



# **SENIOR THESIS MANUAL**

## **2011 – 2012**

(for students beginning thesis in Fall 2011 or Spring 2012)

*Bard College at Simon's Rock  
Great Barrington, Massachusetts*

*(revised August 2011)*

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This manual is subject to change. Any changes will be emailed to students and faculty. For corrections or updates, please email Susan Mower at [smower@simons-rock.edu](mailto:smower@simons-rock.edu).

## INTRODUCTION

An important component of students' senior year at Bard College at Simon's Rock is the Senior Thesis. An eight-month (one academic year), eight-credit project, the thesis offers seniors the opportunity to complete a significant, extended study or project that is the culmination of their baccalaureate work at Simon's Rock. Drawing on the background and skills of analysis and synthesis acquired during the previous three years, students are expected to devote themselves wholeheartedly to their thesis project, as it is one they define and develop in close consultation with their Thesis Advisor as well as other Thesis Committee members. Students are expected to be enrolled full time at Simon's Rock for both semesters of the senior year.

Recent theses have taken many forms: critical studies in literature, psychological research, exhibits of paintings or ceramics, musical compositions, novels, plays, translations, groups of poems or short stories, scientific experiments, solutions to significant mathematical problems, choreography, production and performance of dramatic works, economic and environmental impact studies, and combinations of many of these forms.

The responsibility for selecting the senior thesis topic and organizing the thesis project rests largely with the student. Faculty members serve as advisors and meet regularly with the student to evaluate progress and provide guidance. In these meetings, the processes of developing a project from idea to realization and independent thinking are emphasized. All projects conclude with a substantial project—including a significant written component—that is eventually bound and placed in the permanent collection of the College library. Beginning with theses submitted in May 2012, a digital copy of the final thesis will be archived and accessible through the Alumni Library webpage.

This manual is designed to state thesis requirements and deadlines, to provide guidance, and to assist the student in undertaking and completing the thesis. It outlines College-wide requirements and general guidelines for the thesis. However, because each thesis is an individual project with particular challenges, other or more stringent requirements may apply as stipulated by the concentration or by the Thesis Advisor. Questions that are not covered in this manual should be addressed to the student's Thesis Advisor.

The thesis manual is available on the College's website at:

<https://www.simons-rock.edu/inside/students/academics/forms-manuals/>

Students who are working on theses in the Arts Division or the Simon's Rock/Columbia University Engineering Program should see the supplement in this manual for additional information.

*Note: The term "reader" in this manual should be interpreted broadly in cases of theses that include substantial non-written components. Similarly, in such cases, the term "draft" should be understood to include preliminary versions of non-written products (art works, performances, etc.).*

### **Objectives of the Thesis**

The faculty's objectives in requiring that every senior complete a thesis are to provide the student with an intellectual project of substance that will develop and demonstrate:

- the ability to undertake and complete independent work at an advanced level in the student's areas of study;
- the ability to think critically: to analyze, synthesize, and reason with the degree of sophistication that is to be expected of a graduate of the College program;
- the ability to work creatively and with discipline, as well as to respond productively to criticism;
- the ability to understand the assumptions and approaches that underlie the disciplines relevant to the thesis;
- the ability to express ideas in writing with clarity and precision.

## PLANNING for the Thesis – TOWARD THE END OF THE JUNIOR YEAR

### The Preliminary Thesis Proposal

Submission of the Preliminary Thesis Proposal is the formal procedure to apply to register for the Senior Thesis. In the semester preceding the thesis year (second/final semester of students' junior year), students examine their interests, questions, enthusiasms, and plans for the future, discussing possible thesis topics with faculty members and the library staff.

A student must be on track to have completed a minimum of **90 credits** by the close of the current term to register for Thesis I—and to submit a preliminary thesis proposal—for the coming term.

Toward the close of this semester, students submit a preliminary thesis proposal to Academic Affairs. This preliminary thesis proposal must consist of:

- (1) a brief description of the proposed thesis topic;
- (2) an explanation of the relationships between the proposed thesis topic and the student's overall program of study (concentration[s] and related coursework); and
- (3) a list of potential Thesis Advisors and the reasons they would be appropriate.
- (4) a signed cover sheet (see next page).

#### Preliminary Thesis Proposal Deadlines

For those beginning thesis in the fall term, the Preliminary Thesis Proposal is **due the first week of April**.

For those beginning thesis in the spring, the Preliminary Thesis Proposal is **due the first week of November**.

**Registration:** Students who do not submit a preliminary thesis proposal by the deadline may not register for Senior Thesis I at registration.

While thesis topics may be very interdisciplinary and—when appropriate—broad in scope, the thesis topic is expected to be one that builds upon the student's prior coursework and study, and the student must be able to demonstrate his/her preparation for advanced (not beginning- or intermediate-level) work in the proposed area or topic. **The topic must be within the student's concentration or at least one of the student's concentrations.**

In preparing their preliminary proposal, students should speak with a faculty member (or faculty members) who may be interested or who has (or have) agreed to work with them on their thesis. One such faculty member should sign the cover sheet. Students might also note on the cover sheet (hand-written is permitted) or in the thesis proposal endorsements from other faculty with whom they have consulted and who might also serve as Thesis Advisor. (This second endorsement is not required, and the signature of a faculty member on the cover sheet is not a guarantee that this is the person who will be assigned to be the Thesis Advisor.)

**Students on Leave to Study Away** during the semester before they start their Senior Thesis need to complete all these steps:

- \* writing a preliminary proposal,
- \* creating a cover page, and
- \* proposing possible Thesis Advisors —**all done from the study away location, most likely via email.**

While students will have contact mainly with their Academic Advisor while away, they should also contact potential Thesis Advisors directly to see if they would be willing to serve. The students' first-choice for Thesis Advisor will need to sign the Preliminary Proposal Cover Sheet (as well as their Academic Advisor).

The staff in the Office of Academic Affairs is available to help students on Leave to Study Away in coordinating the Preliminary Thesis Proposal process. Contact Susan Mower at [smower@simons-rock.edu](mailto:smower@simons-rock.edu) with any questions or for guidance.

Preliminary thesis proposals are reviewed by the Policy and Program Committee (P&P) in advance of spring registration. After the Preliminary Thesis Proposal deadline, all the thesis proposals are forwarded to P&P, and approval is based on the proposal's academic promise and its relevance to the student's overall program of study.

### **Sample Preliminary Thesis Proposal Cover Page**

The text in *italics* is to be replaced with the individuals' names. The border here is to show the outline of a page – no border should be included with the actual cover page

Preliminary Senior Thesis Proposal	
Presented by	
<i>Student's Name</i>	
<i>Student's Concentration(s)</i>	
Accepted	
_____ <i>Academic Advisor's Name, signature</i>	_____ <i>Date</i>
_____ <i>Endorsement of requested Thesis Advisor or consulting faculty member (Name, signature)</i>	_____ <i>Date</i>
Bard College at Simon's Rock Fall 2011 (or Spring 2012)	

(note: Both the preferred Thesis Advisor and Academic Advisor signatures are required)

## Selecting A Thesis Advisor

The Policy and Program Committee reviews these preliminary proposals and assigns a **Thesis Advisor**, taking into account the student's recommendations and preferences.

At the close of the Junior year, students are only expected to be assigned the Thesis Advisor – they do not need to put together their full Thesis Committee at this time.

In selecting a possible Thesis Advisor, the student should consider the faculty member's areas of expertise and interests and the student's ability to work closely and comfortably with that faculty member over an extended period of time. This person can also step in to serve as the student's academic advisor; although, sometimes it is helpful to have an Academic Advisor who is not also on the Thesis Committee.

Faculty are expected to be primary Thesis Advisors on theses in their area or areas of specialization. For example, a thesis focused on a topic in psychology should be supervised by a faculty member in psychology. If a thesis is interdisciplinary, the Thesis Advisor must specialize in one of the disciplinary areas most relevant to the thesis. Second and third readers\* can be from other disciplines, but interdisciplinary theses should have representation from at least the two main disciplines.

- For more information on the difference between Thesis Advisor and Second/Third Readers, see **Setting up the Thesis Committee** on p. 4.

Be sure to register for BAST 404. The assigned Thesis Advisor will need to sign the student into the course during registration.

## SENIOR WORKSHOP

### Description

Each August – during the week before classes start—the Simon’s Rock faculty hold a one- or two-day Senior Workshop on campus. This workshop is designed to facilitate the thesis process and is required for all students registered for Thesis I in the fall, or who plan to register for Thesis I in the spring.

Senior Workshop is a requirement for completion of the Thesis (and thus, a graduation requirement).

Topics of discussion include issues such as: What is a Senior Thesis? What does a finished Thesis Proposal look like? What is the relationship between the Thesis Proposal and the final product (i.e. the Thesis)? A significant amount of time is devoted to nuts-and-bolts issues such as research and writing strategies including: Interlibrary Loan, Human Research Review, Senior Thesis Funding Requests, and refining the Thesis Proposal.

**All thesis students are required to attend the Senior Workshop.**

**Students starting Thesis I in the Spring:** Students who will be starting their thesis in the spring term should attend the workshop that occurs in the summer before they start their thesis. Thus, these students need to start their thesis planning a little earlier than students who start in the fall. These students’ Thesis Proposals will follow the following timeline:

(1) **SPRING: Preliminary Thesis Proposal.** At the close of the spring semester of their Junior Year (8 months before they start their thesis) rising second-semester Juniors should be in contact with their Academic Advisor and/or their proposed Thesis Advisor to discuss possible thesis plans. Spring-thesis-start students should write up a draft of their Preliminary Thesis Proposal before the end of the fall term prior to their start of the thesis.

(2) **SUMMER: Senior Thesis Workshop.** Spring-thesis-start students should attend the Senior Thesis Workshop in the summer prior to their start, using the draft of their thesis proposal as a working document in planning for the thesis to start in the spring.

(3) **FALL: Review/Revision of Preliminary Thesis Proposal.** Toward the end of the fall semester prior to their thesis start, spring-thesis-start students should meet again with their Academic Advisor and proposed Thesis Advisor (and other potential committee members) to review and revise the original Preliminary Thesis Proposal.

(4) **SPRING: Thesis Proposal.** At the start of the following spring semester, students complete and submit their final Thesis Proposal.

**These guidelines/timelines may also apply for 3/2 Engineering students**, who may thesis during the first or second year they attend Columbia. They should consult with their Simon’s Rock thesis advisor about this decision, **and plan to attend Senior Workshop in August of the year they will begin thesis.**

## RESOURCES FOR THESIS STUDENTS

### Alumni Library

**Thesis Research.** The library staff are available to consult with thesis students to provide suggestions and assistance on materials and resources available both in the Alumni Library and from other sources. Usually, thesis research involves Interlibrary Loan of materials from other institutions, and since time is required for such loans, it is best to request materials that will be needed for research on a timely basis. In addition, the library has access to an extensive number of specialized electronic databases often essential for thesis research. The library staff can advise students in the selection and use of these databases.

**Interlibrary Loan.** As soon as the student has developed a preliminary proposal, he or she should consult with library staff, who can provide suggestions and assistance on materials available both in the College Alumni Library and from other sources. Since it takes time to request and receive materials from other institutions, the sooner the student does this the more likely it is that the materials will be available when they are needed.

**Extended loan period for seniors.** Library books checked out to thesis students have an extended loan period until the end of the academic year in which they are borrowed.

**Senior carrels.** Each semester seniors who are in the process of researching and writing a thesis have the opportunity to reserve a carrel in the library for their exclusive use during that semester. Each senior may only have a reserved carrel for one semester. A limited number of carrels are available and will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis within the first few weeks of each semester.

### Win Student Resource Commons and the Tutoring and Writing Center

**The Tutoring and Writing Center.** The Director of the Tutoring and Writing Center is available for consultation on specific writing issues. Seniors are encouraged to use the services of Writing Tutors on staff in the Writing Center located in the Library. In addition, seniors may request to be assigned a specific writing tutor who can assist them throughout the thesis process on organization, writing, grammar checks, etc.

**BA Thesis Workshops.** The Win Commons and the Tutoring and Writing Center often sponsor a series of workshops to support seniors in writing theses. Workshops include such topics as writing the thesis proposal; writing, organizing, and developing a thesis, data analysis; editing, citation styles; and resume writing.

### Human Research Review Committee

If a thesis requires human subjects research (defined as “the systematic investigation designed to develop or contribute to generalized knowledge, which involves the collection of data from the living human being”), the student must contact the faculty chairperson of the Human Research Review Committee (HRRC) for the necessary policies and procedures. (The Office of Academic Affairs can direct students to the current HRRC Chairperson[s].)

A detailed outline of the Human Research Review Committee is available via the on-line Student Handbook.

<https://www.simons-rock.edu/inside/students/directories/campus-life/handbook.pdf>

## Thesis Funding

The College has established a fund to support thesis projects that necessitate unusual expenditures (i.e. on-site research, expenses beyond normal materials, such as color printing). A student disseminating a survey might request funds for mailing, for example, or someone conducting an experiment or directing a play could request funding for necessary equipment. The maximum funding available for a project is \$500. Thesis funding is not guaranteed for all projects.

Before applying for funding, the student and advisor should consult with appropriate campus personnel to avail themselves of existing campus resources. Thesis funding is not available for books (books should be ordered through interlibrary loan); travel that is not directly related to on-site research, concert tickets and other items not exclusively related to thesis research.

Thesis students applying for funding will need to complete the Thesis Funding Request Cover Sheet, and write a short narrative (1-2 pages) summarizing the relevance of this funding for their thesis. The Thesis Advisor's endorsement of the budget/funding request must be included on the cover sheet. The Thesis Advisor can also often help identify existing supports for needs, and his/her endorsement will help the Standards and Procedures Committee in their review of the budget/funding proposal.

The thesis budget/funding request must be submitted to the student's Thesis Committee for approval along with the thesis proposal. A copy of the budget/ funding request, and the advisor's written endorsement must be submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs with the approved Thesis Proposal. The Standards and Procedures Committee will review applications and allocate the funds.

**Thesis Funding Requests** are due to Academic Affairs no later than the due date for Thesis Proposals. Thesis Funding Requests must include:

- \* **Completed Cover Sheet** (included in Thesis Proposal section of this manual) --
  - \* must include Thesis Advisor's endorsement of the request.
- \* **Narrative** summarizing the rationale/need for the funding.
- \* **Copy of Thesis Proposal or**—if turned in before Proposal is completed— Preliminary Thesis Proposal, a more detailed explanation re: thesis topic in narrative/rationale for funding, and more detailed Thesis Advisor endorsement (not just a signature).

Requests for thesis funding are reviewed by the Standards and Procedures Committee.

Students in the **Visual Arts** have additional funding opportunities and should review the Arts Division Thesis Guidelines at the back of this manual.

**Videotaping of the thesis performance:** If a student would like to have the final thesis performance videotaped, they must make arrangements with the AV department at least a month prior to the event. There is generally a charge of about \$100 for this service. The student may request funding for this. If funding is not requested or granted, a student's account will be charged for the service.

## SETTING UP THE THESIS COMMITTEE

In the first three weeks of the thesis year, the student and the Thesis Advisor finalize the Thesis Committee. The Thesis Committee consists of the Thesis Advisor, who bears primary responsibility for meeting with the student and directing the research, writing, and revision process; a Second Reader; and an optional Third Reader, if the student and Thesis Advisor deem that a third reader is advisable.

Thesis Committees must include at least two Simon's Rock faculty members. A third reader is an option, but is not required. A student's Academic Advisor may also serve as the Thesis Advisor or a Reader on the committee, but this is not required.

In addition to the Simon's Rock faculty members, a Thesis Committee may include an expert from elsewhere, including Bard College at Annandale. Since the Thesis Committee must read and respond to the student's thesis work at various stages, a student who chooses to have a committee member located elsewhere must be conscious of the additional time that will be required for response and reaction at all stages of the thesis process and must be prepared to complete work early enough for this to occur within the prescribed thesis deadlines.

### The Thesis Advisor

The responsibilities of the Thesis Advisor are:

- to help the student finalize the proposal, including selecting a topic that is suitably challenging yet feasible;
- to advise the student on selection of a Thesis Committee; to call for meetings of the committee, beyond those specified in the College-wide schedule of deadlines, when advisable;
- to meet with the student regularly throughout the thesis year, encourage and guide the student in research, in formulating ideas, and in finding effective structures for formal expression;
- to respond critically and constructively to early thesis drafts, to work with the student on refining, clarifying and polishing, and to suggest when response from the rest of the committee should be solicited;
- to evaluate the student's final thesis draft in term of standards of scholarship, creativity, form, and documentation established by the field or discipline, and to stipulate necessary revisions; to help the student satisfy demands for revision from the other members of the committee;
- to check the final revised draft for spelling, grammar and form, and to indicate what needs to be corrected;
- to chair the final Thesis Committee meeting, to report on the quality of the thesis process throughout the year to the committee, and to submit the grade of the thesis.

In cases where the student fails to meet thesis deadlines or to work conscientiously on the thesis, the faculty member may resign as Thesis Advisor.

### The Thesis Second Reader

The responsibilities of the thesis Second Reader are to support both the thesis student and Thesis Advisor in guiding the student in his/her thesis project. Ideally, the second reader's area of specialty will complement that of the Thesis Advisors (e.g., he/she may bring background in particular topics, subjects, methods or techniques that will enrich the perspectives, support and guidance available to the thesis student).

Most often, thesis students don't meet as often with their Second Reader as they do with their Thesis Advisor—although this will depend on the role of the Second Reader and should be negotiated and discussed with the Thesis Committee during the Thesis Proposal process and at the first Thesis Committee Meeting.

Some students opt to have a Third Reader as well. This reader generally serves a similar function as the Second Reader, although he or she may meet with the thesis student even less frequently than the Second Reader, and may play a more tertiary role.

While the Second Reader (and Third Reader, if relevant) do not need to sign the Thesis Proposal, it is assumed that all additional readers have been involved in the Thesis Proposal process and are in agreement with the Thesis Advisor about the final proposal and plan. All readers—Thesis Advisor and Second (and, if relevant, Third Reader)—must approve and sign off on the final thesis. While the responsibility for the determination of the mid-year and final thesis grade rests with the Thesis Advisor, it is assumed that the Thesis Advisor will consult with all readers in determining grades, so students should be sure to involve all readers as much as possible in discussions regarding thesis expectations as well as any changes or alterations to the overall thesis plan and/or thesis expectations.

A Thesis Advisor, or the Second Reader (or Third Reader) can decline to sign off on a final thesis if he or she does not feel a student has met the minimum requirements of a Senior Thesis and/or has not fulfilled the expectations outlined in the Thesis Proposal and/or at the First Semester Thesis Committee Meeting.

**Other advisors seniors may have:** The responsibilities of a senior's Academic Advisor are to assure that the student meets all College-wide deadlines and BA requirements; The responsibilities of the Major or BA Program Advisor are to assure that the student's Thesis Proposal meets the goals of the program of study. All other responsibilities associated with guiding the thesis rest with the Thesis Advisor and Thesis Committee.

**BA Progress Report:** During the first week of the senior year, the student should review BA Progress Report in consultation with the academic advisor, detailing accomplishments to date and plans for the year.

**Reminder: in addition to the Thesis, BA graduation requirements include:**

- ☐ Senior Workshop
- ☐ 120 credits
- ☐ completion of BA Seminar
- ☐ completion of at least four advanced (300- or 400-level courses)
- ☐ completion of a Leave to Study Away program, an Independent Study  
or Tutorial, or an Extended Campus Project (ECP/Internship)
- ☐ minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0.

## Thesis Committee Meetings

Three meetings of the Thesis Committee are mandated by the College-wide schedule of dates and deadlines: one to accept the proposal, one to assess the work of the first semester, and one to review and assess the completed thesis process and product. Additional meetings of the Thesis Committee may be called at the discretion of the thesis advisor.

There are three mandatory Thesis Committee Meetings throughout the year—and each meeting coincides with the submission of a document:

- (1) **Thesis Proposal Meeting.** This meeting occurs early in the first semester of the thesis, and at this meeting the committee reviews the student's Thesis Proposal, suggests any changes or revisions, raises concerns, and makes plans for how the committee will support the student in both the content and timeline of the thesis work for the current semester. The thesis budget and funding request, if applicable, are also reviewed at this meeting.
- (2) **First-Semester Evaluation Meeting.** This meeting occurs toward the end of the first semester of the thesis. At this meeting, the committee reviews the student's Self-Evaluation and progress overall. Particular focus is given to how well the student met the goals in his/her proposed timeline as well as the work completed to date. An additional focus is planning ahead to the second Thesis semester, revising/updating the second-semester timeline and goals as needed.
- (3) **Final Thesis Meeting.** This meeting occurs toward the end of the second semester of the thesis—shortly after the first-draft of the Senior Thesis has been turned in to the committee and before the thesis is due. At this meeting, the committee reviews the student's thesis draft—reviewing and outlining what revisions need to be made, etc.

Other meetings with the Thesis Advisor or other readers are generally one-on-one and occur on a schedule that is negotiated with the student and the relevant faculty.

## THE THESIS PROPOSAL

The Thesis Proposal is intended to assist the thesis student and the members of his/her Thesis Committee in planning for the thesis year ahead. In writing this proposal, students should take this opportunity to reflect on and build upon the Preliminary Thesis Proposal, written at the close of the prior semester. In the formal Thesis Proposal, students will focus more on what led them to this topic and/or project, and where they would like to go with it in the coming year. In writing this, thesis students might want to ask themselves: What drives me toward this topic? What is it that I hope to accomplish in this thesis?

A Thesis Proposal includes four sections:

- (1) Cover Page (needs to be signed only by Thesis Advisor)
- (2) Narrative (2-4 pages)
- (3) Preliminary Bibliography
- (4) Proposed Timeline (must include mandatory thesis deadlines in addition to other self/committee-generated deadlines)

<optional> Thesis Funding Requests should be a separate document, but should be included for discussion at the Thesis Proposal Meeting.

It could be that in pursuing this project, thesis students would like to delve deeply into a certain topic, or to explore particular methodologies. They might also have goals related to demonstrating their ability in a variety of areas, not just in writing and scholarship. They may want to improve on a particular set of creative abilities or talents, to improve on writing or research skills, or to explore an area that is somewhat new to them.

After the Thesis Proposal is completed – or close to completion – the student sets up a meeting with the Thesis Committee to discuss the final proposal. Students should send copies of the Thesis Proposal to the members of the Thesis Committee prior to the committee meeting—and in sufficient time to enable committee members to read and consider the Proposal prior to the meeting.

### Outline for the Thesis Proposal

#### Sequence of Sections

1. **Cover Page.** See the Sample Figure on the next page. Note: The Title/Cover Page has no page number.

The Thesis Proposal does not need to have a title.

2. **Proposal Narrative:** This is the written portion of the Thesis Proposal. It should be no less than 2 and no more than 4 pages (double-spaced) in length.

3. **Preliminary Bibliography.** This includes a list of resources, research and/or readings, including the books you plan to consult, preliminary ideas for readings in areas that the student needs to research more, as well as other sources.

4. **Proposed Timeline:** This provides students the opportunity to think about what kinds of deadlines are most helpful to them in accomplishing a major project over a significant period of time. Students might want to think about what they hope to accomplish each week, and what parts of the project they hope to have accomplished at certain points in the coming semester and in the following semester. What other significant dates or deadlines might there be? Be sure to include the required dates and deadlines as given earlier in this manual.

## Guidelines for the Thesis Proposal Narrative

In the process of writing this proposal, thesis students should:

- (1) consider the basic idea for their thesis;
- (2) outline a plan for the coming year;
- (3) assess if they have the necessary preparation to successfully complete the thesis as proposed;  
and
- (4) consider how their thesis idea or topic is situated in one or more academic disciplines.

Thesis Proposal Narrative should be 2 to 4 pages in length, double-spaced.

Of course, the assumption in writing a proposal, is that there is much that thesis student has yet to learn about the thesis topic; however, in the proposal the student should think about how he/she came to this topic and what he/she already brings to it.

In writing the Thesis Proposal, students might also keep in mind the objectives of the Senior Thesis, as outlined in this manual and stated in the College's *Catalog*. To address the objectives and goals stated above, students should consider the questions listed below when writing the thesis proposal. Ideally, the proposal should **not** be written in a manner that lists the questions and then answers them, e.g., "In answer to question (a)..."

Rather, students should read through these questions (below), write their proposal using their own words, and then go back and make sure they've addressed all or most of these questions. Some of the questions may be more or less relevant for the thesis; however, most will be relevant to all theses. If a student working on a proposal finds very few of these questions are relevant for their thesis, they should meet with their Thesis Advisor ASAP to discuss their thesis topic in greater detail before submitting their proposal. (The Arts Division has additional guidelines specific to Arts theses.)

**(a) What do you propose to do in completing this project?** Think of your thesis as an eight-month project. What do you hope to accomplish? What topic(s) will you explore? What will you examine, write about, or create – and how does this connect to your thesis topic? Will you review the work of a particular author, conduct a survey, direct a play, do an experiment, write a piece of fiction or something else? If you are doing a performance or production piece, how will you use and integrate the written component? If you are including artwork or fiction in a thesis that is primarily expository, in what way will this be integrated?

**(b) How did you get interested in this topic?** Where did you get the idea for this thesis? What existing work, ideas, readings, techniques, approaches and/or theories did you draw on in thinking about this project? What is the general approach (methodology) you will be using?

**(c) What courses (including Tutorials and Independent Studies) have prepared you for this project?** Your thesis topic and goals should draw on your coursework here at Simon's Rock. What courses will you be taking in the current or coming semester that will also contribute to your thesis? How?

**(d) What other academic or professional experiences have led you to choose this thesis topic** (e.g., performances, internships, ECP's, Study Away Programs, research or lab work, or other experiences)?

**(e) How did you decide what you want or need to read?** As part of this proposal, you will be asked to submit a preliminary reading plan (the preliminary bibliography). Give some background to your reading plan.

(f) **To what field(s) or area(s) is your thesis connected?** In what traditions will you be following? What contribution do you hope this project will make to these fields/discipline(s)? What is the interdisciplinary component of your thesis (e.g., how will it draw from multiple disciplines)? [Note: you will most likely have a primary discipline, area or technique in which you are working, but what other disciplines may also be relevant and how might you integrate these into your thesis?]

(g) **What do you see as your own strengths in undertaking this project?** And what are some areas or skills that you may need to improve on or that may need some special attention?

(h) **In terms of the writing, what is your plan?** How will you document or report on your progress?

**Regarding the writing style:** The Thesis Proposal should be directed toward a general, versus specialized, audience. Not everyone on a Thesis Committee may be familiar with the jargon used in a particular field, and even if they are, not all readers of the final written work will be.

## **Page Formats for Thesis Proposal**

[Note: Many are similar to the formatting guidelines for the Senior Thesis.]

All Thesis Proposals must be double spaced on 8-1/2" x 11" paper.

The text must be double-spaced.

Margins must be 1-1/2" on the left and 1" on the right, top, and bottom.

Pages of the written portion of the proposal should be numbered consecutively, starting with the first page of text (all pages, including Proposal Narrative, Bibliography and Proposed Timeline, but excluding the Title Page), using Arabic numerals. Page numbers should be centered at the top or bottom of the page and placed consistently throughout.

The option to print out **two-sided copies** is under the discretion of the Thesis Committee. Your committee members may prefer single-sided; be sure to check with the committee.

## **Electronic Submission of the Thesis Proposal**

Beginning with theses begun in Fall 2011, students submit both the approved, signed hard copy of the proposal (to Academic Affairs) and an electronic copy of the thesis proposal for archiving through the Alumni Library. Thesis proposals should be emailed to [thesis@simons-rock.edu](mailto:thesis@simons-rock.edu) in PDF format.

## **Sample Thesis Proposal Cover Page**

The text in italics is to be replaced with the individuals' names. The border here is to show the outline of a page – no border should be included with the actual cover page

Senior Thesis Proposal

Presented by

*Student's Name*

*Student's Concentration(s)*

Accepted

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Thesis Advisor's Name*, Thesis Advisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

Thesis Committee Members:

*Second Reader's name*, Second Reader

<optional> *Third Reader's name*, Third Reader

<optional> *BA Major Advisor's name*, Major Advisor

Bard College at Simon's Rock  
Fall 2011 (or Spring 2012)

*(note: Only the Thesis Advisor's signature is required)*

## **Sample Thesis Funding Request Cover Page**

*Date*

*Thesis Student's Name*

*Thesis Advisor's Name*

Amount requested: \_\_\_\_\_ (\$500 maximum)

**Detailed Budget** (include as much detail of estimated expenses as possible):

<u>Item/Product/Service</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Ex: 20 DVD's @ _____ ea	\$xxxx
Ex: Travel to NYC for video shoot Round trip train from Wassaic to NYC	\$xxxx
Ex: Videotaping of final thesis performance	Estimated cost \$100
<hr/>	
Total	\$xxxx

Written justification for these expenditures, and a  
copy of my approved thesis proposal are attached: \_\_\_\_\_ (thesis student's initials)

**Student's Commitment:** If awarded funding, I will keep a record of expenditures and **receipts**, and turn these with a final accounting to Academic Affair before the last day of classes, or return any unused funds. I will return any unused funds to Academic Affairs. Any discrepancy will be billed to my student account.

Signature of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

**Thesis Advisor:** I have reviewed the above, the attached justification for these expenditures, and the relevant Thesis Proposal; I have considered existing campus resources of which I am aware, and I endorse this request. < note: if the Thesis Proposal is not yet approved, the Thesis Funding narrative must clearly address how the funding is necessary for the proposed thesis, and the Thesis Advisor should include here a statement summarizing the rationale for his/her support of this request.>

Signature of Thesis Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Statement of Thesis Advisor Support <if Thesis Proposal not included>:

**Note to Student:** Attach a brief justification for the request, and include this with the cover page (above) to the Thesis Committee with the Thesis Proposal.

Submit your approved Funding Request (**with Approved Thesis Proposal** if submitted at final deadline) to the Office of Academic Affairs by due date. This is a separate submission from your approved proposal. Both are due on the same date, but both can be submitted before the due date.

## THE THESIS SELF-EVALUATION

### Guidelines for The Mid-year Thesis Self-evaluation

The purpose of the self-evaluation is for the student to summarize and reflect upon his/her progress toward the thesis final project/product over the course of the first thesis semester.

Thesis Self-Evaluations should be two to three pages in length, double-spaced.

Summarize the process thus far.

- Reread your Thesis Proposal, but don't assume your committee will.
- Briefly restate or summarize the goals and intention of your thesis as stated in the Thesis Proposal;
- Describe and discuss about what modifications, new directions and insights you have had during this semester. How has your thesis topic/focus changed and/or stayed the same. Why?
- Where is your thinking on your topic at now?

Discuss relevant/useful sources.

- Discuss in detail the most important works (texts, artwork, music, other sources) and their impact on your thinking about your thesis during this past semester. (We recommend referencing at least three such sources.)

Describe what has been accomplished thus far.

- Reflect on your process. Did your reading, writing, and work progress as you had expected? What went differently?
- Are you where you had hoped or expected to be at this point? What has helped you progress, what has hindered your progress?
- Write a timeline of what you've done thus far, referencing the schedule that you had planned for yourself for the first semester and how well you have been able to follow it.

Plan for next semester.

- In light of what you've learned about your topic and your own work habits on a major project, write a plan for your work in the second semester.
- Think about what type of work schedule has worked (or failed to work) for you this past semester, and how you plan to accomplish your thesis work in the coming semester. Develop a schedule (e.g., time commitments) for the coming semester.
  - Include required dates/deadlines from Thesis Manual
  - Include own dates/deadlines

The Annotated Bibliography.

- Some theses require an annotated bibliography at mid-year (as part of the self-evaluation).

An annotated bibliography is a listing of the most relevant works read or studied for the thesis (in this first semester). Sources should be listed in the bibliographic/reference format that will be used in the thesis (e.g., APA, MLA). Each source listed should be followed by a short (3-6 sentences) summary of the relevance of the source for the thesis thus far.

The thesis self-evaluation must be distributed to all members of the Thesis Committee for review prior to the end-of-semester committee meeting. Students should expect to discuss their self-evaluation at the meeting and hear feedback from the committee regarding their evaluation of the student's progress to date. **Once approved by the committee (and signed by the Thesis Advisor), the Self-Evaluation is turned in to the Office of Academic Affairs.**

## **Sample Self-Evaluation Cover Sheet**

Senior Thesis Self-Evaluation

Presented by

*Student's Name*

Accepted

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Thesis Advisor's Name*, Thesis Advisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Thesis Committee Members:

*Second Reader's name*, Second Reader

*Third Reader's name*, Third Reader

or

*Major Advisor's name*, Major Advisor

Bard College at Simon's Rock  
Fall 2011 (Spring 2012)

*(note: Only the Thesis Advisor's signature is required)*

## **Sample Annotated Bibliography**

Of course, in most theses, students will have more than two sources read by the end of the first semester! These are presented here as examples of the citation and the annotation.

### **Annotated Bibliography\***

Waite, L. J., Goldschneider, F. K., & Witsberger, C. (1986). Nonfamily living and the erosion of traditional family orientations among young adults. *American Sociological Review*, 51, 541-554.

The authors, researchers at the Rand Corporation and Brown University, use data from the National Longitudinal Surveys of Young Women and Young Men to test their hypothesis that nonfamily living by young adults alters their attitudes, values, plans, and expectations, moving them away from their belief in traditional sex roles. They find their hypothesis strongly supported in young females, while the effects were fewer in studies of young males. Increasing the time away from parents before marrying increased individualism, self-sufficiency, and changes in attitudes about families. In contrast, an earlier study by Williams cited below shows no significant gender differences in sex role attitudes as a result of nonfamily living.

Waite, Linda J., Frances Koberlin Goldscheider, and Christina Witsberger. "Nonfamily Living and the Erosion of Traditional Family Orientations Among Young Adults." *American Sociological Review* 51.4 (1986): 541-554. Print.

The authors, researchers at the Rand Corporation and Brown University, use data from the National Longitudinal Surveys of Young Women and Young Men to test their hypothesis that nonfamily living by young adults alters their attitudes, values, plans, and expectations, moving them away from their belief in traditional sex roles. They find their hypothesis strongly supported in young females, while the effects were fewer in studies of young males. Increasing the time away from parents before marrying increased individualism, self-sufficiency, and changes in attitudes about families. In contrast, an earlier study by Williams cited below shows no significant gender differences in sex role attitudes as a result of nonfamily living.

**Note:** The **first citation** here uses the **APA format** for the journal citation. The second **citation** uses the **MLA format** for the journal citation. NOTE: Standard MLA practice requires double spacing within citations.

Students should use one citation format – not jump between different formats – both are shown here for purpose of providing exemplars.

\* from: <http://www.library.cornell.edu/olinuris/ref/research/skill28.htm>

## TIMELINES

**A student must meet the deadlines outlined below in order to graduate on schedule. A student who does not complete his or her required work on Thesis I by these deadlines will receive a grade of “No Credit” (NC) for that semester’s work. Students who receive a grade of “NC” will need to repeat and successfully complete Thesis I before progressing to the second semester of the thesis (Thesis II). Note: a student who does not pass Thesis I in the fall will not be able to graduate in May of that Academic Year. Students who do not complete Thesis II by commencement are not eligible to participate in commencement—no exceptions.**

**A student who repeats a Thesis semester (I or II) but does not complete the thesis (I or II) in that additional semester will be required to take some time off and then return at a later date to undertake a new thesis.**

### First Semester – Thesis I

For exact dates for students’ particular start year and semester, see the appropriate Senior Thesis Dates and Deadlines insert – also available on the College’s inside website at:

<https://www.simons-rock.edu/inside/students/academics/forms-manuals/>

#### **By the end of the first week of classes (early September)**

- ☐ Register for first semester thesis (BAST 404) if not done so already;
- ☐ Review or complete the BA Progress Report in consultation with your Academic Advisor and/or the BA Program Advisor and submit the BA Progress Report, signed by your Academic Advisor, to the Office of Academic Affairs.
- ☐ Finalize Thesis Committee.
- ☐ Begin to outline a budget for the thesis. Funding maximum is \$500.

#### **By the end of the second week of classes**

- ☐ Finalize the written thesis proposal in consultation with the Thesis Advisor;
- ☐ If applicable, prepare a Thesis Funding request for approval by the committee and get Thesis Advisor’s endorsement/signature.
- ☐ Submit the final written thesis proposal, budget, and funding request if applicable to all members of the thesis committee;
- ☐ Meet with the Thesis Committee to review the proposal and budget/funding request to ensure a common understanding of the topic and the process for developing it and the expenses related to the thesis;
- ☐ Develop a schedule, approved by the Thesis Advisor, which establishes dates and deadlines for the various stages of the year's thesis work.

- ☐ **By Wednesday of the THIRD week of classes**, the student must submit a **final copy** of the Thesis Proposal (including cover page, narrative, proposed timeline, preliminary bibliography, and the thesis funding request if applicable) **signed** by the Thesis Advisor together with the thesis schedule and the names of the members of the Thesis Committee, to the members of the committee, the student's advisor, and the Office of Academic Affairs. An electronic copy is also submitted at this time.

Thesis Proposals are turned in to Academic Affairs for record keeping and tracking purposes. The Provost does not read or endorse Thesis Proposals—only the faculty on the Thesis Committee must approve the Thesis Proposal and only the Thesis Advisor must sign off on it. The Provost reads and signs off only on the final Senior Thesis written project.

**By the week before the end of the semester (last week of classes) the student must:**

- ☐ Submit a written Self-Evaluation of his or her first semester's thesis work in light of the goals articulated in the thesis proposal and schedule, and written materials appropriate to the particular thesis (such as annotated bibliography, production plan, chapter drafts or outlines) to the Thesis Advisor, and other members of the Thesis Committee.
- ☐ Meet with the Thesis Committee to review the student's progress.
- ☐ Turn in signed and approved Self-Evaluation to the Office of Academic Affairs.

**By the last day of class of the first semester:**

- ☐ Submit final self-evaluation and materials due to the Committee and the Office of Academic Affairs. This must be approved and signed by the Thesis Advisor.

The Thesis Committee meets to review and evaluate the student's first semester of thesis work and, following that meeting, the Thesis Advisor writes a thesis progress assessment (semester final comment) as part of the grades and comments for that semester.

If the Thesis Committee determines that the student has not made satisfactory progress during the initial semester of thesis work, the student and the Thesis Advisor will be required to meet with the Dean of Academic Affairs during the first week of the next semester to review the student's standing at Simon's Rock.

## **Second Semester – Thesis II**

In the second thesis semester, there are no mandatory deadlines until the last month of the term. However, students should work with their committee to develop regular and step-wise deadlines throughout the semester so that the student does not find him/herself at the final deadline with little progress made toward the final thesis product.

Senior Thesis Dates and Deadlines

<https://www.simons-rock.edu/inside/students/academics/forms-manuals/>

**Three weeks before the last day of class, the student must:**

- ☐ Submit copies of the completed thesis, including the abstract, to all members of the Thesis Committee for approval. These copies should include proper (final) formatting and page numbering, and pages printed in color\* (if applicable). No further student-initiated revisions are permitted after this date.
- ☐ Email the thesis title (as it will appear in the commencement program) to: [thesis@simons-rock.edu](mailto:thesis@simons-rock.edu)
- ☐ Email the thesis abstract to: [thesis@simons-rock.edu](mailto:thesis@simons-rock.edu).

**One and one-half weeks before the last day of class, the student must**

- ☐ Complete all revisions suggested by the committee;
- ☐ Schedule a final meeting with the Thesis Committee and receive approval of the thesis.

Thesis students should make sure to schedule and arrange well in advance their final meeting with their thesis committee—and if relevant—a time to meet with the individual committee members to get the final signatures. Hoping to catch a thesis reader for his/her signature unscheduled on the day (or day before) the theses are due is not an acceptable plan.

**Before noon on the last Wednesday of classes, the student must:**

- ☐ Prepare one final copy of the completed thesis, according to the instructions outlined in the section titled The Form of the Thesis;
- ☐ Submit one final copy of the thesis signed by all members of the Thesis Committee, and inserted into a black thesis binder, to the Provost and Vice President.

A student who wants personal copies of the bound thesis, should contact Beth Moser in the Library. She will arrange to have these bound for the student. Prepayment is required.

\* Simon's Rock does not have color printers available for regular student use.

## THE FORMAT OF THE FINAL THESIS

One original copy of the completed written thesis, in a black thesis binder (available at the Simon's Rock Bookstore) and already signed by all members of the Thesis Committee must be submitted to the Provost and Vice President. After reading and review by the Provost and Vice President, it will be sent to the library for binding and cataloguing. Printing must be on white 25% rag content archival quality paper with low acid, which will be available in the Simon's Rock Bookstore. The final copy must be laser printed. Color printing, if applicable, must be arranged with Kwik Print or Staples. We do not support color printing on campus.

### Page Formats for Final Thesis

**All Senior Theses must be 8-1/2" x 11" paper.**

**The text must be double-spaced.**

**Margins must be 1-1/2" on the left and 1" on the right, top, and bottom.**

**Pages should be numbered consecutively, starting with the first page of text, using Arabic numerals.**

**Page numbers should be centered at the top or bottom of the page.**

**Two-sided copies are not permitted.**

If a thesis includes non-print material--CDs, slides, films, music scores, oversized manuscripts, etc.--one copy of such material should be submitted with the copy of the written component of the thesis intended for professional binding. There are special bindings (at an additional fee) available to accommodate cassettes of all sizes (see the Bookstore Manager to order these). Students may also order extra copies of the bound library edition (for an additional fee) if students provide the additional thesis material.

All theses must follow an accepted manual of style and consistent form of documentation, since preferred style manuals and forms of documentation vary by program and discipline. The student should check with the Thesis Advisor to determine the style and form of documentation that should be followed.

The appropriate style manual should answer any questions of form that the student may have. The following information is provided as a brief overview of some major points of organization and presentation.

### Electronic Submission of the Thesis

Beginning with theses begun in Fall 2011, students submit both the approved, signed hard copy of the final thesis and an electronic copy of the thesis proposal for archiving through the Alumnae Library. Details on the electronic submission will follow.

## Sequence of Thesis Pages And Sections

The following sequence of pages is recommended:

---

### Preliminary pages

(numbered with small Roman numerals)

#### Title Page (i)

[note: this page number (i) can be suppressed/hidden]

#### Dedication and/or Acknowledgments (ii)

#### Table of Contents (iii)

List of Tables (iv) ← only if relevant

List of Figures (v) ← only if relevant

#### Abstract

(page # [iv, v or vi] will depend on prior pages)

---

### Body of Thesis

(numbered with Arabic numerals – starting with 1 )

Body of Text

Figures and Tables (if not included in text)

Bibliography

Appendices

**Thesis Length:** There is no College-wide policy regarding how long (in pages) a thesis must be. The content of the thesis is evaluated on the bases of the quality, scope, contribution, and significance of the work. Generally, if there is a significant performance, lab, or non-written component of the thesis, then the written portion may be shorter. Theses that involve mainly or exclusively writing or a review of the literature should be longer.

**However, in all instances, the minimum (and maximum) page-length of any given thesis—if such restrictions exist—are determined by the Thesis Committee.** Students with concerns or questions regarding thesis length expectations should consult with their Thesis Advisor and other committee members (Readers) for clarification.

### Thesis Abstract

The Thesis Abstract is a **150-200 word** statement of the essence of the thesis. It should give a clear sense of the central argument, rationale for, and/or concerns of the thesis, as well as the major areas of discussion, examples, creative experiments, etc. and their outcome.

The thesis abstract should be submitted to the committee with the final draft of the thesis and will be discussed at the final meeting.

When it has been approved, the thesis abstract, along with the title of the thesis, the name of the student, and their concentration(s) should be e-mailed to: **thesis@simons-rock.edu**.

## **Table of Contents**

The table of contents should clearly illustrate how the thesis is organized. It may be brief or elaborate, but it must correspond exactly to the headings and the subheadings included in the text. A list of tables and figures may be included on a separate page following the table of contents.

## **Tables and Figures**

Style manuals (e.g., MLA, APA) often do not give clear instructions on the preparation of figures and tables. The Thesis Advisor can answer questions concerning these matters. Some general guidelines are as follows:

Tables and figures may appear on separate pages or within the body of the text.

The title (description) for a figure (drawing, graph, photo or picture) should appear below the figure or, if there is insufficient space, on a facing page.

A table title normally appears above the table. Tables and figures should be numbered independently.

A table that is oversized may be divided so that portions of it appear on two pages facing each other. The entire title and any footnotes must appear on the left-hand side of such over-sized tables.

## **Sample Thesis Title Page**

A Management Strategy For The  
Upper Housatonic River

by  
Jane Wilson

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the  
BACHELOR OF ARTS

Accepted

---

*Thesis Advisor's Name*, Thesis Advisor

---

*Second Reader's Name*, Second Reader

---

*Third Reader's Name*, Third Reader < if necessary >

---

Peter Laipson, Provost and Vice President

Bard College at Simon's Rock  
Great Barrington, Massachusetts

2012

\*\*\* *All Thesis Committee members MUST sign above their typed names.* \*\*\*

## Sample Thesis Pages

**Title of Thesis:**

by  
Name

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty  
In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

BACHELOR OF ARTS

Accepted

Faculty Name, Thesis Advisor

---

*Faculty Name, Second Reader*

Mary B. Marcy, Provost and Vice President

Bard College at Simon's Rock  
Great Barrington, Massachusetts

2010

## Dedication

Dedication Narrative (optional), Dedication Narrative  
(optional), Dedication Narrative (optional), Dedication  
Narrative (optional), Dedication Narrative (optional), Dedication  
Narrative (optional), Dedication Narrative (optional).  
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(optional), Dedication Narrative (optional), Dedication Narrative  
(optional).

## Acknowledgements

[illegible]

## Table of Contents

Abstract.....	1
Introduction.....	2
Chapter 1: Chapter Title.....	5
Chapter 2: Chapter Title.....	20
Chapter 3: Chapter Title.....	40
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References.....	75
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## Abstract

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## Introduction

Narrative text here – and lots of it! More narrative, research  
and writing. Narrative text here – and lots of it! More narrative,  
research and writing. Narrative text here – and lots of it! More  
narrative, research and writing. Narrative text here – and lots of  
it! More narrative, research and writing. Narrative text here – and  
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and lots of it! More narrative, research and writing. Narrative text  
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Narrative text here – and lots of it! More narrative, research and  
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research and writing. Narrative text here – and lots of it! More  
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it! More narrative, research and writing. Narrative text here – and  
lots of it! More narrative, research and writing. Narrative text here –

< many more pages >

## Chapter I: Title

Narrative text here – and lots of it! More narrative, research  
and writing. Narrative text here – and lots of it! More narrative,  
research and writing. Narrative text here – and lots of it! More  
narrative, research and writing. Narrative text here – and lots of it!  
More narrative, research and writing. Narrative text here – and  
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Narrative text here – and lots of it! More narrative, research and  
writing. Narrative text here – and lots of it! More narrative,  
research and writing. Narrative text here – and lots of it! More  
narrative, research and writing. Narrative text here – and lots of it!  
More narrative, research and writing. Narrative text here – and lots

**< many more pages >**

## References <or Bibliography>

[illegible]

## Appendices

## Thesis Grades

Both semesters of thesis work are graded. At the end of the first semester, the student receives a grade of *Pass*, *No Credit* or *Incomplete* for the thesis work to date. Upon the end of the second semester, the thesis is awarded a grade of *Pass*, *Honors*, *High Honors*, *No Credit* or *Incomplete*. A student who receives a grade of *No Credit* in either semester of thesis work is required to repeat that semester of thesis. Thesis grades are not calculated into the student's GPA, but is factored in when conferring honors (see below).

A student who receives a grade of *Incomplete* at the end of the second semester of thesis if, in the judgment of the committee, the work remaining is not substantial, but can reasonably be completed by the deadline for incomplete grades. The thesis must be completed, approved, and turned in to the Provost and Vice President by that date or the grade will become *No Credit* and the student will be required to register for an additional thesis semester. In such a case the student will not graduate until the subsequent year.

### Product and Process in Thesis Grades

Thesis grades—following both the first and second semester of thesis work: Thesis I and Thesis II—is based on both process and product.

**Process** refers to how engaged, invested, and self-directed the student was in completing the thesis project as well as how diligently and committed the student was to the work throughout the duration of the project. Process also refers to how effective and responsible the student was at meeting the college-wide Thesis deadlines, as well as the deadlines and goals the committee outlined with the student at the start of the term or year.

**Product** refers to the quality of the actual thesis work. At the close of the first semester this often is based on the quantity and quality of the student's writing or other work at that time. For the final product, this refers to the quality of the final project – the quality of writing, performance, artwork, analysis, research, etc.

The final grade is generally based on both Product and Process. However, the particular balance of Process and Product in determining a final grade is at the discretion of the Thesis Committee.

The first semester thesis grade is determined by the Thesis Committee at the end-of-semester meeting after review of the student's written work and self evaluation to date. The final thesis grade (issued at the close of the second semester) is based on the Thesis Committee's assessment of both the final written thesis submitted to the Provost and Vice President and the student's commitment to and involvement in the thesis process throughout the senior year.

This final evaluation of the thesis is determined at the final committee meeting—or when the final product is completed, if there is substantial revisions to be made after that meeting. The Thesis Advisor recommends a grade to the other members of the committee. A grade of *Honors* or *High Honors* requires the unanimous concurrence of all members of the committee. A grade of *Pass* is awarded only if all members of the committee agree that the thesis is acceptable.

In either case, the thesis is signed by all members of the committee. The signature of the Thesis Advisor certifies that the committee has met and judged the thesis acceptable in the quality of its writing, thinking, scholarship or creativity, form and documentation to fulfill the thesis requirement for the BA degree. The signatures of the committee members indicate who, besides the Thesis Advisor, served in advising and judging the thesis. The signature of the Provost and Vice President certifies that the thesis has been accepted by the committee and has been submitted on time and in proper form to fulfill the thesis requirement for the BA degree. **The thesis must be signed by all members of the committee before being handed in to the Provost and Vice President.**

The designation of *High Honors* indicates a clearly superior thesis in all respects. The grade *Honors* indicates outstanding work in most respects. A grade of either *High Honors* or *Honors* indicates that a student has

- conceived and produced a thesis demonstrating **superior intellectual and creative work that is documented in a polished and professional way**;
- engaged in the thesis such that he/she has met all thesis deadlines established by the College, the concentration(s), and the Thesis Advisor in both semesters;
- provided the Thesis Advisor and committee members with written work and revisions in a timely manner;
- responded to comments and suggestions from the advisor and members of the Thesis Committee in a thoughtful and cooperative manner.

Numerous factors—especially overall quality of the final product and meeting deadlines—weigh heavily in the assessment of the final thesis grade. Ultimately, **the Thesis Committee members have the responsibility for evaluating the quality of the thesis student's work on the thesis and thus have the responsibility for determining a student's final thesis grade.**

Students who are not clear on the basis of their final thesis grade should consult with their Thesis Advisor and/or other members of the Thesis Committee.

In determining graduation honors, the following criteria will be used:

*Summa Cum Laude*: Cumulative GPA of at least 3.70 and a grade of *High Honors* on the thesis

*Magna Cum Laude*: Cumulative GPA of at least 3.50 and a grade of at least *Honors* on the thesis

*Cum Laude*: Cumulative GPA of at least 3.30 and a grade of *Pass* on the thesis.

## Arts Division Thesis Supplement

### A. General Schedule

1. The Office of Academic Affairs issues the Thesis Manual including a schedule listing all college due dates relating to the thesis.
2. All seniors meet weekly with their Thesis Advisor
3. Each arts major should meet with his or her Thesis Committee:
  - a. at the end of junior year
  - b. at the beginning of the thesis year
  - c. at the end of first semester
  - d. after a production (if applicable)
  - e. for a final meeting

### B. Deadlines

1. Dates for thesis exhibitions and performances must be determined by the second week of the first semester for thesis work.
2. Students are responsible for scheduling the times and dates for thesis related use of the appropriate building/space/facility. The date must be cleared with the Thesis Advisor. The Thesis Advisor should help schedule the facility with the appropriate staff in charge of scheduling the space.

### C. Individual Concentration Requirements: Listed in the Simon's Rock College Catalog

### D. Performance / Exhibition / Music Theses

#### 1. Written Components

At the committee's discretion, the student will keep a process journal containing weekly contributions to be used as a point of focus during weekly meetings with the Thesis Advisor and which may eventually become part of the final thesis. Questions to be considered include:

- a. What is the starting point of the work?
- b. What does the image, script, music, choreography indicate about the student's own personal development?
- c. What are the historical precedents for the work?
- d. What works by other artists have been influential prior to and during the thesis work?
- e. What critical theories relate to the work?
- f. What context is there for the work in the real world? How does the work relate to other art forms, politics, science, etc.?
- g. What is the student's personal aesthetic?
- h. What is the student's artistic process?

**Final Thesis Project:** To include at least fifty pages of writing in addition to art work. Photographs should be mounted on typing paper with pressure-sensitive double adhesive mounting paper. Adhesion will be best on 100% rag bond paper.

#### 2. Documentation

- a. Each Committee will determine the appropriate form of documentation for each student
- b. Most exhibitions or performances must be documented photographically, through use of video tapes, digital documentation or through the use of audio. (Please note that this is at the student's expense.)
- c. A comprehensive exhibition catalog may be used to document a visual arts presentation.

### E. Special Opportunities for Funding

#### 1. Visual Arts

- a. **The Arts Endowment for BA thesis exhibitions**, established by an anonymous donor, provides grants to help students prepare and install their thesis exhibits or to help fund thesis catalogs. Apply to Arthur Hillman or Bill Jackson.
- b. **The Sadie Miller Family Scholarship Fund** annually provides a Travel and Study scholarship for a deserving junior or senior student who shows interest and promise in the fine arts. Notice for scholarship applications will be sent to Thesis Advisors and are widely posted outside the classrooms during the spring semesters. They are due at the end of that semester (dates vary)

2. **College-wide Funding** for All Senior Theses. Refer to the information in this manual for thesis budget and funding requests.

## SENIOR THESIS EXHIBITION GUIDELINES

Senior thesis exhibitions are generally held throughout the last month of the academic year; the length of the time slot is determined by the number of students to be accommodated. However, if space is available, a student can request to hold their exhibition at different times of the year. Students may choose between the Library Atrium Gallery and the lower lobby of the Daniel Arts Center.

A meeting with the Exhibitions Curator, Margaret Grant Cherin, is required for all thesis exhibitions. Margaret will reserve the space and dates, organize refreshments with Dining Services for an opening reception and provide general advice. Margaret can be reached in the Slide Library/Exhibitions Office (upstairs at the DAC, Room 134) at 528-7389 or [mcherin@simons-rock.edu](mailto:mcherin@simons-rock.edu)

### STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY CHECKLIST

☐ **RESERVE SPACE & DATES.** This should be done at the time of the Final Thesis Proposal submission. Meet with Margaret to determine available dates for the run of your show, as well as time for installation/de-installation. Set date and time for an opening reception (check with your advisor first as he or she will want to be able to attend.)

☐ **VIDEOTAPING OF FINAL PERFORMANCE:** If a student wants to have the final thesis performance videotaped, they must make arrangements with the A/V Department at least a month in advance. The student is responsible to cover the cost of this service, either through thesis funding or by paying through the student account. The average cost of this is \$100, which includes a copy of a DVD. Email [av@simons-rock.edu](mailto:av@simons-rock.edu) to make arrangements.

☐ **FUNDING: ARTS ENDOWMENT FOR B.A. THESIS EXHIBITIONS.** Seniors may apply for modest grants to help defray the expenses of mounting an exhibit and/or preparing a catalogue to accompany their work. (This amount will depend on the quality of the proposal and the number of students applying in a given year.) Students in one of the arts concentrations who are completing senior thesis exhibits are eligible to apply for endowment funds and have first priority. Deadlines for submission of written applications to the endowment are posted early in the fall.

☐ **PUBLICITY: POSTCARDS / POSTERS.** Students are responsible for creating, printing and paying for their **postcard announcements and flyers**. Note there is an Arts Endowment for B.A. Thesis Exhibitions (see above). The announcements should include the following information:

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                        |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>1.</b> Your name                                                                                                                                                                                        | <b>2.</b> The title of the show and <u>the words THESIS EXHIBITION</u> |
| <b>3.</b> The beginning and end dates of the show.                                                                                                                                                         | <b>4.</b> The date and time of the opening reception                   |
| <b>5.</b> The location, e.g. Library Atrium Gallery or Daniel Arts Center, Simon's Rock                                                                                                                    |                                                                        |
| <b>6.</b> Gallery Hours: <b>Atrium Gallery:</b> Monday-Friday 8:30am-midnight, Saturday-Sunday 11:00am-midnight<br><b>Daniel Arts Center:</b> Monday-Friday 9:00am-10:00pm, Saturday-Sunday 2:00pm-10:00pm |                                                                        |
| <b>7.</b> An image that will be in the exhibition                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                        |

**Students must submit a proof of the postcard/poster to their advisor before going to press.**

☐ **PUBLICITY: COLLEGE WEBSITE.** Send all of the postcard information along with an image and short paragraph about your exhibition to Margaret at least one month before your show opens. Margaret will post your exhibition on the College website and add it to the Events calendar.

☐ **INSTALLATION PLAN/HANGING MATERIALS.** Students are responsible for hanging/installing their work. Determine how your work will be framed and how it will be hung. Review the frame sizes and pedestals that the College has in stock (see Margaret). Make a list of what installation materials you will need (hammer, nails, level, tape measure, etc.) Do you require shelves, pedestals? Will you need to recruit some volunteers to help? Do you anticipate needing help from Physical Plant?

☐ **LABELS.** Works of art are expected to be clearly identified with either printed labels or a checklist. See Margaret for guidance in using templates in Word to print text onto adhesive label sheets.

☐ **DE-INSTALLATION.** Students are responsible for taking their work down on time and leaving the space empty on the last day of the exhibition. Remove all nails, screws, shelves, labels, etc. and move any pedestals under the stairway (if at the DAC.) Students are also responsible for storing their work after their show comes down and must get their instructors permission to store anything within the DAC studios. Any art work left in the building after graduation will be thrown away.

☐ **ARTIST'S STATEMENT.** Prepare a typed paragraph about your show and its relationship to your thesis subject. This statement is required to be displayed on the wall with your work.

☐ **DOCUMENTATION.** Photographic documentation of student work is a required part of the final thesis binder. Students are responsible for acquiring printer specific paper to print out digital images of your work and installation views. Images should be 300dpi or higher. Monk Schane-Lydon is available to assist with printing in the Computer Lab at the DAC. A set of digital images should also be sent to Margaret to be included in the College's Digital Image Collection.

## THESIS DATES AND DEADLINES -- 2011-2012

### Deadlines for Students Beginning Theses in Fall, 2011

April 1, 2011 Preliminary Thesis Proposal to Academic Affairs

August 24-25 Senior Workshop at Simon's Rock

### **THESIS I = First semester of thesis: Fall 2011**

Aug. 29 Fall classes begin. Register for BAST 404 (Thesis I)  
*Mon.*

Sept. 2 BA Progress Report reviewed and submitted to Registrar  
*Fri* Thesis Advisor and Student should select remaining members of Thesis Committee, if applicable, before this date.

Sept. 9 Student meets with Thesis Committee to review Thesis Proposal, budget, and Funding  
*Fri.* Request (if applicable) and to receive recommendations for revisions and outline the thesis schedule for the year.

Sept. 14 Student submits copy of **Thesis Proposal** and **Thesis Funding Request** (signed  
*Wed.* by the Thesis Advisor) to the Office of Academic Affairs, and submits an electronic (PDF) copy of the Thesis Proposal to [thesis@simons-rock.edu](mailto:thesis@simons-rock.edu).

Dec. 7 **Before this date**, the student must submit a written self-evaluation of thesis work to  
*Wed.* date, together with an annotated bibliography and/or other appropriate materials, to the Thesis Advisor and Thesis Committee, and meet with the Committee to review the student's progress.

Dec. 14 Self-evaluation and materials due to the Committee and the Office of Academic  
*Wed.* Affairs

### **THESIS II = Second semester of thesis: Spring 2012**

Jan. 23 Spring classes begin. Register for BAST 405 (Thesis II) if not already done at  
*Mon.* registration in fall.

April 18 Student must submit copies of the complete thesis including the thesis title and abstract to  
*Wed.* all members of the Thesis Committee for approval. These should include all formatting and numbering. No further *student-initiated* revisions permitted.

**Thesis title** (as it will appear in the commencement program) sent by email to:  
[thesis@simons-rock.edu](mailto:thesis@simons-rock.edu), or submitted to Academic Affairs.

**Thesis Abstract** sent by email to [thesis@simons-rock.edu](mailto:thesis@simons-rock.edu), or submitted to Academic Affairs.

April 27 **Before this date**, the student must hold a final meeting with the Thesis Committee  
*Fri.* and receive approval of the thesis.

May 9 Students submit one final copy of the thesis, **signed by all members** of the Thesis  
*Wed* Committee, to the Provost and Vice President by noon. An electronic copy must be also be submitted at this time.(guidelines to follow).

## Deadlines for Students Beginning Theses in Spring, 2012

- April 1, 2011                      Preliminary Thesis Proposal to Academic Affairs
- August 24-25, 2011              Senior Workshop at Simon's Rock
- November 2, 2011                Revised Preliminary Thesis Proposal to Academic Affairs if applicable  
**THESIS I = First semester of thesis: SPRING 2012**
- January 23                      Fall classes begin. Register for BAST 404 (Thesis I)  
*Mon.*
- Jan. 27                              BA Progress Report reviewed and submitted to Registrar.  
*Fri.*                                  Thesis Advisor and Student should select remaining members of Thesis Committee, if applicable, before this date.
- Feb. 3                                Student meets with Thesis Committee to review Thesis  
*Fri.*                                  Proposal, budget, and Funding Request if applicable, and to receive recommendations for revisions, and outline schedule for the thesis year.
- Feb. 8                                Student submits copy of **Thesis Proposal** and **Thesis Funding Request** (signed  
*Wed.*                                  by the Thesis Advisor) to the Office of Academic Affairs, and submits an electronic (PDF) copy of the Thesis Proposal to [thesis@simons-rock.edu](mailto:thesis@simons-rock.edu).
- \* \* \* \*
- May 2                                **Before this date**, the student must submit a written self-evaluation of thesis work to  
*Wed.*                                  date, together with an annotated bibliography and/or other appropriate materials, to the Thesis Advisor and Thesis Committee, and meet with the Committee to review the student's progress.
- May 9                                Self-evaluation and materials due to the Committee and the Office of Academic.  
*Fri.*                                  Affairs

### **THESIS II = Second semester of thesis: Fall 2011**

#### **(Actual dates to come when academic calendar is set)**

Fall classes begin. Register for BAST 405 (Thesis II) if not already done at registration in spring.

Student must submit copies of the of complete thesis including the thesis abstract to all members of the Thesis Committee for approval. These should include all formatting and numbering. No further *student-initiated* revisions permitted.

**Thesis title** (as it will appear in the commencement program) sent by email to [thesis@simons-rock.edu](mailto:thesis@simons-rock.edu), or submitted to Academic Affairs.

**Abstract** sent by email to [thesis@simons-rock.edu](mailto:thesis@simons-rock.edu), or submitted to Academic Affairs.

**Before this date**, the student must hold a final meeting with the Thesis Committee and receive approval of the thesis.

Students submit one final copy of the thesis, **signed by all members** of the Thesis Committee, to the Provost and Vice President by noon. An electronic copy must be also be submitted at this time.(guidelines to follow).