Honors Thesis/Projects for Africana Studies

Concentrators should identify a thesis sponsor during their junior year. Working in consultation with a faculty advisor, students should begin reading the secondary literature related to their topics in the summer prior to their senior year. At the beginning of the concentrator's senior year, the student must complete a thesis proposal. This proposal, not to exceed three (3) typewritten pages, must be approved and signed by a committee, including the faculty sponsor who is to direct the Honor's thesis, the concentration advisor, and the second reader. The proposal is due by the second week of the 1st semester and should be filed with the Director of Undergraduate Studies by the thesis advisor. The proposal is a blueprint for your thesis, subject to change as you move deeper into the research and writing. However, the better you devise the plan, the more it will help you.

The Proposal
A proposal is a written research plan that defines a problem, outlines what you are going to do and why, and describes how you are going to do it. Its precise form can be worked out with your thesis sponsor but, in general, a proposal should:
- define the general topic/question/issue;
- review the existing scholarship;
- describe the central research questions or objectives;
- discuss the methodological approaches you will draw on to answer the questions (e.g. archival materials; interviews; critical reading of texts); and
- state the significance and originality of your topic.

In the proposal, explain how your topic differs from the work of others and the insights you bring to the problem. Discuss your choice of sources and how you are “reading” your materials and organizing your thesis. A detailed annotated chapter outline is advised for the proposal, as it will help you conceptualize the entire project. This outline will change as you conduct more research and begin to write the first draft of the thesis. Also, provide a secondary and primary bibliography. Secondary readings should be extensive.

The Thesis
The Honor's candidate should enroll in an independent study with their sponsor (at least one, preferably two, semesters is required). Students should work out the basis of evaluation with their sponsor but in general students should complete writing a draft of at least one chapter and part of a second chapter during semester 1. Participation in the Africana Studies senior-level capstone seminar AFRI 1360 is also required.
For students completing graduation requirements by the end of Semester 1 (Fall), theses/projects must be submitted to the department in early December (dates will vary by calendar year and will be posted on the website.) For students completing graduation requirements by Semester 2 (Spring), final version of the theses/project should be submitted to the department around April 20th. (A draft should go to your sponsor and second reader around mid-March. Again, dates for submission of your initial (not final) draft will vary slightly and are to be determined in consultation with your advisor.)

Your thesis should have a bibliography of primary and secondary works and documents consulted. All end/footnotes, chapter headings, tables of contents, bibliographies, etc. must be in an accepted form. The form is your choice, as long as you are consistent. See Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* or the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations.*

**Submitting the Thesis**

*There will be no extension of the due date for submission of the final version of your thesis.*

After submission of the final version and the public presentation, the faculty will evaluate the work and may require minor revisions. At this point, the faculty committee will make a recommendation for honors. At the end of this process, submit two (3) professionally BOUND copies of your thesis (one for each reader and one for the department) as well as an electronic copy.

**Title Page**

The thesis title page should present the following information:

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“Title of Thesis”
By
“Author”
Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Bachelor of Arts
In the Department of Africana Studies at Brown University
Thesis Advisor: “Name of your advisor”
Name of second reader
Date
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