MA Comprehensive Exam, must be completed before the Essay or Thesis proposal is submitted. It may be advantageous, of course, to begin research on a possible topic well before the final course requirements are met, particularly in cases where seminar papers seem to be promising topics. Students should feel free to consult with individual faculty members about such possibilities at an early stage and be sure to allow ample time to do the necessary bibliographical research before defining a topic. While any student may choose the Essay option, the Thesis option must be approved by the student's essay/thesis advisor, and a special form must be submitted to the Graduate Office.

2. Proposal and Second Reader

The student must select a Thesis (if approved) or Essay topic in consultation with a faculty member who will be the major advisor and reader of the paper. After general agreement concerning the scope and organization of the paper has been reached, the student will write a formal proposal or thesis statement of three to five pages, which should include: 1) a clear statement of the topic and its significance; 2) a claim or argument about the topic; 3) a working outline; 4) the bibliography used to write the proposal. It is important to discuss a first draft of the proposal with the essay/thesis advisor. The student will then consult with his or her essay/thesis advisor before asking another faculty member to serve as a Second Reader for the Essay or Thesis.

In addition, the student should compile a preliminary working bibliography (i.e., an extensive list of all the sources the student has been able to find that may be relevant to the topic - including sources that must be requested through Interlibrary Loan, or require travel in order to use, and foreign language sources).

3. Research and Writing

After the proposal has been accepted, the student should meet with the essay/thesis advisor to work out a practical schedule of work for completing the Essay or Thesis. This should include enough

time for draft revisions and for the Second Reader to read and comment on the revised draft.

Once the topic has been determined, the first step in research is the development of a working bibliography through a wide-ranging search for all sources that are likely to contain relevant material. It is most important at this stage to consult a wide range of indexing sources, library catalogues and electronic databases. In addition to the working bibliography, a careful record of the works of art that may be discussed in the Essay or Thesis must be kept; it should include not only the physical data and locations of the works, but also notes on sources of good reproductions.

Writing is a highly individual process, and it is not the intention of these instructions to set up rigid guidelines for either style or content. Questions of format should be worked out with the essay/thesis advisor. Some general guidelines may be helpful, however. It is recommended that the student follow as nearly as possible the model of a reputable scholarly journal such as *Art Bulletin*. For footnotes and bibliography, the forms in any approved style manual are recommended (such as *The Chicago Style Manual*).

Essays must be revised and completed by the end of the semester in which the student is registered to graduate. The Essay will be submitted to the department. The Thesis must be submitted to both the department and the Graduate School to meet a University deadline. This is usually three weeks before the end of the semester in which the student is registered to graduate. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of these deadlines, which can be found at www.gradschool.wayne.edu. Students must also keep the essay/thesis advisor informed on the progress of the Essay or Thesis, arrange for consultations, and turn in sections or chapters of the draft well in advance of the date on which they wish to discuss them.

4. Format and Technical Requirements

The Graduate Office establishes the guidelines for the format and technical requirements of the M.A. Thesis only. Students should consult the Graduate School website and Graduate School Handbook at www.gradschool.wayne.edu for the appropriate guidelines.

Although minor details of format may vary, the completed final draft of the Thesis submitted to the faculty advisor and second reader must contain the following: (1) title page; (2) table of contents (without page numbers); (3) list of illustrations; (4) text; (5) footnotes; (6) appendices (if needed); (7) list of works cited; (8) illustrations; (9) autobiographical statement (in the case of a Thesis). Illustration pages must be numbered consecutively and display a figure or plate number and page number. The captions must also include the image source.

Example: Paul Cezanne, *Mt. Ste. Victoire from Bibemus Quarry*
 ca. 1898, oil on canvas, 25 1/2" x 32".
 Baltimore Museum of Art. (Photo: Museum).

MA Essays are not submitted to the Graduate Office and therefore are not held to the same strict formatting specifications; however, MA Essays should also follow the same general format.