This semester, there will be a few changes regarding students enrolled in thesis hours with me:

1. The university is changing from Course Den to Desire 2 Learn or D2L, and I am trying to learn how to use it. Please be patient as we all figure it out. I hope to set up the course page no later than next Friday, January 18. I will keep you posted to let you know how it progresses and when it is available for students to submit their weekly reports and engage in discussion.

2. This semester, all students MUST complete all the requirements below to pass the thesis hours. This means that you must submit all weekly reports, engage in class discussion on-line, submit a final report, and attend the Thesis Writer’s Colloquium (unless you can provide an adequate reason for not attending, in advance). Please be forewarned that if you do not complete all these requirements, you will not pass the thesis hours and get an “S” for the class.

Course Requirements

1. **Establish a goal or goals for the semester.** Please consider this now, and send me your ideas no later than the first **Friday, January 11**. For some of you, the goal is to graduate this semester. For some of you first-semester thesis folks, your goal should at least include the production of a thesis prospectus, the creation of your committee, and a meeting with your committee as well as producing a bibliography for your thesis or thesis/project. The goals will vary depending on where you are in the process.

2. **Create a schedule to achieve those goals.** Once we approve your goals, I will ask for a semester schedule to achieve those goals by next **Friday, January 18**. Be realistic with your schedule. For example, remember that you need to allow at least two but preferably three weeks for your committee to read a draft of an essay. You should allow time both for you to do your work but also for me and/or your committee to review your work, at your request.

3. **Schedule a meeting with me in person or by phone to discuss your goals and schedule during the week of January 14-18 or 22-23.**

4. **Submit a weekly report on your thesis work to Desire 2 Learn every Friday, beginning January 18.** I will create a place for you to submit this in journal format. In each week's report, please describe what you did that week, what you plan to do the upcoming week, and what questions you might have. These updates are **required.**

5. **Check D2L at least once each week for any updates or messages that I might have sent.** Sometimes, in reading through the weekly reports, I see issues or topics that I could
address to all of you, and I will do it through D2L.

6. **Participate in on-line discussions with other thesis students on D2L.** Each student is expected to participate in discussions weekly. Discussions should focus on what you are doing with your thesis, what questions or issues or frustrations you might be feeling, and what help you might need from others. Sometimes, I might raise a question and ask you all to respond. I also request that you ask questions that will help you. Thesis work is a lonely process, but knowing others are going through it and feeling the same things can be extremely helpful. You'll find that your fellow thesis students may be very helpful in the process as well! Students are expected to post at least two comments each week, but more are preferred!

7. **Meet or talk to me by phone at least every other week.** Even if it is only a short conversation, it allows a chance for us to touch base about what you are doing. Please take the initiative to schedule these meetings.

8. **Attend the Thesis Writers Colloquium series this semester.** All of the seminars are going to be held at 4–5 p.m. in TLC 3205 on alternating Mondays and Tuesdays.

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tr>
<td>January 15</td>
<td>writing abstracts for the thesis and for conferences</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 12</td>
<td>revising and incorporating criticism</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 11</td>
<td>topic to be determined</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 9</td>
<td>writing the academic vs. non-academic resume</td>
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9. **Submit a written, three- to four-page report at the end of the semester about what you accomplished and what you have left to do.** Of course, if you graduate, there is no report needed!

   In terms of **deadlines** for meeting the spring graduation—and I cannot emphasize this enough—that everything takes more time than you think. And this year, the deadlines are earlier than usual, since we have a shorter semester. Graduation for this semester is April 26.

   **Thesis and Thesis Projects**

Please note that requirements for the thesis and the thesis project are outlined in the History Department’s Graduate Student Handbook, available on the History Department website at [http://www.westga.edu/~histgrad/Forms/Graduate%20Student%20Handbook.pdf](http://www.westga.edu/~histgrad/Forms/Graduate%20Student%20Handbook.pdf)

Remember that if you are pursuing the thesis project, you will need to complete a project and a thesis essay. In addition, you will be required to write an overview of your project. More detailed descriptions about the thesis project are attached.

Writing a thesis or producing a thesis project is hard work; it does not happen overnight. And writing a thesis essay is more than an essay that you would write in a class. It is the equivalent of a journal article. Both are demanding and require considerable time.

Both a thesis and a thesis essay require primary research and additional secondary reading; strong writing, analysis, and interpretation; and the review of three "peers," in this case your thesis committee, and usually at least two but often five or six revisions. Students are expected to give their faculty committee two weeks to read any draft.
Producing a thesis project is also challenging, as well it should be. You want to leave the program with confidence that you know how to take on a project in the real world and certain that what you produced is the best it can be. A project is, like a thesis, more than what you would produce in one semester for a class.

All of this is hard, demanding work. But I know you are all up for the challenge. And I have to say that it can be fun too, and you will learn a lot in the process. After all, if you already knew how to do all this, then you wouldn’t be in the program, right?

I am looking forward to working with all of you. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions!

**Thesis Hours Schedule**
McCleary, spring 2013

January 11: Submit semester goals to Ann McCleary by email. I will respond by email no later than Tuesday, January 15.

January 15: **Thesis Writers Colloquium:** writing abstracts for the thesis and for conferences, 4-5 p.m., History Seminar Room.

January 18: Submit schedule for completing those goals to Ann McCleary, hopefully through Desire 2 Learn.

January 14–23: Meet with me about your thesis to discuss the semester’s work. You may meet earlier than this, but no later than January 23.

January 28: Submit weekly update to D2L by 5 p.m.

January 25: Submit weekly update to D2L by 5 p.m.

February 1: Submit weekly update to D2L by 5 p.m.

February 5: **Summer 2013 graduation:** Thesis prospectus due for Summer 2013 graduation. Please be sure that you submit your thesis prospectus to your committee and meet with them, and have the final prospectus and all required forms submitted to Dr. Popov by this date.

February 8: Submit weekly update to D2L by 5 p.m.

February 12: **Thesis Writers Colloquium:** revising and incorporating criticism, 4-5 p.m., History Seminar Room

February 8: Submit weekly update to D2L by 5 p.m.

**Spring graduation students:** Please plan to have a draft of your full thesis to your committee sometime in early February, but no later than February 15.

February 15: Submit weekly update to D2L by 5 p.m.
February 22: Submit weekly update to D2L by 5 p.m.

March 1: Submit weekly update to D2L by 5 p.m.

March 8: Submit weekly update to D2L by 5 p.m.

Spring graduation students: Please note that students hoping to graduate in the spring 2013 semester should have the full FINAL, revised and edited draft to their committee members two weeks in advance of their defense. That would mean sometime in early March but no later than March 13.

March 11: Thesis Writers Colloquium: topic to be determined, 4-5 p.m., History Seminar Room

March 15: Submit weekly update to D2L by 5 p.m.

March 22: No update needed; spring break

March 27: Spring 2013 graduation: For those of you scheduling a thesis defense for the spring semester, you should plan for the defense no later than March 25.

Spring 2013 graduation: If you hope to graduate in the spring, you should provide a copy of your full thesis draft to Annette Pritchett in the Vice President for Academic Affairs office by this date as she will need to review your format. Please note that you must also include all the “front matter,” such as the table of contents, illustrations, abstract, cover sheet, etc for format check.

March 29: Submit weekly update to D2L by 5 p.m.

April 5: Submit weekly update to D2L

April 9: Thesis Writers Colloquium: writing the academic vs. non-academic resume, 4-5 p.m., History Seminar Room

April 10: Spring 2013 graduation: A completed draft of your entire thesis, submitted on the appropriate paper and formatted correctly, should be turned in to the Library by this date. If this date changes, I will let you know. You will also need to submit forms with the thesis, so please allow time to get those signed.

April 12: Submit weekly update to D2L by 5 p.m.

April 19: Final semester report due by 5 p.m.

April 26: Spring 2013 graduation