



SENIOR THESIS MANUAL

Sequitur Classical Tutorials
Class of 2016



2014-2015 Senior Thesis Due Dates
This is subject to variation depending on thesis route.

Thursday, August 13th

- Senior Thesis Summer Research Packet due
 - At least ten hours of research per week. “Research” here will include reading, writing, drawing, painting, interviewing, building, or taking notes on your subject.
 - Two monthly check-ins per month (June and July) with your thesis committee faculty advisor.
 - A first annotated bibliography (15 new scholarly sources: 10 books and 5 essays).
 - A one-page outline which shows a clear vision and plan for your paper. A 5-page draft of your paper will be due near the beginning of November.

Thursday, October 1st

- Three-page, bullet-point outline with relevant quotes
- A one-hour meeting with first committee member
- A one-hour meeting with third committee member
- At least twenty research hours (writing, reading, interviews, etc.) logged in local library

Thursday, November 19th

- 5-page draft due
- A one-hour meeting with first committee member
- A one-hour meeting with third committee member
- At least fifteen research hours (writing, reading, interviews, etc.) logged in local library

Thursday, January 14th

- 8-page draft
- A one-hour meeting with first committee member
- A one-hour meeting with third committee member
- At least fifteen research hours (writing, reading, interviews, etc.) logged in local library

Thursday, March 17th

- 12-15 page draft
- A one-hour meeting with first committee member
- A one-hour meeting with third committee member
- At least fifteen research hours (writing, reading, interviews, etc.) logged in local library

Tuesday, April 19st

- Final Draft
- A one-hour meeting with first committee member
- A one-hour meeting with third committee member

Tuesday, May 3th

- Presentation Draft (shortened and concise)
- Two-hour meeting with entire committee

Friday (evening), May 20th

- Senior Thesis Presentation and Defense



Purpose and Overview

The senior thesis is the culmination of one's studies at Sequitur. It offers the student an opportunity to expand critical thinking, research skills, and rhetorical abilities by preparing, presenting, and defending a substantive argument on a chosen topic, a collection of artistic pieces, or managing and implementing a community-based project. Students are expected to prepare a paper as formal evidence of learning and skill acquired at Sequitur. As such, the paper should reflect both the classical and the Christian instruction the student has received.

There are five stages in the completion of the senior thesis:

1. Students will select and do preliminary research on a topic to be proposed to the faculty.
2. Students will work with the thesis director to perform further research on the approved topic.
3. Students will complete the thesis in a series of either written drafts or project benchmarks that are reviewed by the director in preparation for an essay that adequately defends a position on the issues relevant to the chosen topic.
4. Students will carefully prepare a final draft of the essay and their presentation.
5. If allowed, students will present and defend a shortened version of the essay and/or body of work to the rhetoric school, faculty, and invited guests at the Senior Thesis Defense.

Successful completion of all five stages in the senior thesis is a requirement for completing Sequitur in high standing. Each student's thesis title and grade will be included on his/her final transcript.



I. *INVENTIO*

Stage One: Enquiry, Development, and Formal Proposal

Students will choose one of the four thesis routes:

1. **Idea:** Take one of Mortimer Adler's great ideas from the *Syntopicon* and write a 15-20 page argumentative prose on that topic.
2. **Person:** Choose a person of interest and write a 15-20 page argumentative prose on their life, thought, and importance in a particular field.
3. **Art:** Choosing a medium to work in, the student will create a body of work, writing a 5 page thesis to defend their work.
4. **Story:** Choose a literary genre and write an original piece or several original pieces in that genre.
5. **Project:** Choose a year-long project to lead and coordinate which will have tangible impacts on one's city or local church.

Formulate and research a topic which you will formally propose to the faculty. This two-five page proposal introduces your topic, presents your preliminary study, and advances a research question or project agenda. To prepare this document, you must begin the preliminary research for your topic using in-depth critical resources. Your proposal must contain the following elements:

1. Introduction to your topic
 - a. Briefly explain your interest in the topic and its relevance to your culture.
 - While your topic does not have to be overtly Christian, you should explain its relevance in relation to your Christ-centered worldview
 - Your explanation should include a statement of the relevance of your classical education to your topic
2. Provide a formal statement of the research question, the issue you seek to explore
3. Summarize the sources you have found so far
 - a. Preliminary research should include your first and second annotated bibliographies, community leaders, and/or studies supporting your project. Each annotation should explain what each source includes and why it is valuable for your project.
 - b. Research should consist of books, journal articles, reputable websites, and/or interviews.

Here is a sampling of research questions:

1. *Should an understanding of ancient Egyptian history affect our interpretation of the Old Testament?*
2. *Was U.S. intervention in Cuba motivated only by financial concerns?*
3. *Does Milton create a 'fortune fall' in Paradise Lost?*
4. *Can Locke's views of 'right to property' and the subsequent views of the Western liberal tradition on the matter, be deemed Scriptural?*
5. *What is the role of 'human nature' in Hobbe's political philosophy?*
6. *Can one be anti-Machiavellian in his aim for virtue and successful in American politics today?*
7. *Should technology be used in worship?*
8. *How does technology impact learning in children?*
9. *Does the access to more information through the internet make us smarter?*
10. *Whether Augustine provides a full view of a Christian political philosophy.*



II. INVENTIO & DISPOSITIO

Stage Two: Research and Consultation

Upon submission of the thesis proposal, you should submit a written request for third committee member, signed and dated by that committee member. The thesis director will make the final choice on committee members. The third committee member is responsible for assisting the other two committee members in coaching you through the research and writing process. The thesis director is responsible for overseeing the entire research and writing process as well as the final presentation and evaluation. You also are strongly encouraged to choose as your third committee member an outside expert in your field of study to help direct your research.

The thesis proposals will be presented to the faculty for review and to one or more classmates for peer review and consultation. As soon as your committee is compiled, you will be required to schedule regular meetings to collaborate on your project. Be ready to take his or her advice on sources, narrowing your topic, et cetera. You will be required to meet regularly to demonstrate an orderly and effective system of recording notes and thinking through your topic. It is your responsibility to initiate and maintain the meeting schedule with all committee members.

From this point forward, you will be looking for sources, reading, painting, interviewing, collaborating and taking extensive notes in preparation for the actual writing or implementation of the thesis. Your notes must be organized into major categories that you expect your paper to cover.

III. DISPOSITIO AND ELOCUTIO

Stage Three: Writing

Begin the necessary work for writing a series of incrementally expanded drafts. Each step during this stage will have clear directions and expectations and will be submitted to the thesis committee for approval and grading. You will be given a schedule for the completion of required steps. Non-thesis projects will work with thesis advisors to determine benchmarks for completing segments of their proposed work.

IV. ELOCUTIO

Stage Four: Final Thesis

Making careful revisions and taking into account all committee comments, write a final draft of your paper. This copy should be free of typographical errors, grammatical errors, and logical errors and should follow the MLA guidelines for documentation of sources. You are strongly encouraged to have several outside sources such as parents and classmates or other friends read your paper at this point to help with clarity and typos. The final paper must include:

1. Title page
2. Works cited (not annotated bibliography or works consulted)

The final draft will be evaluated according to the rubric for clarity and logic of the argument, quality and appropriateness of the organizational strategy, use and documentation of quality resources sufficient in number, and quality of style, grammar, and typing



V. *PRONUNTIATIO*

Stage Five: Deliver and Defense

You will practice short presentations of your paper throughout the writing stage. You will also present a section of the final defense in front of your fellow classmates after you have turned in your final paper. For the final presentation you must dress in acceptable professional attire.

The required elements for the Senior Thesis Defense are as follows:

1. A condensed reading of your thesis to the audience of Logic and Rhetoric School faculty, students, and invited guests, as well as any art or visuals pertaining to your project.
2. An oral defense of your argument in response to questions and remarks from the committee, students, and invited guests.

Your presentation and defense grade will be based on responses of the three-member committee.

Grading Summary:

25% - diligence, attitude, and participation in class

25% - proposal, outlines, and rough drafts

25% - final paper

25% - presentation

General Policies and Procedures

Submission and Deadline Policy: You are to prepare written drafts (outline and paper) in multiple copies (one for each of the three committee members and one for yourself). It is your responsibility to hand in the assignment to all parties when requested. You must save each draft when returned by your committee members in a folder which will contain all subsequent drafts. For each graded assignment of a written or oral nature, the standard policy for lateness will apply. Please be sure to secure all of your work on multiple electronic devices. Create back-ups each time your work.

Sources, Format, Minimum Length: In order to ensure that your thesis is of the best quality possible, you must utilize the minimum of thirty (30) sources of adequate reputation and relevance to your topic, at least twenty (18) of which must be directly cited in your paper. The rough drafts of varying length are to be written as portions of the entire paper and the final draft must be twelve-fifteen (12-15) pages in length (double-spaced, 12 point font, Times New Roman, 1-inch margins). Drafts not conforming to the length requirements will be penalized at least five (5) points per absent page. Every draft is subject to point deductions for grammar and spelling errors. Plagiarism, at any time in the process, results in an automatic failure from the senior thesis.

Revisions, Draft Grades: Drafts and outlines will be graded using rubrics. When committee members call for revisions (any markings on drafts), these are to be taken as conditions for the grade on the next submitted assignment. If the draft does not receive adequate revision, it may be returned without a grade, requiring a draft that does not meet original directives. In such cases, the deadline penalty will apply. Committee members will submit all papers and grades to the director who will return them to the student.