



### **AFST 495 & 496: Africana Studies Honors Thesis**

- I. The Africana Studies Curriculum Committee oversees the thesis proposal process, the Fall Break update, the mid-year interim review, and the appointment of a Supervisor and Thesis Committee for each accepted proposal.
- II. Thesis proposal guidelines and deadline:
  - A. Student should submit a polished, clear, informative, "professional" research proposal (2pps. max), including timeline for completion, a personal statement (approx. 1 page) which explains the student's goals in doing this research.
  - B. Student should note their academic preparation (i.e., in Africana Studies and other relevant courses) and discuss how the proposed research fits with their academic program.
  - C. A current transcript (an unofficial Banner transcript is fine)
    1. A recommendation from the proposed thesis supervisor (150 words approx.), including itemized expectations for the thesis process and schedule of deadlines.
    2. Final deadline for submission of thesis proposal: 1<sup>st</sup> week after graduation (although earlier submission is strongly encouraged, given Charles Center's March deadline for funding).
    3. Committee decision ordinarily within 2 weeks of receiving proposal and before any major data collection is started.
- III. In evaluating the proposal, the Curriculum Committee will look for the following:
  - A. Evidence of strong performance in Africana Studies courses relevant to the thesis as well as any non-Africana Studies courses relevant to the thesis.
  - B. Strong thesis proposal, personal statement, and current transcript.
    1. Strong recommendation from proposed thesis supervisor.
    2. Evidence that the proposed project is feasible in the time allotted.
- IV. On the basis of its evaluation the Curriculum Committee may accept the proposal, reject it outright, or request revision and resubmission. If the latter, the Committee will send the student and proposed Thesis Supervisor an explanation.
- V. A Thesis Supervisor may be any continuing member of the Africana Studies Faculty.
  - A. In appropriate circumstances, joint supervision may be allowed with a faculty member from outside the AFST Program

VI. Fall Break update:

- A. The student should submit a report to Curriculum Committee before the end of Fall Break. The report should include the following:
  - 1. The names of proposed members of Thesis Committee (made in consultation with supervisor).
  - 2. A statement that expectations for the thesis have been discussed with members of Thesis Committee.
  - 3. An explanation of any significant revisions or updates to the project as originally proposed.
  - 4. This report should also be copied to Thesis Committee.

VII. Constitution of Thesis Committee:

- A. The Thesis Committee should include three faculty total—one continuing member of the Africana Studies faculty, one faculty member from another department/program, and the Thesis Supervisor (non-voting).

VIII. Mid-year review (early January a week before the first day of class):

- A. The student submits to the Curriculum Committee a 2-3 page statement of progress, including a expected section outline of thesis and remaining timeline.
- B. The Supervisor submits letter stating whether he or she supports the student's statement and whether he or she recommends continuation for the final semester.
- C. The Chair of the Curriculum Committee asks Thesis Committee members of any concerns.
- D. If Curriculum Committee approves continuation, a message to this effect is sent to student, Supervisor, Thesis Committee, and the Charles Center.

IX. Thesis:

- A. The maximum length of the written paper is 70pps -- not including (e.g.) data presentation, appendix(ces), figures, tables, bibliography.
- B. The format of thesis is to be determined in consultation with the Supervisor and may vary according to the topic and methodology.

X. Final Examination (Oral Defense):

- A. The final examination will include an opening presentation that discusses the findings of the research and oral defense



- B. Audience may be present for opening presentation if student and supervisor wish, but must withdraw for oral defense.

XI. Thesis committee deliberation:

- A. Following the oral defense, the student withdraws. The Thesis Supervisor makes a statement to Committee, providing information on the research and writing process. The Supervisor remains in room during the Committee's deliberation and final vote but does not participate except in response to questions from the Committee.

XII. Final decision:

- A. The Thesis Committee bases its decision on (i) the written thesis, (ii) the presentation, (iii) the oral defense
- B. The Thesis Committee (not including the Supervisor) votes for or against the award of Honors.