

Morehouse College Philosophy Senior Thesis Guidelines

Name: _____ Email: _____

This document should be printed out, referred to while preparing the senior thesis and submitted – with proper signatures and documentation – when the thesis is complete.

From the Morehouse Catalogue:

In order to qualify for graduation, every philosophy major must write a substantial research paper either (a) in one of the regular courses in the major or (b) in a directed study course.

The research paper must have at least 20 pages of text (at 250 words per page) and a bibliography of works cited containing at least 10 books and 10 periodical articles. This research can be carried out in the junior or senior year. If a student wants to write his research paper in a regular course in his major, he must seek the approval of the instructor before the last day of classes of the previous semester. Similarly, a student who decides to do his research project as a part of the directed study course must obtain the approval of the professor who will teach the course and make the research paper a part of it. This, too, must be done before the last day of classes of the semester preceding the course.

Every student must fill out a copy of the appropriate departmental form to register for the research paper and submit it to the department chair before the last day of classes of the semester preceding the research project. A research paper that is done as part of the requirements for a regular course should count for at least one third of the grade for the course.

A copy of the final paper should be given to the department chair by the end of the semester in which the project is carried out.

This policy makes the research requirement a part of the 30-hour requirement for a philosophy major.

Please make sure that you read a standard guide to writing philosophy papers, such as James Pryor's Guidelines on Writing a Philosophy paper:

<http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/writing.html>

1. **Initial Faculty Consult:** You should *consult with* at least three faculty members in philosophy as you prepare your **thesis's topic(s), argument(s) and organization**. Who will these three faculty members be?

Please document your discussions with these faculty members, as you develop your plans for your thesis.

2. **Faculty Advisors:** You should find at least two faculty members in philosophy who you will meet with regularly (weekly or bi-weekly) about your thesis and they will serve as your co-advisors. Who will these two faculty members be?

Please document your discussions with these faculty members, as you develop your plans for your thesis.

3. Topic(s): What will your thesis's topic or topics be? Why is this a *philosophical* topic?

4. Librarian Consult: Please schedule a meeting with Mr. Brad Ost, at the AUC Woodruff library, about how to better use the library's databases in philosophy:

<http://www.auctr.edu/about/people/subject-librarians/>

Please document your discussions with Mr. Ost and review with your advisors what you learned about how to use the library research resources.

5. Research:

a. Please first find at least two entries (total) from online philosophical encyclopedias (Internet Encyclopedia and/or Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy and/or Routledge Encyclopedia, etc.) concerning your topic(s). Carefully read those articles and share with your advisors.

b. Search the Philosophers' Index (through the library) for your topics. Share your results with your advisors.

c. Please share any other research materials (such as books, online materials, other sources) that you will use for your thesis with your advisors.

6. Organization: Your thesis must have clearly labelled sections, including an *Introduction*, *Conclusion*, and *Objections*. What other sections will your thesis have?

Present your outline to your advisors and notify them of changes to the outline, as your thesis develops.

7. Writing and Editing: Good writing requires time, reflection and careful revision. *With your advisors, find and/or develop resources to help improve your writing.*

8. Citations and Bibliography: An official bibliographic citation method must be used. Which will you use?

9. Drafts of your thesis: Multiple drafts are required, so you must arrange a timeline with your advisor.

a. First draft, due:

b. Second draft, due:

c. Other drafts, as needed.

10. Presentation: Please be prepared to present your thesis to your fellow students and advisors and others on *Thesis Presentation Day*, and engage that audience's questions and comments and then *revise accordingly for final submission*.