

THESIS GUIDELINES

Department of Foreign Languages
West Virginia University

Students who wish to write a thesis must meet the following requirements in order to be eligible to complete the thesis option:

1. Students must have a 3.6 GPA in required content courses in first two semesters.
2. The student must submit an approved thesis proposal to his/her thesis committee by the third week of the third semester of study.

The very first step in writing a thesis is the selection of a topic. It should represent an area in which you are particularly interested and to which you are willing to dedicate your time and energy in research. You should discuss the topic with faculty in your field of study, for they will be able to assist you in better defining the topic.

During your second semester of study, you must complete the “MA Thesis Committee” form below and submit attached to it a brief description (1 page/250-300 words) of the proposed thesis topic. The form must be signed by the thesis committee, and copies will be made for the committee members, for you, and for your file. (NOTE: This document indicates the faculty members’ willingness to serve on the thesis committee but does not imply final approval of the topic.)

The minimum number of committee members is three, of whom at least two, including the committee chair, are regular members of the graduate faculty. You may also ask a professor from another department to serve as an ‘outside reader’, especially if your topic touches on areas beyond the scope of this department.

After forming a committee, you must prepare a formal thesis proposal, including a preliminary bibliography. Before beginning the proposal, be sure to consult with your committee on how to structure the proposal. The proposal shall be typewritten (double spaced, 12 pt font) and be written in accordance with the appropriate style for the area of study, MLA or APA, with which you are expected to be very familiar. The proposal shall be 5-8 pages (1250-2000 words) in length, including notes but excluding the bibliography. You must submit an approved thesis proposal to your thesis committee by the third week of the third semester of study, in order to continue with the thesis process. When the proposal has been approved, you will need to give a copy of the proposal, with committee signatures, to the Graduate Program Coordinator; this copy will be placed in your file.

After approval of your proposal, you will need to maintain close contact with your committee regarding the progress of the thesis. It is strongly suggested that you submit to the committee individual sections or chapters of the thesis throughout the remainder of your course of study in order to receive progressive feedback. The committee is expected to provide you with specific suggestions and comments for revision in a timely fashion. Although the exact length of the thesis will depend on several factors, it should have a minimum of 50 pages, including notes but excluding the bibliography.

After the thesis has been found acceptable by the committee, the oral defense/examination will be scheduled, at which time the committee will ask questions relating to the specific topic and content of your thesis. Also, although by writing a thesis you are not required to take the written comprehensive examination, you are still

responsible for the MA reading list in your area, and during the oral defense, you may be asked to comment on the reading list as well as course work, particularly as they relate to the thesis. The oral defense/examination normally lasts between 1.5-2 hours, and must be scheduled before the deadline for submitting the signed blue shuttle sheet certifying that all requirements for graduation have been met in the semester you intend to graduate.

All theses and dissertations must be submitted electronically to the library. For the submission deadline and electronic submission guidelines, please consult the following website <http://www.libraries.wvu.edu/theses/index.htm> . Although your committee will be able to provide you with some help in these matters, it is ultimately your responsibility to insure that all such requirements and deadlines are satisfied.

MA THESIS COMMITTEE
Department of Foreign Languages
West Virginia University

Student's name: _____

Area of Emphasis: _____

Expected date of graduation: _____

Committee:

Professor's Names (printed or typed)	Regular Graduate Faculty?	Signature
,Chair		

*** You must attach a one page (250-300 words) description of your thesis topic.***

NOTE: This document indicates the faculty members' willingness to serve on your committee given the general description of the topic. It does not imply their final approval of the topic. You must submit a formal proposal to the committee (see attachment "Thesis Guidelines") for said approval.

Please turn in the signed form to the Graduate Program Coordinator.