English Graduate Student

Thesis Manual

Revised Edition Fall 2018
Important Reminders from the Chair

The following directions are to help you plan for a timely submission. They do not replace other guidelines. It is your responsibility to read the guidelines from the library and the department carefully and note down your deadlines and requirements.

We suggest the following steps:

• Identify your thesis project; identify your primary and secondary thesis advisors. Make a schedule to meet with your advisors regularly.
• Make sure your thesis advisors give you a clear sense of expectations in terms of thesis content and format. Set up a regular schedule to meet. Find out if your advisors want you to send them updates through email or hard copy. Stay in touch. If you are having a tough semester and can’t spend time on thesis, let your thesis advisor know and work out a new timetable.
• Once you reach your final semester to complete your thesis, begin to work on a countdown schedule. Check the academic calendar on Brooklyn’s LIU website. Note two dates: the last day to submit application for graduation and the last day to submit thesis to the library. These dates cannot be missed. They are not flexible and they are your responsibility if you wish to graduate on time.
• Look at the last day to submit your thesis to the library and subtract one week from this day. Then count back as follows:
  1) Submission to chair (once both advisors have first signed off) should be at least two weeks before the final submission day. Make sure you include two signature pages.
  2) Submission to second reader is to be determined by consulting with your reader.
  3) Submission to your primary thesis advisor to be determined by your predetermined schedule with your advisor.
• Submission to the Chair is your last step in this process. By this stage, it should be edited carefully. You may give the Chair a thesis that still needs some work, but s/he should not under any circumstances have to be your copyeditor. Remember, the Chair reserves the right to reject your thesis and send you back to your thesis advisor for more review. That is another reason why it is important to be careful about deadlines.
• Throughout the process, keep in touch with Jacob Matkov, Graduate Advisor.
Thesis Guidelines

Both the MFA in Creative Writing and the MA in English have general guidelines to review when you are thinking about your thesis requirement. Read the descriptions below carefully.

MFA in English—Concentration in Creative Writing

The thesis in Creative Writing will be a substantial work in fiction, nonfiction, poetry, playwriting, or cross genre. The length is determined by you and your first reader. It needs to be paginated, have standard margins, and include an abstract and a coda. The abstract is a brief introduction to your thesis. The coda is an afterword, a concluding personal statement and reflection on your creative thesis. The coda should be double-spaced, a minimum of ten pages, and a maximum of twenty pages in length (NOTE: The coda length is aside from the number of pages of your actual creative thesis). It should reference literary influences, your experience as a graduate student in the MFA Creative Writing program at LIU Brooklyn, and how you have developed as a writer.

As you work on your thesis, it is imperative to start thinking about who you will ask to be your primary and secondary thesis advisors. A primary thesis advisor has expertise in your thesis area and is the main person with whom you will work on your thesis. The secondary thesis advisor may be asked to review your thesis occasionally and provide feedback to you: another eye, so to speak. Be sure to begin working with them even prior to registering for ENG 708 (Thesis). ENG 708 is considered a 3 credit course (it is not a real course, however, but allows you to maintain part or full time status while working on your thesis).

MA in English—Concentration in Literature

The thesis in Literature is normally an extension of work already undertaken in or suggested by a course. The thesis usually takes more than one semester to be developed, revised, and completed. Its scope should be precisely defined so that the topic can be discussed intelligently in approximately 25 pages or more. In addition to primary text(s), the thesis must include a significant number of secondary sources demonstrating that you are familiar with the major critical approaches to the subject. The thesis may be based on a single author, genre analysis, social or historical perspectives on culture, critical traditions, or literary movements or periods.

MA in English—Concentration in Writing & Rhetoric

The thesis in Writing and Rhetoric is normally an extension of work already undertaken in or suggested by a course, and will take more than one semester to be developed, revised, and
completed. The thesis should be, a) scholarly writing based on library, field, or classroom research, including a significant number of secondary sources that demonstrate familiarity with the relevant literature; or, b) creative or topical non-fiction, including full-length, subject-driven books, memoir, and personal and informal essays.

For the scholarly thesis, the scope should be precisely defined so that the topic can be discussed intelligently in approximately 25 pages or more.

For the creative non-fiction, thesis rules are parallel to those in the MFA in Creative Writing Program: must include a coda, a minimum of ten pages, reflecting on literary influences, problems of genre, process, and development as a writer.

**MA in English—Concentration in Professional Writing**

The thesis in Professional Writing is normally an extension of work already undertaken in or suggested by a writing course taken in the professional writing concentration. The thesis will generally take more than one semester to be developed, revised, and completed. Its scope should be precisely defined so the topic can be discussed intelligently in approximately 25 pages or more. The thesis should develop principally from primary and/or secondary research.

The main document in the thesis should take the form of an academic research paper or a research-based professional writing genre, such as a report, grant proposal, or informational website. This main document may be accompanied by a portfolio of supporting or related documents, such as a report accompanied by a proposal, or a website accompanied by a justification report.
Planning and Registering for Your Thesis (ENG 708)

Registering for Thesis

You may register for thesis after you have completed at least 21 credits with a B average or more. You may take up to five years to complete your thesis. After five years, a letter from the Chair and authorization by the Dean of Graduate Students is required in order to extend the 5-year limit. Once you have registered for your thesis, you do not have to register again (no matter how long it takes to complete it).

Make sure, after all of your course work is completed, that you maintain matriculation during fall and spring semesters until your thesis is complete, to keep your file active. You enroll online with the course code “MM1” to maintain matriculation, and there is a University fee instead of tuition. Please do this each semester or else you will have to pay a huge bill when you do complete your thesis.

English 708, the thesis, counts for 3 credits toward your degree. It is not a class, but an independent process you initiate with your thesis advisor. You will receive an incomplete for it until the library informs the Registrar that your thesis has been accepted and is ready to be archived.

Selecting Your Topic and Thesis Advisors

Your MFA thesis is a reflection of your creative interests and work. You will likely be thinking about it from the very start of your program. No thesis proposal form is required.

Your MA thesis is usually a reflection of your major interest area and may originate from something you have begun in one or more of your courses. Be sure to speak to professors with expertise in your interest area. They will help you focus and refine your ideas. When you have a clear idea about the focus of your thesis, fill out the Thesis Proposal form and use it to recruit your primary and secondary thesis advisors. When you have them established, have them sign the form and give it to Jacob Matkov for your file.

Professors are not compelled to be your thesis advisor, so remember to request help from the professors you hope to work with, and don’t be offended if they cannot work with you. If you have difficulty locating someone with expertise in your area, speak to Jacob Matkov or the Chair of the Department for leads. The primary thesis advisor meets with you regularly and is the
person with the expertise to help you. The secondary thesis advisor spends less time and serves as a second set of eyes and ideas for you.

Remember, only full time English faculty members can serve as thesis advisors unless otherwise authorized by the Chair. For MFA students, a visiting writer may serve as a thesis advisor if authorized by the Director of the MFA Program and the Chair.
THESIS PROPOSAL FORM (MA only)

Degree Sought:

MA in English (Please check concentration)

- Professional Writing____
- Literature_____________
- Writing & Rhetoric____

Name of Graduate Student________________________________I.D.#________________

Date__________

GPA__________

Description of Proposed Thesis (Use Other Side if Needed):

Primary Thesis Advisor: __________________________

Secondary Advisor: __________________________
PROCESS FOR THESIS COMPLETION AND RELEVANT DATES

It is your responsibility to keep in touch with your thesis advisors. Make sure to give them opportunities to respond to your drafts. You should have an on-going working relationship to make sure your thesis is focused and representative of the best work you can do.

When your work is nearing completion (a semester away), look at LIU Brooklyn’s library formal requirements that you must follow. They are included in this manual. You also need to be very vigilant about dates and deadlines. At the beginning of every semester, Jacob sends a memo to graduate students with important dates. If you are looking for this information in advance, you can look at the LIU Academic Calendar on LIU Brooklyn’s website for the semester you intend to graduate. There are two important dates there, so write them down here.

1) Last date to apply for graduation_________________ (apply online*).

2) Last date to submit thesis to library_______________.

Once you have these dates filled in, follow the process recommended by the Chair in the introduction to this manual. Fill in the dates.

1) Submission to Chair________ (at least three weeks prior to submission to library date).

2) Submission to second thesis advisor for final sign off on front page (two copies) __________.

3) Submission to primary thesis advisor for final sign off on front page (two copies) __________.

Do not wait until the last minute to have your readers and the Chair sign off on your thesis. If it does not meet the appropriate standards and criteria for an acceptable thesis in your program area (including editing and format criteria), your readers will not sign off on it and you will have to delay your graduation. It is your responsibility to make sure your readers have had time for input and you have taken the time to make sure the thesis meets approval from all parties involved.

Make sure all your coursework is complete. Check your MyLIU page for incompletes and blocks. Handle these things in a timely fashion so they will not interfere with registration and graduation.

*The application must be submitted on time, which is early on in the semester, so don’t miss the date. Missing this filing date will result in a delay in your graduation. To be on the safe side, submit early and if needed, you can always submit again for another semester. There is no limit on how many times you can file for graduation, and filing is free.
TECHNICAL FORMAT FOR THESIS

For the MA theses, the technical format—page length, type face, margins, words per page, documentation, notes and Works Cited—must conform to standard academic style as set out by the latest edition of The MLA Handbook.

For MFA theses, the technical format must meet the standards set by the Director of the MFA in Creative Writing Program.

In addition, the LIU Brooklyn Library requires the following format for your thesis:

1) A Title Page that includes: title of work, author of work; university and department; names and signatures of your primary and secondary readers and a Chair of the department; and date. You need two originals of this page. See the title page samples in this manual. Your title page must be set up exactly like these with the same wording, spacing, and lines for signatures.

2) A Table of Contents which may be as specific as necessary to reflect your work.

3) An Abstract Page that should be no more than 300 words. Two originals also required.

4) The Body of the Thesis which follows departmental/program rules for length and form.

5) The 10+ page Coda for all MFA in Creative Writing theses as well as Non-fiction or Memoir theses for the MA in English, concentration in writing & rhetoric.

6) A Works Cited page that follows MLA guidelines (for MA theses and codas).

7) Not required, but allowed, a dedication and/or acknowledgement page for special recognitions or appreciation as well as any special permission to use someone’s published or unpublished work.

Cover Page and Abstract Samples

The library requires two copies of the signed cover page. Please follow the exact for very carefully. The first is an MFA Sample. The second is an MA sample.

The library also requires an abstract. Sample MFA and MA abstracts follow.

The other formats for your thesis are self-explanatory.
THE ESSENTIAL HITS OF SHORTY BON BON: POEMS

By

WILLIE PERDOMO

A MASTER’S THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY
OF LONG ISLAND UNIVERSITY BROOKLYN,
RICHARD L. CONOLLY COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
OF MASTER OF FINE ARTS IN CREATIVE WRITING

MAJOR DEPARTMENT

SPONSORING COMMITTEE

__________________                                      ______________________
1st Reader

__________________                                      ________________
Chair                                                                        2nd Reader

DATE: May 2012
THE NEED FOR CHANGE IN THE BILDUNGSROMAN

BY

ROBIN JILL KESLONSKY

A MASTER’S THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY
OF LONG ISLAND UNIVERSITY BROOKLYN,
RICHARD L. CONOLLY SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN ENGLISH

MAJOR DEPARTMENT

SPONSORING COMMITTEE

__________________                      ______________

__________________                      ______________

1st Reader

__________________                      ______________

Co-Chair                        2nd Reader

DATE:  May, 2012
Three Abstract Samples

(Courtesy of MFA in Creative Writing graduate Willie Perdomo; MA in English graduate Jamie Barker; MA in English, concentration in professional writing; and Nicole Sampson, MA in English, concentration in literature).

ABSTRACT (MFA SAMPLE)—Willie Perdomo, (May 2012)

The Essential Hits of Shorty Bon Bon is a collection of poems that re-imagines a conga player’s impressions on the evening he records with a classic descarga band in a New York City studio. The landscape of his impressions is concerned with love, apprenticeship, diaspora, and death. The collection explores ahistorical approaches to a factual, historical moment. The accuracy of the facts plays a limited background to what may have possibly gone through Shorty Bon Bon’s mind when the red “Recording” light was turned on and it was his turn to play.

ABSTRACT (MA SAMPLE)—Jaime Barker, Prof. Writing, (May 2008)

Organizations that publicly communicate about and advocate for issues related to the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender (GLBT) community design their Web pages to inform specific audiences about their political and social agendas. Using verbal and non-verbal cues, an organization builds its website with the intention of reaching a certain population of visitors, or Ingroup. With the increasing popularity of the World Wide Web, organizational pages can potentially reach anyone with Internet access, even though many visitors are not considered part of the Ingroup audience. Through the structure and design of the page, visitors are able to deduce in seconds whether or not they are part of the intended Ingroup. Visitors to the Web site who cannot access or relate to the verbal and non-verbal cues are part of the Outgroup, or unintended audience members. This study uses a sampling from two GLBT, two anti-gay, and two mainstream “gay friendly: organizational web sites to access, compare, and contrast how non-profit organizations use their Web pages to include some visitors and exclude others. Each organization communicates a message about the GLBT community to their intended Ingroup, while at the same time representing the GLBT community to Outgroup visitors.
ABSTRACT (MA SAMPLE), Nicole Sampson, Literature, (Sept. 2013)

This thesis facilitates analytical discourse around the eighteenth-century courtship-marriage plot as an exemplar of the mature adult relationship that operates primarily through women’s understanding of private, “inner” spaces. In consideration of twenty-first century courtship rituals, marrying for money is culturally frowned upon; however, courtship rituals leading to financially secure marriages in eighteenth-century England was a time honored tradition. This thesis presents an analysis of the courtship plot in Jane Austen’s *Northanger Abbey* and *Emma*. Within these works, courtship, intimacy, maturity and private space are concepts analogous to the various relationships not only exemplified by hero and heroine, but by supporting characters whose ideas of relationships are well entrenched within the thematic concepts. Additionally, in contrast to how the characters develop relationships and the creative ways women use space, the outcome of financial security that women obtain through marriage, is seen as an admiration in the wake of eighteenth-century patriarchy. As a result, the financial security is analyzed as a redress for women who are oppressed by patriarchal systems.
SUBMITTING THE THESIS

When you have completed your thesis and received signatures from all required faculty members, you can submit your thesis to the library.

Please go to the LIU Brooklyn library website. You will find a section under “Library Services” called “Dissertation & Thesis Submission.” Please follow the instructions there.

It is important to take this step the semester you plan to submit thesis. The library has a habit of updating forms and their website without notifying academic departments / advisors. The only way to ensure you have the most current forms is to download them as you prepare to deposit your thesis at the library.

REMEMBER: you receive a welcome back memo every semester from Jacob Matkov. This email always contains pertinent deadlines and instructions. Carefully hold onto this email so that you have all of the information necessary for the semester you plan to submit thesis / graduate.

1. Take the forms and payment to the bursar window on the 3rd floor of the S building and pay the fee(s).
2. Once you have your stamped form(s), take all required paperwork, along with the thesis, two copies of the cover page and two copies of the abstract to the third floor of the library and ask for Marjorie Charlot.
   a. If she is not available, I advise that you ask when she’ll be back and return then. I do not recommend leaving the thesis with another employee or workstudy student.
3. Marjorie Charlot will confirm all paperwork is in order and take the thesis off to be processed.

Any questions you have about the forms, payment, ProQuest, or optional services like binding, should be directed to Marjorie Charlot in the library (ask for her at the third floor library desk or email marjorie.charlot@liu.edu)