

HIST 7399: THESIS SEMINAR

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University of Arkansas at Little Rock
Arkansas Studies Institute 205

WELCOME!

Regardless of your background or career plans, I am pleased to have you in this course and believe that you will benefit from this focus on your thesis. My goal is to help you navigate this final stage of the MA program in public history and encourage your independence and creativity as an advanced graduate student.

CATALOG DESCRIPTION

In this class you will plan, design, research, and write your thesis . . . Students should repeat this class in two consecutive semesters.

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND FORMAT

This course differs significantly from traditional history courses. Rather than focus on a particular topic of study, you will develop an independent research project that incorporates the variety of research and writing skills that you have mastered in the public history program.

We will meet as a class only five or six times during the semester, although I will be readily available for individual consultations during regular business hours. During our class meetings, we will discuss the department's expectations for completing a project thesis or traditional thesis, and you will develop personal goals to meet those expectations. While your thesis must be an independent research project, you will receive feedback from classmates and faculty members as your project takes shape. You will work independently, but you will not work in isolation.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Learn the steps for successfully completing a project thesis or traditional thesis.
- Design and plan a project thesis or traditional thesis.
- Confirm your thesis advisor and the members of your thesis committee.
- Write first drafts of a process paper for a project thesis or a chapter for a traditional thesis.

BOOK(S)

This course does not require a textbook, but I highly recommend that you have access to the Chicago Manual of Style (ISBN 9780226287058). Also see <https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html>.

ASSIGNMENTS

You will write three papers for this class. Each paper will build upon the previous one and establish the foundation of your project thesis or traditional thesis.

- An **initial thesis proposal** (300-350 words) will be due as an e-mail attachment (.doc, .docx, or .rtf) to btkey@ualr.edu **by noon on Tuesday, September 10**. It will clearly state the purpose, objectives, and significance of your thesis.
- A **formal thesis proposal** (1500-1750 words) will be due as an e-mail attachment (.doc, .docx, or .rtf) to btkey@ualr.edu **by noon on Tuesday, October 1**. It will clearly state the purpose, objectives, and significance of your thesis. The proposal will also provide a brief historiography, explain the research materials that you will utilize, and outline your project.
- A **REVISED formal thesis proposal** (1500-1750 words) will be due as an e-mail attachment (.doc, .docx, or .rtf) to btkey@ualr.edu **by noon on Tuesday, October 22**. It will clearly state the purpose, objectives, and significance of your thesis. The proposal will also provide a brief historiography, explain the research materials that you will utilize, and outline your project. A bibliography should be included with this revision.
- A draft of your **process paper** or **first chapter** (word count will vary but approximately 9,000-10,500 words) will be due as an e-mail attachment (.doc, .docx, or .rtf) to btkey@ualr.edu **by noon on Tuesday, November 19**. This paper should also be shared with your thesis advisor.

A NOTE ON WRITING

Please understand that I have the highest expectations for your writing. Poor grammar, misspelled words, and the like are absolutely unacceptable for a project thesis or traditional thesis. I will be glad to help you improve, but I also urge you to work with your thesis advisor and utilize the University Writing Center. See <http://ualr.edu/writingcenter/> for details.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Your success in this class is important to me, and it is the policy and practice of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock to create inclusive learning environments consistent with federal and state law. If you have a documented disability (or need to document a disability) and need an accommodation, please contact me privately as soon as possible so that we can discuss with the Disability Resource Center (DRC) how to meet your specific needs and the requirements of the course. The DRC offers resources and coordinates reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process among you, your instructor(s) and the DRC. Thus, if you have a disability, please contact me and/or the DRC, at 501-569-3143 (V/TTY) or 501-683-7629 (VP). For more information, please visit the DRC website at ualr.edu/disability. (UA Little Rock Policy 404.9)

UNSOLICITED ADVICE

- ✓ Class will begin promptly at 4:30 p.m. Compulsive tardiness is annoying and rude. Be on time.
- ✓ Carefully note due dates and times. We will do our best when we meet deadlines, share our work with classmates, and receive constructive feedback.
- ✓ Plagiarism will not be tolerated, and I will try to have you removed from the public history program if you plagiarize. Please consult with me if you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism.

CONTACT INFORMATION

E-mail is the best way to contact me. You may expect a reply within a few hours if you e-mail during regular business hours. If you e-mail after regular business hours, I will reply on the following business day. You are also welcome to visit my office with or without an appointment.

E-mail: btkey@ualr.edu
Office: 604N Stabler Hall
Hours: MW, 9-10 a.m. or by appointment

GRADING

Two grades are given for this course, IP (in progress) and CR (credit). After you complete and defend your thesis, your grade for this course will be changed to CR. Until that time, your grade for this course will be IP. For more information about UALR's grading systems, see <https://ualr.edu/policy/home/facstaff/grades-and-grading-systems/>.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

MEETING DATES	TOPICS
August 21	Introductions; understanding different types of theses; choosing a thesis topic
August 28	Confirming a thesis topic; choosing a thesis advisor; and initial thesis proposals
September 11	Critiquing initial thesis proposals; formal thesis proposals; and setting goals
October 2	Critiquing formal thesis proposals and resetting goals
October 23	Finalizing formal thesis proposals; confirming a thesis advisor; and choosing members of a thesis committee
November 20	Critiquing initial drafts of process paper or chapter in traditional thesis

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

The UALR inclement weather policy is available at <https://ualr.edu/policy/home/admin/weather/>.