

**Ling B399, Ling H399, & Ling S100/195:
Senior Thesis Seminar
Example Syllabus: Fall 2019**

INSTRUCTORS AND LOCATIONS:

- Bryn Mawr Section: Fridays 1:10 - 3:30 p.m., in OL111 (Old Library), Bryn Mawr Campus
- Haverford Section: Fridays 1:30 - 4 p.m., Stokes 102, Haverford Campus
- Swarthmore Section: Fridays 2:15-5:00 p.m., Pearson 006, Swarthmore Campus

Your Faculty Advisor will be assigned based on thesis topic and other considerations and may not be the instructor of record of the thesis section you are initially enrolled in.

STRUCTURE OF THE COURSE

- You will have a Faculty Advisor who will give feedback on all assignments.
- You will have a Second Faculty Reader who will give you feedback on some assignments.
- You will have (and be for someone else) a Student Reader A who will give you feedback on some assignments.
- You will have (and be for someone else) a Student Reader B who will give you feedback on some assignments.
- You will have a final 45-minute defense (or discussion) of your thesis with your Faculty Advisor and Second Faculty Reader.

LEARNING GOALS:

By the end of this course, students will:

- Gain familiarity and meaningfully engage with the essential foundational and advanced literature relating to their topic;
- Select and correctly implement appropriate methods, formal theories, and technologies;

- Understand the best practices for responsible and ethical collection, storage, and use of data in ways that respect the relevant speakers/signers and their communities and cultures;
- Demonstrate an understanding of proper scientific methodology for collecting data, and organize that data in meaningful ways that clearly demonstrate important patterns;
- Construct useful, appropriate hypotheses, rigorously and clearly formulated, to explain the observed patterns in the data, and convincingly argue for why your hypotheses are superior to the logical alternatives;
- Produce noteworthy or innovative insights into their topic;
- Generate clear, logically structured prose in line with general standards of academic writing, using appropriate formatting and citation practices.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

Note: all files submitted by email in pdf or doc(x) format, and must be named with the student's last name and the title of the assignment, e.g. Lopez_Prospectus_and_Bibliography or Wang_First_Draft.

- Week 1, in class: prospectus & task breakdown (Assignment #1)
- Sept 10: Email your research librarian about your topic.
- Week 2: data report (Assignment #2)
- Week 3: revised prospectus with annotated bibliography (Assignment #3) You will get feedback from your Student Reader A.
- Week 5: Presentation I - 10 min oral presentation with written presentation material (handout or slides). You will get immediate feedback from your advisor and small group members.
- Oct 6: Draft Zero, 5-6 pages towards your First Draft. You will get feedback from your Student Reader B.
- Week 8: First Draft, 15 pages, focusing on analysis. You will get feedback from your Student Reader A.
- Week 11: Presentation II - 10 min oral presentation with written presentation material (handout or slides). You will get immediate feedback from your peers.

- Nov 20: Second Draft, full draft. You will get feedback from your Student Reader B.
- Dec 10: Defense Draft.
- Reading & Finals period: Defense. You will defend the third (defense) draft at a time arranged with your Faculty Advisor and Second Faculty Reader.
- Peer feedback for all writing assignments.

Additionally, students are required to **meet with a writing associate/peer tutor at the Writing Center** on the campus of their choice (at least) twice during the semester, once in October and once in November. You may make an appointment through the websites linked below or stop by drop-in hours where applicable. Be sure to get your Writing Center form (on the Moodle) signed while you're there, and turn it in to your Faculty Advisor. All three Writing Centers offer Mentor or Partner programs, where you can meet with the same Writing Associate/tutor each week to further develop your writing. More info and instructions for how to sign up/apply are available on the Writing Center websites.

- Bryn Mawr: www.brynmawr.edu/writingcenter
- Haverford: www.haverford.edu/writing-center
- Swarthmore: www.swarthmore.edu/writing/writing-center

GRADING

Your grade is for the seminar as a whole and will be based on:

- Attendance (class and individual meetings) and participation
- Timeliness and quality of Student Reader A & B comments
- Short writing assignments (Weeks 1 - 3)
- Presentations I and II and accompanying written presentation materials
- Drafts Zero, 1, 2, and 3
- Final thesis and defense

Prior to Week 1, you will be notified of your Faculty Advisor via email. This will determine which campus you go to for your group meetings. Your Faculty Advisor will be assigned based

on thesis topic and other considerations and may not be the instructor of record of the thesis section you are enrolled in.

SCHEDULE:

WEEK 1, 6 SEPT.

Meet at Bryn Mawr, Haverford, or Swarthmore, depending on who your Faculty Advisor is. We will discuss the nature of a linguistics thesis and our expectations for this semester. We will show you what an annotated bibliography is and why it can be useful. We will discuss strategies for reading and dealing with the literature in class. We will explain upcoming assignments on data and bibliography.

Due:

- **Reading:** Read Prof. Tim Burke's blog post (linked below) and come prepared to discuss it. <https://blogs.swarthmore.edu/burke/permanent-features-advice-on-academia/how-to-read-in-college/>.

Assigned:

- **Assignment #1 (in class): Prospectus & task breakdown.** Write a one-page prospectus on your thesis topic. Explain the topic clearly, and provide framing to explain the importance of the topic. Why is this topic worth investigating? If you've already started your research, summarize what you've done. Then think about all the steps required to complete your thesis. What research tasks do you need to do? What reading, writing, data gathering, analysis, etc.? Break it down into bite-sized pieces, and lay them out in (roughly) chronological order. Try to put approximate due dates on each task. We'll then break into small groups and you'll discuss with your peers to compare notes and help each other think of anything you've missed.
- **Assignment #2. Data Report (due Week 2).** Write a one-page report on the data you plan to use for your thesis. Be as specific as possible. Send to your Faculty Advisor before **1 p.m. on Friday, 9/13**. Address the following questions:
 - What data do you have or have you observed?

- What state is this data in?
 - What additional data would be useful?
 - What steps do you need to take to have all the data in the form that you need for your thesis? Include a detailed schedule, building off of the task breakdown you created above.
- **Assignment #3. Revised Prospectus & Annotated Bibliography (due Week 3).** Revise your thesis prospectus based on feedback from your Faculty Advisor and the research you have done over the past two weeks. Explain your topic and provide framing and contextualization in order to explain its importance. Where does this topic engage the literature in the subfield? If possible, provide some preliminary data and discussion. If you've already turned in a project proposal on this topic for Ling 90, you should instead revise/expand on that proposal based on discussions with your faculty reader, any additional work you did over the summer and/or the new sources you're adding to your bibliography (see below). Total length 3-4 pages.
 - In addition, include an **Annotated Bibliography** for 5-6 sources (these can be the sources in your works cited list). Approximately 4 pages. If you've already turned in a bibliography on this topic for Ling 90, please expand on that, adding an additional 5-6 relevant sources. Email this to your (i) Faculty Advisor, (ii) your Second Faculty Reader, and (iii) Student Reader A by **1 p.m. on Friday 9/20**.
 - **Email your librarian:** In anticipation of the library meeting, email your librarian a brief description of your topic and any types of resources you would especially like help finding by **10 p.m. on Tuesday 9/10**. Send it to the librarian at the library where you plan to do most of your research. This may or may not be the same campus as your regular meetings, but should be the same campus where you plan to attend the library orientation.

WEEK 2, 13 SEPT.

Students will meet at the library of the campus where they prefer to do research.

Due:

- Assignment #2 (data report, via email).

WEEK 3, 20 SEPT.

Full class meeting in the usual classroom. We will discuss the format and preparation of handouts and other linguistic presentation materials, such as slides. We will discuss expectations of Draft Zero and style and format of academic linguistics writing. Visit from the Writing Center.

Due:

- Assignment #3 (annotated bibliography & revised prospectus).

Assigned:

- **Student Thesis Reader A:** Provide peer review on Revised Prospectus & Annotated Bibliography. See handout on effective peer review. Bring the review to return to the author in class on Week 4.
- **Draft Zero.** Write 5-6 pages toward your thesis. Study the resource on style and format in writing linguistics papers and implement them. Include peer review Cover Sheet. Send this to your (i) Faculty Advisor and (ii) Student Reader B by **11 p.m. on Sunday, Oct 6.**
- **Reading for Week 4:** Read a) one previous thesis that everyone will read & we will critique as a class (TBA) and b) choose one of the previous years' theses available on the Moodle (we'll provide 3-4 to choose from). Come to class prepared to dissect and critique them.

WEEK 4, 27 SEPT.

Full class meeting in the usual classroom. Structure of a thesis. For the thesis that everyone read, we'll work together as a class to critique it, so you can see how your advisor looks at theses. Students will individually critique the second thesis they read, and compare notes with a partner. Students will then reverse-engineer a 150-word abstract for the thesis they read, and create an

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outline from its structure. Think about what works about this structure and what doesn't, and how it might apply to your project.

Due:

- Peer review of assignment #3.

Assigned:

- **Presentation I** (due Week 5). Prepare a 10 min oral presentation with written presentation material (e.g. handout or slides). These will be presented in class and you will get immediate feedback from your small group members.

WEEK 5, 4 OCT.

Full class meeting in the usual classroom. Presentation I will take place in class.

Due:

- Draft Zero due at 11pm Sun 10/6.

Assigned:

- **Student Thesis Reader B:** Provide peer review on Draft Zero. Email your peer review to the author by **1 p.m. on Friday, October 11**, CCing your faculty advisor.

WEEK 6, 11 OCT.

Group meeting in the usual places. Meet with your Student Thesis Reader A to discuss peer reviews; the rest of the class period will be a write-in. Make an appointment to discuss your Draft Zero with your Faculty Advisor; this may happen during the class period or another time this week. Be working on your Draft 1.

Due:

- Peer review due.

Assigned:

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- **Draft 1.** Write 15 pages toward your thesis. Focus on the meat of your analysis. Incorporate Faculty Advisor feedback and peer review on Draft Zero. If you've already written on this topic for Ling 90, add 10 pages to your revised project proposal, and edit it into thesis form. Submit to your (i) Faculty Advisor, (ii) Student Reader A, and (iii) Second Faculty Reader via email by **1 p.m. on Friday, Oct 25.**

WEEK 7, 18 OCT.

FALL BREAK. Rest and work as needed

WEEK 8, 25 OCT.

No group meeting this week. Make appointments to meet one on one with your Faculty Advisor if necessary.

Due:

- Draft 1 due.

Assigned:

- **Student Thesis Reader A:** Provide peer review on Draft 1. Email your peer review to the author by **1 p.m. on Wednesday, Oct 30**, CCing your faculty advisor. You should read your peer feedback and be ready to discuss it in class next Friday.

WEEK 9, 1 NOV.

Group meeting in the usual places. Meet with your Student Thesis Reader A to discuss peer reviews; the rest of the class period will be a write-in. Make an appointment to discuss your Draft 1 with your Faculty Advisor; this may happen during the class period or another time this week. Reach out to your Second Faculty Reader regarding feedback on Draft 1 (not all Second Faculty Readers will want to meet at this point). Prepare Presentation II and continue work on the thesis.

Assigned:

- **Presentation II** (due Week 11). Prepare a 10 min oral presentation with written presentation material (e.g. handout or slides). These will be presented in class during Week 10 and you will get immediate feedback from your peers.
- **Draft 2.** Draft 2 should be a near-complete draft of your thesis. Be sure to consider how your work stands in conversation with others' contributions to the field. Submit the draft with a peer review Cover Sheet to your (i) Faculty Advisor, (ii) Second Faculty Reader, and (iii) Student Reader B by **1 p.m. on Wednesday, Nov 20.**

WEEK 10, 8 NOV.

No group meeting this week. Work on your second draft. Feel free to make an appointment with your Faculty Advisor.

WEEK 11, 15 NOV.

Meet at the campus of your choice.

Due:

- Presentation II will take place in class.

WEEK 12, 22 NOV.

Group meeting in the usual places. You'll have a chance to read your Student Reader B's latest draft in class, then meet to discuss peer reviews; the rest of the class period will be a write-in. Make an appointment to discuss your Draft 2 with your Faculty Advisor; this may happen during the class period or another time before Thanksgiving. You are strongly encouraged to meet with your second faculty reader this week as well.

Due:

- Draft 2 due Weds 11/20.

Assigned:

- **Student Thesis Reader B:** You may wish to get a head start reading over your Thesis Reader B's second draft before class on Friday. Please bring a copy to class in whatever format you prefer (paper or pdf) to read and comment on in class.
- **Draft 3.** This Final Defense Draft of your thesis should be emailed to your (i) Faculty Advisor and (ii) Second Faculty Reader by **6 p.m. on Tuesday, December 10.**

WEEK 13, 29 NOV.

THANKSGIVING BREAK. No group meeting this week.

WEEK 14, 6 DEC.

No group meeting this week. Work on your Defense Draft. (Additional optional write-ins likely to be held this week, or feel free to organize your own.)

WEEK 15, 10 DEC.

Your Defense Draft is due at 6pm. Then join us for a celebration at the campus of your choice!

DEFENSES:

Defenses will commence **after Dec 11**, scheduled at the convenience of all concerned.

(Important note: If you are a Swarthmore student doing honors, you **must** defend your thesis in December in order to continue in the honors program.) Please consult with your readers about a defense date before booking your trip home for break to ensure time to meet.

Your Faculty Readers may request some final revisions after your defense. Complete these and submit a final copy of your thesis via email to your Faculty Advisor and the department administrator by the date determined at your defense.

GOING FORWARD:

Want to share your work with a broader audience? Talk to your advisor about submitting it to a Sigma Xi poster session or other (undergrad) conference in the spring.