

UiB Institutt for Fremmedspråk
ENG340 • Spring 2018
Thesis Writing Preparation for English Literature and Culture
Tuesdays, 14:15-16:00, SH Seminarrom F

Instructor: Laura Saetveit Miles

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Course content: This is a course designed to prepare you for writing your English literature MA thesis. The course consists of writing instruction as well as critical thinking and research methods. By the end of this course you will have a thesis topic, an advisor, and a thesis proposal – and be ready to embark upon writing your English literature MA thesis.

Learning outcomes: To gain an understanding of the basic prerequisites, ideals, and conditions of MA-level literary research and thus be prepared to write a thesis.

Required reading books: Although not every chapter of these books might be assigned for this class, you will refer to other chapters throughout your thesis writing, so please buy them – available at Akademika, or may be purchased as e-books if possible.

1. Irene L. Clark, *Writing the Successful Thesis and Dissertation* (Prentice Hall, 2007)
2. Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein, *They Say, I Say: The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing*, 3rd edition (Norton, 2014) – or most recent 2017 edition
3. Umberto Eco, *How to Write a Thesis*, tras. Farina and Farina (MIT Press, 2015/ original Italian, 1977)
4. Robert Dale Parker, *How to Interpret Literature: Critical Theory for Literary and Cultural Studies*, 3rd edition (Oxford, 2014)

N.B.: The Parker guide will be used in all 3 MA courses in Spring 2018 (and in all MA courses in the future), so please purchase it.

Obligatory Assignments: Your “exam” for this course consists of a *mappe*, or portfolio of four assignments you will complete throughout the duration of the course. Detailed assignment sheets will follow; due dates are listed on the schedule on the next page. Each assignment is pass/fail and all assignments must pass for you to pass the course. More detailed directions for each assignment will be distributed during the semester.

Total portfolio consists of:

[1] Report on 2 theses (2-3 pages)

[2] Project idea form with two project idea paragraphs (1 page total)

[3] Annotated bibliography (5 pages)

[4] Project proposal (2-3 pages)

Obligatory Attendance: Attendance is required at 6 of the 8 seminars, including required attendance at the final project proposal workshop (seminar 8). Since this course is a seminar, your class participation in discussion is necessary. It is important that you come to class prepared to discuss the day’s assigned topics.

Grading: This course is pass/fail. Obligatory assignments and attendance must be fulfilled to pass the course.

Schedule

Seminar 1	Week 8 20 Feb	Getting started <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Reading</u>: Clark, ch. 1. & 2; Eco, ch. 1 • <u>Prep</u>: Come prepared with a list of 5 interests that could relate to a thesis topic: texts, genres, periods, authors, theories, anything related to English literature and culture – as specific as possible
Seminar 2	Week 10 6 March	Evaluating Sample Theses DUE [1] Report on 2 theses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Prep</u>: Class presentation of report
Seminar 3	Week 11 13 March	Theory and Method <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Reading</u>: Assigned theoretical/critical approach, one Parker chapter + one relevant essay • <u>Prep</u>: Class presentation of assigned theoretical/critical approach
Seminar 4	Week 12 20 March	Theory & Method presentations continued Developing a Project Idea Paragraph Part I <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Reading</u>: Clark, ch. 3 & 5 • <u>Email the day before</u>: First draft of first project idea paragraph
Seminar 5	Week 15 10 April	Developing a Project Idea Paragraph Part II <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Reading</u>: Eco, ch. 3 & 4 & 5 (selections TBA) • <u>Email the day before</u>: Second draft of first project idea paragraph • <u>Email the day before</u>: First draft of second project idea paragraph
	Week 16 15 April	DUE [2] Project Idea Form with two project idea paragraphs ADVISOR ASSIGNMENTS MADE, WEEK 16-17 <i>Meet with your advisor to discuss your idea and formulate a plan for the thesis proposal, ideally involving one draft and revision</i>
Seminar 6	Week 18 NB: Wed. 2 May Gr. rom J/ Library	Working with Sources Part I: How to research and write a thesis proposal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Reading</u>: Clark, ch. 4 & 6; sample thesis proposals • <u>Prep</u>: Bring in one book on your topic from the library on your topic, one article cited in that book's footnotes, and a second article cited in the first article's footnotes (both printed)
Seminar 7	Week 19 8 May	Working with sources Part II: Being a part of the conversation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Reading</u>: <i>They Say, I Say</i>, ch. 2 & 3; Eco, ch. 5 & 6 (selections TBA) • <u>Prep</u>: Bring in 2-3 draft annotated bibliography entries
	Week 20 16 May	DUE [3] Annotated bibliography
	Week 21 22 May	DUE [4] Thesis proposal + WHOLE PORTFOLIO
Seminar 8	Week 22 29 May	Final Thesis Proposal Workshop <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Prep</u>: Read all the thesis proposals and come prepared to discuss