Master Research for Museum Studies

The class will prepare students to identify a research question, navigate relevant primary and secondary sources necessary for successful completion of the master’s thesis or project-in-lieu-of-thesis. By the end of this semester, students will produce a well-written, well-organized introduction and first chapter to their thesis or project-in-lieu-of-thesis that includes a literature review, methodologies, and research questions. In addition, students will work with the professor to identify and secure a committee for their research project, and make a formal defense of their research.

This seminar will also have students work on writing groups to provide peer reviews and support structures for their classmates. This masters research seminar provides students with a collective structure and series of deadlines as they develop individual research projects. Students will be responsible for their own research and writing, as well as thoughtful reading and comments in writing groups.

At the end of the term students will be prepared to continue their research and successfully complete their thesis.
Course Objectives: *Students will ...*

**PLAN**
- Develop a research question
- Determine the scope of their research project
- Create a plan to conduct their research that is appropriate to the scope and timeframe of their research
- Present their research proposal and plan to a faculty committee

**RESEARCH**
- Engage with existing research in the field that is relevant to and impacts their research question
- Determine how their research will make a contribution to the field
- Be familiar with the library resources and how to integrate primary and secondary sources
- Prepare to conduct their own original research

**WRITE**
- Write responses to current literature pertaining to their area of research
- Prepare a review of the literature that pertains to their research project
- Write an Introduction and first chapter for their thesis that outlines the significance of the project, the research methods, and theories

**PLAGIARISM AND THE HONOR CODE**

On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied:

"On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."

This includes plagiarism, which includes but is not limited to:

1. Quoting oral or written materials including but not limited to those found on the internet, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution.
2. Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student.

For more on plagiarism and the honor code see: https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/
How will you be graded?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>Resources/Research</th>
<th>Writing/Proposal</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>50%</td>
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</table>

Grade Scale

93.4-100=A; 90.0-93.3=A-; 86.7-89.9=B+; 83.4-86.6=B; 80.0-83.3=B-; 76.7-79.9=C+; 73.4-76.6=C; 70.0-73.3=C-; 66.7-69.9=D+; 63.4-66.6=D; 60.0-63.3=D-; 0-59.9=E

Grade Rubric

A
- Directly addresses the question, makes a compelling and original argument, and presents a nuanced understanding of the key issues and texts.
- Demonstrates excellent understanding of secondary sources and creatively forges relationships between different texts.
- Synthesizes sources' most important ideas, and makes judicious use of examples, references, and primary source quotations to develop and support the argument.
- Clearly organized, with graceful, lucid prose.

A-
- Directly addresses the question, makes a compelling argument, and makes reference to a wide range of references and material.
- Synthesizes readings, extrapolates key arguments and provides examples, references, and primary source quotations to develop and support the argument.
- Clearly organized and well written.

B+
- Directly addresses and answers the question, making use of a range of references and source material.
- Demonstrates understanding of relevant readings and key issues, and uses both to support the argument.
- Clearly organized and well written.

B
- Sufficiently addresses and answers the question, making use of an adequate range of references and source material.
- Demonstrates understanding of the key issues and ties them clearly to the examples used.

B-
- Shows basic understanding of the literature, focuses on a narrow group of readings in order to address the question.
- Does not develop a strong argument.
- Writing style and organization could use improvement.

C
- Demonstrates poor understanding of key ideas in the literature.
- Is unable to clearly synthesize readings or use examples to substantiate points made.
- Does not clearly answer the question or develop an argument.

D
- The frame and requirements of the assignment have not been met.
Course Pedagogy

This course is designed to guide students through the process of researching and writing their masters thesis. Each student will have their own research interests and focus. The class will therefore be emphasize the process of research and writing. This means that students will be responsible for conducting their own research and writing, maintaining their work along the schedule of the class, reflecting upon their process, and being prepared to discuss this in class.

Students will also be responsible to their own inquiry and learning through exploring topics and questions that interest them and sharing their research and ideas with the class. Student led discussions and participation in writing groups are a critical part of this course.

Students are responsible for raising questions or concerns as they arise.

Dr. Rasmussen is here to support and guide you through this process, but not to do it for you.

‘Learning results from what the student does and thinks and only what the student does and thinks. The teacher can advance learning only by influencing what the student does learn.’


Assignments

Participation  20%

This course includes weekly assignments, discussions, and work in writing groups. For each class you should prepare questions and comments and be prepared to contribute to class discussion, respond to questions posed to the class, and demonstrate engagement with the material through active class participation. Writing group will be an important part of this course. You will benefit from the support and feedback of your classmates. Therefore, your full participation and contributions to your writing group are an important part of your participation grade. Your final presentation of your research proposal is also part of your participation grade.

Research and Resources  30%

Much of the work in this course will require students to find resources, read and analyze them, and integrate them into their research project. This portion of the grade will assess effort and skill in developing a topic and compiling resources for research, as indicated by the proposal, abstract, annotated bibliography, and outline.

Writing  50%

The majority of your grade will be based on the quality of your final writing assignment. Please see the grading rubric above for details of how this will be assessed.

E-Learning aka Canvas

The printed syllabus is subject to change. More detailed information on assignments, weekly readings, and schedules, along with the complete syllabus are posted on the Canvas site for this class. Canvas is the most current resource for the class. Students are responsible for consulting the site for the latest information.

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at https://evaluations.ufl.edu. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/.
How do I get in touch with Dr. Rasmussen?

Dr. Rasmussen is a teacher, a researcher, and the Director of the Museum Studies program. This means that she isn't in her office all day or every day.

First, check the syllabus before asking Dr. Rasmussen. Then, it is most effective to:

**Come to office hours**—If you have questions about the course, your assignments, or grades you MUST come to office hours. These hours are set aside explicitly to meet with students. It is the **best way** to speak with Dr. Rasmussen anything, but it is the only way to address questions about the course.

**Email or Canvas**—You can reach out to Dr. Rasmussen via email or through Canvas email. Dr. Rasmussen checks email a few times each day Monday through Friday, 9am-5pm. She will do her best to respond in a timely manner. If you email at night or over the weekend you should not anticipate a response until regular business hours.

**Make an Appointment**—If you are unable to meet with Dr. Rasmussen during office hours you can make an appointment. The best times to meet with Dr. Rasmussen are during the afternoon Tuesday–Thursday.

**Talk to her after class**—this is effective, but best for quick questions or to make appointments to speak in more depth at a later time.

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**Letters of Recommendation**

If you would like a letter of recommendation you should work throughout the semester to distinguish yourself so that there is evidence of your excellence. In addition, help me, help you.

- Ask for the letter a minimum of **ONE MONTH** in advance of the deadline
- Include information on the job, internship, academic opportunity, etc that you are applying for
- Include your CV and achievement you would like highlighted in the letter
- Clearly state the deadline and how the letter should be submitted
- Gentle reminders leading up to the deadline are greatly appreciated
Resources for Students

**Students Requiring Accommodations**

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

**Writing Studio**

The writing studio is committed to helping University of Florida students meet their academic and professional goals by becoming better writers. Visit the writing studio online at http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/ or in 302 Tigert Hall for one-on-one consultations and workshops.

**Basic Needs Security**

Any student who faces challenges securing their food or housing and believes this may affect their performance in this course is urged to contact the Dean of Students for support. Furthermore, please notify me if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable me to provide any resources that I may possess.

**Counseling and Wellness Center**

Take care of yourself! The stresses of graduate school can take a toll on our mental and physical health. The Counseling and Wellness Center (CWC) is dedicated to caring for students’ wellbeing. If you are feeling unwell in anyway, including anxious or panicked, you can reach out to the CWC: http://www.counseling.ufl.edu, 392-1575;

For concerns about physical safety or to report crimes or incidents you can contact the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 911 for emergencies.
# Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week One</th>
<th>January 9</th>
<th>SPRING BREAK—No Class</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Masters Research</td>
<td>Week Nine</td>
<td>March 13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week Two</td>
<td>January 16</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Introduction to Library Resources</td>
<td>Week Ten</td>
<td>March 20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week Three</td>
<td>January 23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week Four</td>
<td>January 30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week Five</td>
<td>February 6</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Topics due</td>
<td>Week Eleven</td>
<td>March 27</td>
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<tr>
<td>No Class—Meet individually with Dr. Rasmussen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week Six</td>
<td>February 13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preliminary Annotated Bibliography Due</td>
<td>Week Thirteen</td>
<td>April 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week Seven</td>
<td>February 20</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Working with Your Committee</td>
<td>Week Fourteen</td>
<td>April 17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meet individually with Dr. Rasmussen</td>
<td></td>
<td>Research Proposal Defense Presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week Eight</td>
<td>February 27</td>
<td>Committee Paperwork Due</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**PLEASE NOTE:**

When there are class meetings scheduled during a particular week or class meets for a shorter period of time than allocated it is to enable you to use this time to research, write, and work in your writing groups, and/or meet with Dr. Rasmussen. You should be spending a equivalent amount of time working on your research. It is expected that you will work 9-10 hours a week for this class.