

Welcome back! This is it, the last semester of the Croft senior thesis. Hopefully by now you have done some of your analysis and have a plan for finishing your thesis in the next few months. The most important piece of advice I have for you is to continue working hard on the thesis **now**. Ideally, you should be setting aside at least 9 hours every week to work exclusively on your thesis.

The schedule for Inst 422 is more straightforward than for Inst 421. Rather than working a series of different assignments, you just need to focus on writing and revising your thesis.

First Draft

The **first draft** of the thesis is due **Monday, September 20**. Think about what your finished thesis will look like and think about what you will need to do each week to get there by Monday, September 20. This is the moment to work the hardest on your thesis. Your other classes are just getting started and you have more time now than you will later in the semester.

Second Draft

The **second draft** of the thesis is due to your mentor, your second reader, third reader and Dr. Gowan (igowan@olemiss.edu) on **Friday, October 15**. Your mentor, the second reader, and the third readers should all be reviewing a complete paper so that they can aim their comments at helping you improve your analysis.

Comments from readers

During the two weeks after you submit your second draft you should continue polishing your work as your committee reads it. This is also a good time to prepare the presentation of your work that you will give at your defense (see <http://www.croft.olemiss.edu/current/thesis-defense> for instructions on preparing the defense). Your committee will return your thesis to you by **Monday, October 25**, at which point you will confer with your mentor and discuss how to integrate the readers' comments into your work, taking into consideration the scope of your project and the time remaining before the end of their semester.

Please refer to the Senior Thesis Format page on the website (<http://www.croft.olemiss.edu/current/croft-thesis-format>) for a detailed explanation of the **formatting requirements** for the thesis.

Final Draft

After making all necessary revisions, you will turn in the **final draft** of your thesis on **Monday, November 15**, and, in coordination with your mentor and third reader, you will schedule a time for your thesis defense during regular business hours between **Wednesday, November 17** and **Friday, December 3**. Your defense will last an hour, and the instructions can be found at <http://www.croft.olemiss.edu/current/thesis-defense>.

Final Grade

Your final grade for Inst 422 will be based on an evaluation by each of your three readers of both your written thesis and the oral presentation that you give at your defense. The criteria for this evaluation are as follows:

- The student has articulated a *compelling research question or hypothesis*.
- The student has *contextualized the research topic*.
- The student has used *appropriate literature and primary sources*.
- The student has employed *methods of analysis* that are both *explicit* and *appropriate* for testing the hypothesis.
- The student has convincingly *demonstrated the validity of the hypothesis*.
- The note *apparatus, bibliography, and any graphs or tables* are organized and presented in a manner in keeping with the standards of the discipline.
- The thesis meets the *linguistic and stylistic standards* of the discipline.
- The student *met deadlines set by the thesis mentor and the Croft Institute*.
- The student *kept appointments and was respectful of the committee members' time*.
- The student's *oral presentation at the outset* of the defense was successful.
- The student's *oral defense* of the thesis was successful.

Your written thesis will count for 80% of the grade for Inst 422 and your defense for 20%. A grade of C or better is required to complete the course for credit and graduate. Please discuss these criteria with your mentor to determine what their expectations are for each of them.

Model Theses

The Croft Institute has posted senior theses and thesis prospectuses on its website, available for viewing by mentors and thesis writers. These can be found at <http://www.croft.olemiss.edu/current/model-theses>. Note many of these theses are longer than our current target length, but are still useful for their methodology and bibliographies. You will need to be on the University of Mississippi campus network and use your WebID to log into this site. You can also find Croft theses, but not prospectuses, on the University's electronic depository at https://egrove.olemiss.edu/croft_thesis/.

Let me reiterate that the key to success this semester is working hard now so that you can turn in a complete draft of your thesis on **Monday, September 20!** This should be your absolute number one priority for the next four weeks. As always, if you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me at igowan@olemiss.edu.

Inst 422 Fall 2021 Schedule of Activities and Deadlines

Week	Dates	Activity
1	August 23-27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student research and writing; consultation with mentor
2	August 30-September 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student research and writing; consultation with mentor
3	September 6-10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student research and writing; consultation with mentor
4	September 13-17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student research and writing; consultation with mentor
5	September 20- 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First draft due to mentor by Monday, September 20
6	September 27-October 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student revises first draft
7	October 4-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student revises first draft
8	October 11-15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second Draft due to mentor, 2nd, 3rd reader, and Dr. Gowan (igowan@olemiss.edu) by Friday, October 15.
9	October 18-22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student begins to revise second draft.
10	October 25-29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentor and readers return second draft with comments to students by Monday, October 25; student revises and integrates readers' comments as appropriate (based on mentor's advice)
11	November 1-5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student works on revising and completing final draft
12	November 8-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student works on revising and completing final draft
13	November 15-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised and final draft due Monday, November 15. • Defenses scheduled between Wednesday, November 17 and Friday, December 3
14	November 22-26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • THANKSGIVING HOLIDAYS
15	November 29-December 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defenses scheduled between Wednesday, November 17 and Friday, December 3 • Last week of classes
16	December 6-10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Exams
	WINTER BREAK	