Thesis Hours, History 6699  
Dr. Ann McCleary, University of West Georgia  
Fall 2013

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Offices: History, TLC 3-211, and Center for Public History, Ingram Library  
Office hours: Tuesday/Th 2-4:30; Wednesdays in the Center for Public History, 11:30-1 at the Atlanta History Center by request; and other hours by appointment

The goal of the thesis class is to provide an opportunity for you to work on your thesis or your thesis project. Participants in this class will be at different phases of the project—some of you may be drafting your thesis prospectus, others may be in the midst of writing or working on your thesis project, and others maybe be finishing up and hoping to graduate.

My goal is to provide a guided experience that will help you through this process. By requiring you to submit weekly updates on your work, I hope to provide a structure that will encourage you to keep working and keep me updated about any concerns, frustrations, challenges, or accomplishments! In addition, the weekly discussions with fellow thesis writers will provide the opportunity to share issues with others and hopefully raise questions or topics of concern to you. Last, all participants will participate in the monthly Thesis Writer’s Colloquium held on Tuesday afternoons 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.

Course Requirements

1. **Establish a goal or goals for the semester.** Please consider this now, and **send me your ideas no later than Friday August 30.** 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, September 6.** 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 September 9 or 16.**
4. **Submit a weekly report on your thesis work to Desire 2 Learn** *every Friday*, **beginning September 6.** 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 send.** 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.** The colloquium are listed in this syllabus. Please note that if you have already submitted a prospectus, you do not need to come to the September colloquium.

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 **fall 2013 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 December 14.

**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 three or more 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, fall 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 30</td>
<td>Submit semester goals to Ann McCleary by email. I will respond by email no later than Tuesday, September 3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 6</td>
<td>Submit schedule for completing those goals to Ann McCleary, hopefully through Desire 2 Learn.</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 13</td>
<td>Submit weekly update to D2L. Schedule a time to talk with Dr. McCleary for this week.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Also, please make a point this week to update your other committee members by email or in person. You should consider a meeting with all of your committee members to be sure that everyone is on the same page and that everyone is aware of your plans for the semester and your schedule.</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 17</td>
<td><strong>Thesis Writers Colloquium:</strong> Writing the Thesis Prospectus, Dr. McCleary and Dr. Popov, 4-5 p.m., History Seminar Room.</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 20</td>
<td>Submit weekly update to D2L by 5 p.m. You should have scheduled a time to meet or talk with me by this point, no later than September 20.</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 27</td>
<td>Submit weekly update to D2L by 5 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 4</td>
<td>Submit weekly update to D2L by 5 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 8</td>
<td><strong>Thesis Writers Colloquium:</strong> Moving on from the Prospectus. What comes next?, 4-5 p.m., History Seminar Room.</td>
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**Fall 2013 graduate students:** You should have submitted a very good draft of your essay to your entire committee by this date.

October 11: Submit weekly update to D2L by 5 p.m.

October 14: **Fall 2013 graduate students:** You should plan to meet with your committee to discuss your thesis draft this week. Then you will have two weeks to incorporate their comments before you turn in the draft you hope to defend around October 29.

October 18: Submit weekly update to D2L by 5 p.m.

October 29: **Fall 2013 graduation students:** Please note that students hoping to graduate in the fall 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 late October but no later than October 29.

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

November 4: **Fall 2013 graduation:** For those of you scheduling a thesis defense for the spring semester, you should plan for the defense no later than November 12. This week of November 4-8 would be ideal.

November 5: **Thesis Writers Colloquium:** Research methods and databases: 4-5 p.m., History Seminar Room

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

November 12: **Fall 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.

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

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

November 26: **Fall 2013 graduation:** Last day to submit theses and dissertations for binding for Fall 2013 graduation. A completed draft of your entire thesis, submitted on the appropriate paper and formatted correctly, should be turned in to Annette Pritchett in the VPAA’s office by this date.

November 29: No update due, Thanksgiving Break

December 6: Submit weekly update to D2L by 5 p.m.
December 13: Final semester report due to Course Den by 5 p.m.

December 14: Fall 2013 graduation