

SENIOR CAPSTONE FOR THE LITERATURE TRACK

The 2013-2014 Capstone Coordinator for the Literature track is Professor Paul Kottman
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To complete the Senior Capstone requirement in Literature, students must complete **one** of the following two options.

Please read carefully.

Option One

Senior Thesis (4 credits, 40-60 pages in length)

Preparation for an independent senior thesis should begin in the second semester of the student's junior year.

The required steps for writing a senior thesis are as follows.

I. PRIOR to the semester in which the senior thesis will be handed in, the student must:

- a. Identify a literary text (or set of literary texts) about which the student will write.
- b. Identify an advisor. Only full-time faculty members at Lang are eligible to be senior thesis advisors. He or she must be capable of advising the student knowledgeably about the text(s) the student has chosen. [Please see the Literary Studies page in the Lang website for a list of full-time faculty in Literature.]
- c. Approach this full-time faculty member with the topic, and ask for his or her permission to undertake the senior thesis as his or her thesis advisee. Getting this permission is a required step. Faculty members are not obliged to take on this task. Students may have to approach more than one faculty member before obtaining an advisor. Faculty members will not agree to work with a student before consulting with them about their proposed topic.
- d. Students are then responsible for requesting that the advisor directly email the “[Advising Agreement Form](#)” to Katherine Delgado, delgadok@newschool.edu and to Professor Paul Kottman, kottmanp@newschool.edu before October 1 for theses to be completed during the Spring semester and before March 1 for theses to be completed during the Fall semester. [All Advising Agreement forms require the approval of Professor Kottman at this stage.]

II. Complete a 6-8 paged (double-spaced) proposal. Proposals must be emailed to the students' faculty advisor, to Katherine Delgado, delgadok@newschool.edu and to Professor Kottman [kottmanp@newschool.edu] before October 18 for Spring theses and before March 15 for Fall theses. NOTE: your proposal is therefore due during 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.

All proposals must include the following sections.

- a. Working title of proposed research paper/creative project.
- b. Name of faculty advisor.
- c. Title(s) and author(s) of the text(s) to be examined in the senior thesis.
- d. An argumentative presentation of the primary thesis or hypothesis.
- e. A narrative account of work already accomplished, such as initial research completed.
- f. An annotated Bibliography, in either Chicago or 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 thesis.

III. Complete work on your thesis. Students should read widely in their chosen area, make careful notes, come up with a chapter/argument structure, and work on the substance of the project. Advisors should offer comments on drafts, and students are expected to make use of these comments while making your final revisions.

Students are obligated to meet regularly with your advisor. Failure to do this can result in a failing grade for the senior thesis.

The final 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 -- by December 2 for Fall 2013 semester theses, and by May 5 for Spring 2014 semester theses.

A second copy in paper and electronic form must be submitted at the same time to the Capstone Coordinator for Literature, Prof. Paul Kottman (kottmanp@newschool.edu – 80 Fifth Ave, Room 511, 212-229-5100 x 2272). His mailbox is on the 5th floor of 80 Fifth Ave. The Senior Thesis will be evaluated and graded by your advisor and by a second faculty member, to be appointed by the Capstone Coordinator.

Option Two Senior Seminar (4 credits)

Note: The Senior Seminar is not offered in the Fall semester, and can be taken only in the Spring semester (this is true even if you expect to graduate the following Fall). The senior seminar is a 4000-level class. Please discuss your possible participation in the seminar with the instructor prior to registering. NOTE: No more than 12 students may enroll in the senior seminar. During the course, students research and write a paper, approximately 30 pages in length. The class is divided into three phases: 1) collective work in the classroom 2) individual work on the final project with advice from the professor in regular face to face meetings 3) sharing of research and

class discussion of the course materials towards the end.

The Spring 2014 senior seminar in Literature will be taught by Professor Paul Kottman. The topic will be Shakespeare.

This advanced course will focus on the study of Shakespearean drama. The opening weeks are reserved for close readings and discussion of several plays. Students will learn to identify and articulate aspects of Shakespeare's work that have received significant attention over the past several centuries: Shakespeare's presentation of women, of ethical predicaments, of human agency, of fraught social ties, to name a few. Students will also familiarize themselves with key texts in critical theory and literary criticism that respond to Shakespeare, with special emphasis on the reception of Shakespeare in the German philosophical tradition. Using this preparation as a necessary springboard, students take another week to identify the play(s) and critical angles with which to work on their final projects. They submit extensive plans and bibliographies for approval, and then proceed to produce early drafts. After they receive the instructor's feedback, they return to their projects and submit the polished final version.