Bachelor's Essay Guidelines

Recommended Guidelines for Departmental Bachelor's Essays

The Bachelor's Essay is a 6 credit hour independent research project usually completed in the senior year. The Bachelor's Essay represents the culmination of the undergraduate career. This type of independent, in-depth research will help a student prepare for the rigor of graduate school and life beyond the classroom while enhancing knowledge in the chosen area.

The student must register for two full terms of work (Summer I, Summer II, Fall, Spring): 3 hours of 499 Research in Term A and 3 hours of 499 Research in Term B. Ideally, a student should begin planning for the essay in their junior year by identifying a topic of interest and a potential essay advisor. There are two “Application for Enrollment in Bachelor’s Essay” forms due to the Registrar’s Office – 499 A (Term A) and 499 B (Term B). On this form, the advisor, title, and short description of the topic to be studied are listed. Signatures are required from both the faculty advisor and the department chair before the form can be submitted to the Registrar’s Office. A syllabus with detailed SLOs and a clock to credit description of the project showing at least 700 minutes per credit hour must be submitted with the forms along with a student degree audit.

The Bachelor’s Essay must be written in the language of the student’s major (French) and should comprise a minimum of 40 pages of text (excluding notes and bibliography) in the French language. It must develop a clear and original argument. It should be of near publishable quality. The student will follow MLA format, and the essay must include a title page, an abstract, and a table of contents, plus any necessary appendices. The pages must be numbered, and any chapter or section headings be included as well. The essay is to be written in Times New Roman, 12- point font.

The final essay will be presented (20-minute presentation) to the department at the end of the second term. The oral presentation is to be made in conjunction with a PowerPoint (or equivalent) show. A question and answer period will follow the presentation.

DIVISION OF WORKLOAD

Broadly speaking, the research takes up the first term, leaving the second term free to devote to writing and revising. The first term (3 credit hours) should be spent in:

- Identifying some primary sources to incorporate into the research.
- Developing the bibliography, becoming familiar with the literature, and submitting an annotated bibliography of at least 20 entries in French at the end of the first term.
- Developing a thesis statement, with an abstract
- Making an outline of the essay (with an abstract, if that is possible at this time)

The second (and final) term (3 credit hours) should focus on the writing, with clear deadlines for the introduction, subsequent chapters, and their revisions. The completed essay will be presented to the department, and any necessary revisions will be made to the essay before a final copy is delivered to the library for binding. Drafts are essential before the final version, so revisions of each segment of the essay will be required (introduction, chapters, conclusion).

TIMELINE

Term A

- Early in the term
- Have your project topic chosen
- Begin collecting sources and reading
By the end of term Finish reading  
Write and hand in an annotated bibliography and detailed prospectus of the project with thesis statement, abstract and outline

**Term B**
- Week 1 Begin writing  
- Week 3 Hand in introduction of essay  
- Week 6 Hand in 1st half of essay  
- Week 9 Hand in 2nd half of essay  
- Week 12 Complete revision  
- Week 14 Oral presentation of Bachelor’s Essay

**EVALUATION** (A letter grade is submitted at the end of each term)

**Term A:**
- Annotated Bibliography (w/ at least 20 sources) 75%  
- Prospectus of essay with thesis statement, abstract, and outline 25%  

**Term B:**
- Progress Reports (weeks 3, 6, 9, 12) 10%  
- Oral Presentation 20%  
- Final Essay 70%  

These guidelines were amended on Thursday, May 7, 2020