

American University of Central Asia
Department of European Studies
Bishkek
Kyrgyzstan
Academic Year 2014 / 2015

Senior Thesis Seminar I

Credits: 6
Sessions: 30 (29)

Course Instructor: Alexander Wolters

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Office hours: TBA; or you may meet me by prior appointment
Office: Room 214

Course description

This course is designed for European Studies and American Studies senior students writing senior thesis and seeks to create a discussion forum for students' senior thesis projects. The overall goal of the course is to observe the progress of students on their senior theses. Doing so, it will seek to create a bridge to a successful preparation and defense of the senior thesis.

Please follow the link for more Information: https://www.auca.kg/en/eu_thesis/

A senior thesis is a large, independent research project that European Studies and American Studies students undertake in the senior year of their study. The senior thesis involves two semesters of independent research and writing efforts resulting in a substantial paper on a research topic of the student. Such a work requires from ES / AMS students a great deal of discipline, self-motivation, and creative thinking. For formalities students have to comply with, for deadlines and format, the participants are asked to check with the Qualifying Rules.

Course Organiser

The Course Organiser is Alexander Wolters

European Studies Department, American University of Central Asia

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Teaching methods

Lectures, discussion-rounds, student progress report presentations and writing exercises

Organization of the course:

1. I am going to divide students into small groups if the similarity of interest allows for such division. These groups will provide the opportunity to give and receive comments on individual work. Doing so they will act as peer groups.
2. Participation in the class is obligatory for students writing senior thesis. Missing of classes for more than three times will result in final grade "D", missing more than six times will result in final grade "F".
3. Students should submit during the semester five documents:
 1. Thesis proposal (300 words)
 2. Extended senior thesis info sheet
 3. Literature & Data review (3.000 words)
 4. Research Design Presentation
 5. Draft thesis (6.000 words).

For the deadlines please refer to the "Qualifying Rules".

4. Some classes will be devoted to a discussion of ongoing research projects by students, research methods, related bibliography, and data.
5. Students will be required to make formal presentations in class: on their thesis proposal (5 min) and on their progress report (15 min).

Changes to the syllabus

Additional *assessments* will not be added to the syllabus; however I reserve the right to alter reading or/and topics to meet the needs of the students taking the course. Additional *readings*

may be scheduled if they relate to specific problems researching or drafting the BA papers. A reader with all necessary texts will be provided for the course.

Plagiarism

For any written assessment the **AUCA Essay Writing and Anti-plagiarism Rules** apply. In addition, students should submit a statement certifying that the paper has been written independently, that no assistance and source other than those stated has been used and that quotations have been marked as such.

Students are expected to think for themselves and to express themselves in their own words. In that limited sense their work should be original. It must not be plagiarised. Plagiarism is the appropriation of another person's thoughts or words without attribution. Plagiarism is an offence against Academy Rules and leads to the failure of the course (F grade).

Attendance

All students enrolled for the course are required to attend all seminars. A register of attendance at any meeting of the class will be taken.

Practicalities

Ours is a large class, which means that all of the usual elements of academic courtesy – that you turn up on time to class, that you listen when the Course Organiser or one of your peers is talking, that you hand in work on time – become all the more important to the functioning of the class. Students absent without good reason, constantly late in person or with their work, have ‘negative participation’ in class will be dropped from the class (F grade).

Requirements

Participation (incl. “Research Proposal” and “Research Design Presentations”)	25%
Extended senior thesis info sheet	15%
Literature & Data review (Mid-Term Paper)	25%
Thesis Draft (Final Term Paper)	35%

The mid-term and final term grades will be given jointly by the course instructor and the supervisor (50% - 50%)

Concerns about progress

It is the policy of the course that students worried about progress in individual subjects may discuss their work (including, in broad terms, how they went wrong in units of assessment) with the Course Organiser. Students worried about progress in writing may discuss their work with me and with their supervisor.

Special needs

Students with special needs are encouraged to bring this information to the attention (in confidence) of the Course Organiser and Supervisor.

Course Schedule

Week	Date	Subject
1	2.9.2014 4.9.2014	Getting to know each other & thesis projects The ES formal requirements on senior thesis
2	9.9.2014 11.9.2014	<i>The Introduction</i> How to narrow down the topic? The point of relevance! Research question and hypothesis
3	16.9.2014 18.9.2014	Proposal Presentations Proposal Presentations
4	23.9.2014 25.9.2014	<i>Scientific Writing & Style</i> How to Write Scientifically? MLA (Presentation)
5	30.9.2014 2.10.2014	<i>The Literature Review</i> Selecting Literature Developing the Argument
6	7.10.2014 9.10.2014	<i>The Methodology Section</i> The Research Design The Research Design
7	14.10.2014 16.10.2014	Comparative Method Quantitative social research methods
8	21.10.2014 23.10.2014	Qualitative social research Methods: Interviews Extended Senior Thesis Info Sheet - <i>Midterm Review and Exam</i>
9	28.10.2014 30.10.2014	<i>Towards Findings & Analysis</i> Students Research Design Presentations Students Research Design Presentations
10	4.11.2014 6.11.2014	Students Research Design Presentations Students Research Design Presentations
11	11.11.2014 13.11.2014	Students Research Design Presentations Students Research Design Presentations
12	18.11.2014 20.11.2014	Students Research Design Presentations Students Research Design Presentations
13	25.11.2014 27.11.2014	<i>The Process of Writing</i> Drafting: When should I paraphrase, and when should I summarize? Thanksgiving Day (no classes, independent study)
14	2.12.2014 4.12.2014	Drafting: Using quotations Ordering the Chapters
15	9.12.2014 11.12.2014	REPETITION: Ordering the Chapters Drafting: Objectifying vs. Personalizing
	13.-20.12.2014 .12.2014	Final Exams Final grades due date