

Guidelines for Preparation of Master's Thesis in Art History

The MA thesis in art history represents the final step in the fulfillment of the degree at Hunter. The thesis is a two-semester process, for a total of 6 credits, and consists of two courses in sequence: ARTH 79900 and ARTH 80000 [see description of these two courses under the MA Thesis rubric online].

The thesis demonstrates original thinking based on solid research including primary and secondary sources. It proves the student's ability to gather, evaluate, and present material in a critical and scholarly manner. Primary-source research may involve examining archival material such as an artist's personal papers and correspondence, reading contemporary sources, and conducting site visits as well as interviews. Secondary-source research may include but is not limited to an analysis of current and historical literature.

How to choose a "Thesis Research" topic:

The thesis-topic can derive from prior work in a required course, such as Research Methods, or from another upper-level seminar, or from a course of independent study. The topic must be of sufficient originality to merit extended study, and not be simply a recapitulation of existing scholarly work. The thesis is not an expanded term paper but rather a carefully structured, multi-chapter exploration of a significant topic. It is approximately 50-75 double-spaced pages in length with a full scholarly textual apparatus: footnotes, bibliography, illustrations, and other relevant documentation (the finished thesis is a maximum of 100 double-spaced pages, including notes and bibliography but excluding images). It is intended to prepare students for further study on the doctoral level, and/or to equip them with the skills necessary for a professional career in art history.

How to find an advisor:

The choice of faculty advisor is an important one. You should talk with a full-time faculty member before beginning your preliminary investigation. The faculty member should be someone who is a specialist in your chosen area and, ideally, someone with whom you have established a scholarly relationship during your course of study at Hunter. The faculty member can be of some assistance in refining an appropriate topic, but the student should already have several ideas in mind before opening the discussion.

Once you have decided the topic, you have conducted research, and started to write your thesis, you should approach a second advisor, or second reader, who will also have to approve your thesis. The choice of the second reader should be discussed with your advisor. The first reader acts as a primary supervisor and provides direction and criticism of your research, but is not an editor. When necessary, you are advised to seek guidance from the Writing Center or to employ a professional editor to improve your writing skills.

Only when the first reader approves the thesis, you can approach the second reader for his/her evaluation. It is important to understand that the second reader might also have constructive criticism and might ask you to rework on parts of your thesis. Your thesis must be submitted to the Graduate Advisor with the signature of both your first and second reader.

How to register for “Thesis Research” (ARTH 799):

The student must complete a Thesis Agreement Form once the topic has been selected. This form must be filled out and signed by the first reader in order to register for “Thesis Research” (ARTH 799). The signed form should then be returned to the Art Office where it will be placed in your personal file. Please see description of ARTH799 and ARTH800 to understand all the requirements.

How to apply for funding for travel and thesis research:

The dean of arts and science offers travel grants and grants to support thesis research up to \$500 each. To apply, please visit the following website:

<http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/artsci/graduate-education/funding-opportunities-for-graduate-students>

For further information please email Associate Dean Angela Haddad or call her office:
angela.haddad@hunter.cuny.edu
(212) 772-5121

How to write a thesis:

The content of the thesis should include the following, when applicable, in order as listed:

- Title Page
- Dedication Page (optional)
- Copyright Page (optional)
- Table of Contents
- Acknowledgements or Preface (optional)
- List of Illustrations
- Introduction
- Chapters
- Conclusion
- Bibliography
- Appendices (if used)
- Illustrations

In addition, degree candidates should be prepared to submit an informative abstract of no more than 50 words, a list of ten keywords, and a *CUNY Academic Works* submission agreement.

Numbering: The text should be numbered consecutively in Arabic numerals. Table of Contents, Acknowledgements or Preface (if used), List of Illustrations, and all preliminary pages preceding the actual text **must be numbered in lowercase Roman numerals; e.g., iii, iv, v**, etc. Do not number the title page, the dedication or the copyright page. Page numbers should be located on the bottom right corner.

No numbering:

- Title page
- Dedication page
- Copyright page

Numbered in lowercase Roman numerals, in the following order:

- Table of Contents
- Acknowledgements or Preface
- List of Illustrations

Numbered in Arabic numerals, in the following order:

- Introduction
- Chapters
- Conclusion
- Bibliography
- Appendices (if used)
- Illustrations

No numbering:

- Blank page

FORMATTING:

Length: The length of the thesis depends on the subject and should be arrived at in consultation with the thesis advisor. However, an art history thesis must not be less than 50 pages double-spaced, including notes. The average length is 70 pages and should not exceed 100 pages.

PLEASE REFER TO THE DEAN'S GUIDELINES FOR ANY UPDATES ON FORMATTING:

<http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/artsci/graduate-education/guidelines-for-preparing-masters-theses-in-arts-sciences>

Font: A single legible font, Times New Roman, should be used throughout the thesis. Times New Roman 12 point is standard. Do not use italics unnecessarily.

Margins: All margins of both text and illustrations must be one inch.

Title page: The first page of the thesis must be a completed Thesis Title Page. Please note that the names of the first and second readers are typed onto the title page. Do not scan signatures onto your title page.

The Early Works of John Doe

by

Jane Smith

Submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in Art History, Hunter College
The City University of New York

2018

Thesis Sponsor:

December 15, 2018
Date

Mary J. Sunshine
Signature

December 15, 2018
Date

Harold Jones
Signature of Second Reader

Spacing: The text is to be double-spaced, except for quotations of more than four lines, which will be set apart (single-spaced and indented to the left in block form). Footnotes and bibliography will be single-spaced, with double spacing between notes and entries.

Do not indent your footnotes. Do not use bullet points in the bibliography.

Single spacing may be used in the Table of Contents, captions and appendices.

Illustrations:

Illustrations are the most important part of an Art History thesis. High quality, legible color images, if possible, must be used. Illustrations, graphics, charts, and photographs must be scanned or produced with an appropriate computer program.

Graphic materials must include a descriptive caption that allow users to identify and finding the original materials including the author and original source. (Figure X, author, title of work, date, provenance or source, etc.). Do not number your illustrations “1,” “2,” “3”, etc; rather, use “Figure 1,” “Figure 2,” etc.

Generally, all graphic materials should be scaled to fit the electronic page size of 8 1/2 by 11 inches. The right-hand top and bottom margins should be one inch. If and when appropriate, other sizes can be accepted. The graduate program and the library liaison for *CUNY Academic Works*, [Mason Brown \(mbr0010@hunter.cuny.edu\)](mailto:mbr0010@hunter.cuny.edu), should be consulted for guidance on the technical and legal scanning illustrations and permissions for copyrighted materials.

The **List of Illustrations**, which appears at the beginning of your thesis, should include the following information: figure number (Figure 1, Figure 2, etc.), artist or name of the maker, title, date and location. Where appropriate include medium and measurements. If the thesis is a monograph, you may opt to state at the top “All works are by (name of artist) unless otherwise indicated”. (There is no need to indicate the page number of individual illustrations in the List of Illustrations, since they are all located at the end of the thesis).

CUNY Academic Works:

CUNY Academic Works is the online research repository for the City University of New York. By depositing your work in Academic Works it will receive wide visibility via search engines such as Google, Google Scholar, and Bing. You will receive a permanent URL to include on your CV, as well as monthly download reports telling you how often your work has been downloaded and read.

When you upload the thesis on CUNY Academic Works you must also provide a brief, informative abstract of no more than 50 words, and a list of keywords (10 maximum).

Both the abstract and keywords are used by search engines and catalogers, so be sure to include words or phrases you think are important.

A separate document, “Step by Step Guide for Students,” details how to upload the thesis on CUNYworks. This document is also available online: <http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/artsci/repository/files/graduate-documents/step-by-step-guide-for-graduate-students.pdf>

Further information on formatting and research:

We recommend consulting the Chicago Manual of Style online resource for the most up-to-date guidelines: <http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html>

Whatever style you choose should be followed consistently throughout the thesis. Pay particular attention to guidelines concerning academic honesty in the use of ideas, facts, and quotations from scholarly works.

You may also wish to consult a few Hunter M.A. theses in art history recommended by faculty members. These theses are available in Special Collections on the second floor of Wexler Library and in the Zabar Art Library (16th floor, Hunter North); both collections are non-circulating. Starting January 2016, theses will be available digitally through CUNY Academic Works: <http://academicworks.cuny.edu>

Writing process and consultation with your advisor:

Some advisors may wish to read the thesis only upon its completion, while others prefer to read chapters one at a time. Check with your advisor as to their preferred process.

Thesis Writing/Editing Workshop

Each semester a faculty member oversees an MA Thesis Writing Workshop. The Workshop usually meets weekly.

Students who have registered for ARTH 799 are highly encouraged to participate.

It is not mandatory, but will, we hope, give some structure to the MA thesis writing process, and provide a space for peer reading and editing. You do not need to formally enroll in the workshop.

The workshop is open to students currently registered for Thesis Research as well to students who have completed their Thesis Research semester but who are still in the midst of writing. For those currently writing, the workshop offers an opportunity for peer-

critique and guidance, as well as a calendar schedule that may help them move toward completion. For those enrolled in Thesis Research, and have not yet begun writing or who are only at the beginning, the workshop can help you frame your research questions, and to better understand the pace and process of writing. Even if you are still in the process of crafting a proposal, the workshop can function as a sounding board, and can provide a structure for pushing your thesis further. It is expected that students enrolled in Thesis Research this semester but who have not yet begun writing would still be active readers of their peers' chapters, and would complete the workshop with a more fully rounded abstract and a calendar for completion.

APPROVAL OF THE THESIS

The thesis should be read by two faculty readers (thesis sponsor and a second reader), and their approval should be certified by their typed signatures on the title page of the thesis. When the thesis has been approved by the thesis sponsor and the second reader, it is electronically forwarded to the department graduate advisor. If the advisor is satisfied that the thesis has met the departmental requirements she/he electronically approves the thesis. Once the program adviser and readers approve the thesis via *CUNY Academic Works*, the degree candidate may not make any revisions.

DEADLINES:

The deadline for the electronic deposit of the approved thesis via *CUNY Academic Works* is set by the Office of the Dean for the School of Arts and Sciences and is typically about three (3) weeks prior to the date of graduation at which the degree is conferred.

Fall Semester Deadlines:

1. October 31: Submit completed thesis to the first reader (thesis advisor). Submission by this date, however, does not guarantee approval as substantial changes may be required.
2. November 21: Submit the thesis, approved by the first reader, to the second reader for approval. *By this date please email Laura the name of your second reader.
3. December 14 Submit the thesis, approved by both the thesis advisor and the second reader, to the graduate advisor (position currently held by Prof.

Pelizzari) via DropBox. About a week beforehand, all graduating students will receive an invitation to join the departmental DropBox account.

4. December 19 Upload the final, approved thesis to **CUNY Academic Works** by 12 noon.

Spring Semester Deadlines (approximate):

5. March 18: Submit completed thesis to the first reader (thesis advisor). Submission by this date, however, does not guarantee approval as substantial changes may be required.
6. April 5: Submit the thesis, approved by the first reader, to the second reader for approval. *By this date please email Laura the name of your second reader.
7. April 26 Submit the thesis, approved by both the thesis advisor and the second reader, to the graduate advisor (position currently held by Prof. Pelizzari) via DropBox. About a week beforehand, all graduating students will receive an invitation to join the departmental DropBox account.
8. May 1 Upload the final, approved thesis to **CUNY Academic Works** by 12 noon.

NOTICE OF FINAL APPROVAL

When the thesis has been accepted by the Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences, the thesis approval form will be signed and forwarded to the degree audit department of the Registrar's Office to certify the final approval of the thesis. A copy will be forwarded to the Department's Graduate Advisor. The Dean's Office will electronically submit the approved thesis to the *CUNY Academic Works* administrator for Hunter College Libraries.