Senior Project Proposal Guidelines

Updated Fall 2022

Proposals and papers should follow the format (MLA, APA, Chicago Manual of Style, etc.) appropriate to the topic. Proposals for projects to be completed during Winter semester are due no later than **December 1**; proposals for Summer or Fall semesters are due no later than **April 15**.

Proposals should be three to five pages (one or two pages of text, a page of sources, and a schedule for completion), and **must include all of the following:**

1) A central focus—problem you hope to solve, question you expect to answer, distinctiveness of creative effort, etc.

2) Rationale for the project—why does this project need to be done? What is unique about it? For example, if you are going to produce a guide, pamphlet or website, what is different about it from ones already out there?

3) A detailed statement of your methodology—e.g., type of lab work, primary-source research, approach to expression or creative endeavor, etc. Include a brief statement of whether your study will require additional university-level approval (see link regarding Research Projects involving Human or Animal Subjects).

4) What you expect to turn in for evaluation—e.g., a 25-page paper, a complete script, a spreadsheet of research data and an accompanying written evaluation, a complete novella of 40-50 pages, blueprints and description of a new design, a 50-minute podcast, etc. Note that projects such as artwork, pamphlets, webpages, etc., also ought to have annotated bibliographies and/or written narratives with reflections and details about the process.

5) A preliminary bibliography of 8-10 sources, preferably consisting largely of scholarly articles or books. Please state where you obtained the source (library, database, etc.). Creative and original research projects ought to have sources on methodology, theory and/or historical context.

6) A schedule for completion—map out your research time, outlines, drafts, etc., so that you have a timeline that demonstrates that you will be able to complete your project in time. You should include a minimum of five times to meet with your advisor (spaced out during the semester—don't let your advisor wonder if you're doing anything!). **It is highly advisable that you plan to turn in a digital copy of your completed project to your advisor by the Friday before the next-to-last week of the semester so that you don't scramble at the end, and so that you can be considered for Meijer Honors College project awards.**

If you are doing the thesis or project in conjunction with another credit-bearing project (like a senior thesis in your major, an internship, or international study), please be sure to explain how the honors thesis will be distinct from that project and add value to it (it may be closely related to or augment another project, but it must also go beyond it). It may be adequate, depending on the circumstances, to get HNR 499 credit for publishing your research or doing a significant presentation at an off-campus conference or organization.