

2008-2009 SENIOR THESIS SCHEDULE
International Studies Program

This is the summary schedule for the senior thesis. The schedule and guidelines communicate the Program's expectations at each stage of the thesis. Students are responsible for observing thesis deadlines. Please note: schedule includes deadlines for faculty advisers as well as deadlines for students. Detailed comments for each deadline and required forms are on the following pages.

FALL SEMESTER

Tuesday, September 2	Seniors' Retreat, New England Lounge 101 at 5:00pm
Friday, September 12	Students complete and submit Senior Thesis Topic Proposal Form (page 7), due in Program Office by 3pm.
Monday, September 22	Students submit thesis proposal, draft outline and bibliography, by 3pm in Program office.
Monday, Sept 29- Oct 3	Program faculty reviews thesis proposals.
Wednesday, October 8	Thesis proposal returned with comments from the Program faculty.
Tuesday, October 14	Signed agreement from two advisers due in Program office, 3pm, form on page 8.
Monday, October 15-24	Students schedule meeting with both advisers.
Monday, Oct 27- Friday, Oct 30	Thesis advisers send progress report to Program Director, email is fine at pibatur@vassar.edu
Thursday, November 20	Students submit detailed outline, chapter summaries, and revised bibliography to each adviser and the Program office in hard copy by 3pm.
Thursday, December 11	Work-in-progress presentations, NE 107, 8:30am-3pm. We encourage students and advisers to attend all sessions, but do request that advisers attend their student's Presentations.

SPRING SEMESTER

January 23- 30	Students meet with thesis advisers to report on progress over the inter-semester break. Advisers send progress report to Director; email is fine at pibatur@vassar.edu . If joint meetings are impossible, students can meet with their advisers separately BUT both must be consulted.
Friday, February 20	Students submit copy of thesis draft to each adviser.

Monday, March 2	Faculty return thesis drafts with comment to Program office.
Wednesday, March 4	Draft, with comments, available in Program office for student pick-up.
Monday, March 4-13	Students schedule meetings with advisers to go over thesis draft comments. Problems reported to Program Director by advisers.
Friday, April 24	Students submit two copies of completed thesis in springboard binders to Program Office, by 4pm.
Friday, May 15	Faculty return theses with comments and grade to Program office.
Monday, May 18	Theses, with comments and grades, available for student pick-up in Program office, 4pm.

2008-2009 THESIS SCHEDULE IN DETAIL

A SEMESTER

IMMEDIATELY ON RETURN - CONSULTATION WITH FACULTY MENTORS & ADVISERS

Starting immediately upon their return to campus in late August, seniors should seek out faculty members whose expertise, feedback, or consultation may be helpful in the choosing and focusing on a thesis topic. You are encouraged to consult broadly for advice and different perspectives. By September 16, you need to have settled on two faculty members who will act as your thesis advisers; the faculty members should represent two different disciplines and at least one of them should be a participating faculty member of the Program.

SEPTEMBER 2, 6:00p.m. - SENIORS' RETREAT, New England Lounge 101

SEPTEMBER 12, 3 P.M. - THESIS TITLE AND CHOICE OF ADVISER SUBMITTED TO PROGRAM OFFICE.

Seniors must return completed form (Page 7) indicating tentative topic and probable advisers to the International Studies Program office by 3:00 p.m.

SEPTEMBER 15 - SEPTEMBER 19 ---- DRAFTING A THESIS PROPOSAL

During this time you should work on narrowing your topic, exploring resources available to you, building a bibliography, and drawing up a preliminary draft of your thesis proposal. It is also a critical time to be meeting with the faculty members who may become your advisers. Indeed, now is the time to meet with potential advisers to discuss your topic, your methodology, and your sources.

SEPTEMBER 22**THESIS PROPOSAL, DRAFT OUTLINE AND BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE, PROGRAM OFFICE, 3pm**

By this date you must hand in to the appropriate program office the following:

- a) a thesis proposal cover sheet
- b) a thesis proposal
- c) draft outlines of all chapters
- d) a preliminary bibliography

The thesis proposal should be a 2-3 pg. carefully written declaration that states your thesis, summarizes the topic or issue, and poses questions related to your investigation. It should indicate how you intend to go about demonstrating your thesis, answering the questions, analyzing the problem, or interpreting the text or situation.

SEPTEMBER 29-OCT 3**PROGRAM FACULTY REVIEW THESIS PROPOSAL**

During this week, the Program faculty will collectively review your proposal. The result of that review may entail one of the following responses: a) enthusiastic acceptance of the proposal; b) acceptance of proposal with some reservations; c) tentative acceptance of proposal pending a rewrite and resubmit of the proposal; d) rejection of the proposal and request for a new proposal. In every case, the Program faculty will respond in writing with advice and suggestions about how you might better focus, improve, broaden, or alter your investigation. Among the factors taken into consideration when reviewing the proposals (which you should go over with your possible thesis advisers) are these questions:

1. Does the student have the academic background (supporting course work in both method and subject matter) to undertake this particular topic? Is the student adequately prepared in the two disciplines in which she/he plans to write the thesis? That is, is this topic a culmination of the student's academic interests and studies at Vassar?

2. Is the topic a feasible one for a senior thesis? Is it too broad? Too ambitious? Does the student have access to the appropriate resources to investigate this particular topic?

OCTOBER 8**PROPOSALS RETURNED TO STUDENTS WITH COMMENTS FROM PROGRAM FACULTY**

The Program Director will provide written comments about your proposal on behalf of the Program Faculty.

OCTOBER 14**SIGNED AGREEMENT TO ADVISE THESIS FROM TWO THESIS ADVISERS DUE IN PROGRAM OFFICE, 3pm. (Form on page 8)**

Even though the signatures of the thesis advisers are due on October 31, you should be talking with the relevant faculty from the first week of the semester. Faculty are limited in how many theses they can effectively advise at any one time. At the beginning of the semester, faculty are sought by several seniors to advise their theses. If you are late to ask, the faculty member may well not be able to advise you, even

though he or she may want to. So start your discussions with and sounding out of advisers as soon as possible.

OCTOBER 15-24

ADVISEE SCHEDULES MEETING WITH TWO ADVISERS

Ideally all three of you will have already met. If not, be sure that you do so now. It is important that the three of you share the same set of expectations about your thesis and what you need to be doing in the weeks and months to come. It is very important that you and your advisers do this, even if it requires some negotiation, because it will clarify your tasks, challenge the advisers to be clear about what it is they expect, and set out how much you need to do starting now. If you are conscientious in doing this, it will avoid potential problems later on in the project. You should view the detailed outline, and chapter summaries as a written statement of these expectations.

OCTOBER 27 – OCTOBER 30 - ADVISERS PROGRESS REPORTS

At this point, thesis advisers email a progress report to the Program Director. It is important that any early difficulties should be communicated to the Director, but also I need to know if things are going smoothly. Please send email to pibatur@vassar.edu

NOVEMBER 20 - DETAILED OUTLINE, CHAPTER SUMMARIES AND REVISED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE IN PROGRAM OFFICE BY 3PM

By this time you should have narrowed your focus while considering the broader context and background that will be necessary to set the scene for your analysis, explication, or interpretation. An outline will push you to consider the flow as well as limits of your thesis. Imagine your outline as a Table of Contents with tentative chapter titles. Under each chapter title, note the areas to be covered, the questions to be presented. In other words, give some organization to all your possible building blocks, though at this stage you may not have begun all of your building. Don't think that this outline binds you to a particular style or outcome; consider it as one possible way to organize your thoughts and materials at this particular stage of the thesis process.

Submit a copy to each of your advisers and one to the office. This copy is to be signed by BOTH advisers. The signatures reflect a consensus between the advisers and the student about the thesis project.

DECEMBER 11 – WORK-IN-PROGRESS PRESENTATIONS – NEW ENGLAND 107

You will make a short presentation (15 minutes) of your topic, and research methodology, to both advisers and other members of the program steering committee as well as your peers. This is an all day event, divided into four segments. The schedule for the presentations will be announced in early December. You are encouraged to attend the other thesis presentations, in addition to your own.

B SEMESTER

JANUARY 21 – JANUARY 28 SCHEDULE MEETING WITH ADVISERS

At this meeting you should review the thesis work you have done with both advisers and your collective expectations about the thesis. Advisers send email progress report to Program Director, please email to "pibatur@vassar.edu"

FEBRUARY 20-- A COPY OF DRAFT SUBMITTED TO EACH ADVISER, FACULTY CONFIRM BY EMAIL TO PROGRAM DIRECTOR (email at "Pibatur@vassar.edu")

Students submit a copy of the complete thesis draft to each adviser. This draft should be the penultimate version of your thesis: at this stage it should not contain incomplete sentences, outlines, improper citation, or spelling/grammatical errors. In this first draft, some of your arguments may not be as developed or as sophisticated as they will be in the final version; there may be gaps in information and some unfinished thoughts; and it may need some reorganization. But, at this stage, the thesis should have a clear flow to it and it should be readable. There should be a title, a table of contents, and a bibliography; footnotes should also be in place, adhering to a standard citation convention (MLA, University of Chicago, etc).

MARCH 2 -- FACULTY RETURN THESIS DRAFTS WITH COMMENTS TO PROGRAM OFFICE

MARCH 4 -- DRAFT RETURNED TO STUDENTS WITH COMMENTS

MARCH 4 - MARCH 13-- JOINT MEETING WITH ADVISERS TO GO OVER DRAFT COMMENTS

You should schedule a joint appointment with your advisers to go over their comments. This is a critical stage in the progress of your thesis; you want to make sure that you, and both your advisers, understand completely what is yet to be done with your thesis, and how best to go about accomplishing that. Advisers notify Program Director of any problems.

APRIL 24 -- TWO COPIES OF FINAL DRAFT IN SPRINGBOARD BINDERS SUBMITTED BY 4 P.M. TO PROGRAM OFFICE

By this date you must submit two copies of your thesis in springboard binders (available in the College Store), to the Program Office (do not submit the thesis directly to your adviser). The thesis should be carefully typed and proofread, paginated, and contain proper and full citations and bibliography.

MAY 15-- FACULTY RETURN FINAL DRAFTS WITH COMMENTS AND GRADES, TO PROGRAM OFFICE

MAY 18 -- THESES RETURNED TO STUDENTS WITH GRADES AND COMMENTS BY 4PM

Theses will be available in the Program Office from noon on, with grades and comments included.

Additional Comments and Advice

On Thesis Advisers

Your thesis advisers should represent two different disciplines. Your major adviser may or may not be one of your thesis advisers. At least one of your advisers should be a participating faculty member in the Program. Your advisers are jointly and equally responsible for guiding your thesis. You are expected to consult regularly with both advisers. This is what makes it a multi-disciplinary thesis. It is your responsibility to initiate and set up joint appointments with your advisers.

On Length

Although there is no actual minimum or maximum length to an International Studies thesis, most successful projects range from fifty to seventy pages. Your thesis should be long enough to get the job done. Consult with your advisers regularly...they will direct you well.

Style

You should meet with your advisers early on to discuss which style manual you will consult for your thesis. Once you have selected a manual, you must be consistent in its use. One of the standard manuals is the Chicago Manual of Style; another is Kate Turabian's A Manual for Writers. For those of you dealing in large part with literary material, we suggest using the MLA Handbook for Writers. All of these style manuals are available in the library.

It is likely that many of you will have theses that contain foreign words and transliterated words, and you should take care to be consistent in your use of transliteration and italicizing.

Grading

The senior thesis is a graded endeavor; failure to meet the specified guidelines will normally affect your thesis grade. An NA (not available) grade will be given at mid-year; the final grade on the thesis will replace the NA or any provisional grade recorded for the first half of the course. Your two advisers will individually read and evaluate the thesis and determine a grade. If the two readers of your thesis do not agree on a grade, a third faculty member will be asked to read and evaluate the thesis.

SENIOR THESIS TOPIC PROPOSAL

Please complete this form and return to the Program Office by **September 12, 2008**.

NAME:

TENTATIVE THESIS TITLE:

- IDENTIFY THE TWO DISCIPLINES IN WHICH YOU HAVE DONE OR WILL BE DOING ADVANCED 300 LEVEL WORK

- WHO DO YOU THINK YOUR ADVISERS MIGHT BE?

- HAVE YOU SPOKEN TO THEM ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF ADVISING YOU?

- DO THE DISCIPLINES IN WHICH YOU ARE DOING ADVANCED WORK AND THE DISCIPLINES OF YOUR ADVISERS CORRESPOND?

- PROVIDE A BRIEF SUMMARY OF YOUR TOPIC, QUESTIONS AND SOURCES.

INTERNATIONAL STUDIES
2008-2009 THESIS ADVISER AGREEMENT FORM

Students -- please ensure that this form is completed and returned to the Program Office by 3 pm, **October 14, 2008**.

I agree to advise the senior thesis of _____ in the International Studies Program.

Adviser's signature _____

Adviser's signature _____