

SENIOR CAPSTONE FOR LITERATURE

Capstone Coordinator for Literature: Prof. Juan De Castro (DecastrJ@newschool.edu)

80 Fifth Ave, Rm 525, 212-229-5100 x 2257

To complete the Senior Capstone requirement, Literature students must complete an independent Senior Thesis under the advisement of a full-time faculty member of the department, or they can take the Senior Seminar and write a senior paper within a class environment.

The Senior Seminar IS ONLY OFFERED IN THE SPRING SEMESTER. (In Spring 2017, the senior seminar will be taught by Professor Rose Réjouis, who will be taking over as capstone coordinator as of July 2016.)

Please note these important dates:

1. **Deadlines for senior capstone proposal:** 3/3/16 (for Fall 2016); 10/14/16 (for Spring 2017)
2. **Deadlines for handing in senior thesis:** 5/3 (Spring projects); 12/7 (Fall projects)

Choose One Option:

A. Senior Thesis (Fall or Spring) (4 credits)

The senior thesis is an independent research paper of at least 40 pages written in consultation with a full-time faculty member of the Literature Program. It should ideally deal with a topic with which the student is familiar.

Preparation for independent senior work should start in the second semester of the junior year. These are the required steps:

Step 1:

- a. Choose a topic (ideally, within an area of literary study with which you already have some familiarity). The key to success is to find a topic that is appropriate for the time available, and for which both library resources and faculty advising are available. Therefore, do research in the library and make a careful list of resources you can use before finalizing your choice.
- b. Identify possible advisors who are knowledgeable in the area you wish to pursue. Advisors are full-time faculty members in the concentration. Find someone who is willing to work with you. You should do this early. You **MUST** consult with your chosen advisor(s) when developing your senior work project. Failure to do so **WILL** result in your proposal being rejected. (The capstone coordinator will make the final decision as to your advisor.)

Step 2:

Start developing your proposal in the summer (if you plan to submit it in the fall and do the Senior Work in the spring), or during the Winter Break (if you plan to submit in the spring and complete it the following fall). Proposals should be 6-8 pages long (double-spaced) and contain the following:

- a. Working title of proposed research paper.
- b. Names of proposed advisors in order of preference.
- c. A description of the key idea being explored.
- d. A description of the methods of investigation to be employed.
- e. An argument about the relevance of the project to the field of Literature.
- f. A section describing the likely conclusions you hope to draw.
- g. Account of work already accomplished, such as initial research completed.
- h. An annotated Bibliography, in MLA format, listing and briefly describing relevant sources you will consult (both primary and secondary).

Think of the proposal as a first draft of an Introduction to your project.

Step 3:

Proposals must be submitted 1) in hard copy and by email to Juan De Castro (decastrj@newschool.edu – 80 Fifth Ave, Rm 525, 212-229-5100 x 2257) Capstone Coordinator for Literature, and 2) electronically to LangLiteraryStudies@newschool.edu, no later than six weeks after the start of the semester prior to the intended project: i.e., Project proposals are due March 8 for Fall projects, and October 14 for Spring projects. In other words, your proposal is due the semester BEFORE you write your thesis project.

You may be asked to revise the proposal, in which case all final proposal revisions are due no later than twenty days after the initial deadline. (Students whose proposals are not accepted will have the option to complete the Senior Seminar as their Capstone.) If you have any questions about your project, contact Prof. De Castro.

Step 4:

Read widely in your chosen area, make careful notes towards the project, come up with a chapter/argument structure, and then work on the substance of the project, allowing sufficient time to do drafts for your advisor's comments, before making your final revisions.

Your advisor will help you keep the project to the right scope and length, design a structure that is most suitable, discover resources you may not find on your own, and act as editor, guide, and deadline setter.

If you choose to do a Senior Thesis, you are obligated to meet regularly with your advisor. Missing meetings will be seen in exactly the same way as missing class. It can mean failure. A written thesis should be 40-60 pages in length, including scholarly notes and a full bibliography, following MLA style.

ALL COMPLETED THESES/PROJECTS MUST BE SUBMITTED in hard copy and by email to your advisor two weeks before the end of the semester: i.e., on or before May 3rd for spring projects, and DEC.7th for fall projects. A second copy in paper and electronic form must be submitted at the same time to the Capstone Coordinator for Literature, Prof. Juan De Castro (decastrj@newschool.edu – 80 Fifth Ave, Rm 525, 212-229-5100 x 2257). His mailbox is in the fifth floor, 80 Fifth Ave. The Senior Thesis will be evaluated and graded by your advisor and by a second Literature professor.

B. Senior Seminar: Literature (ONLY OFFERED IN THE SPRING) (4 credits)

The senior seminar is a 4000-level class in which students research and write a paper, consisting of approximately 30 pages, in a setting that encourages discussion and sharing of ideas. In Spring 2017, the course will be offered by Professor Rose Réjouis, capstone coordinator as of July 2016.