

**Masters Thesis Preparation
Ethnic Studies 290A
Fall 2005**

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The primary goals of this course are writing the introduction and literature review of the master's thesis. Throughout the quarter we will explore the basic tenets of writing style, the outline and structure for the MA. This includes developing a working outline and the primary argument of your MA topic that will guide your writing and ultimate organization of the thesis. A strong component of this course is the structure of writing itself i.e. exercises in writing, style and presentation. It is expected that by the end of the quarter you will produce a working outline, a draft of an introduction, and a strong review of the pertinent literature that will frame your research question, argument and the thesis itself. Although the introduction and literature review are emphasized we will also explore the methods and significance of your thesis.

Requirements:

The course is structured to provide a working dialogue about your thesis and that of your colleagues. As such you are expected to come to class prepared to discuss reading and writing assignments and to discuss your own work, as well as that of your class mates. Your responsibilities include class attendance and participation, and feedback to your colleagues. We will have a number of required assignments throughout the term that are progressive steps in the development of your thesis (see below).

Class Schedule and Assignments:

September 22- Introduction and the Structure of the MA Thesis.

Discussion of individual thesis proposals, background and why topics have been chosen.

September 29- Writing, Authority, and the presentation of your Argument and Question. . The goal here is to think about engaging writing as both a creative and explanatory exercise. This includes understanding each of our positions as ethnic scholars, and the purpose of our writing. In addition to thinking about and locating ourselves, we will explore the mechanics of our own style in writing.

Assignment: Reading: Texts: On Writing Well, and Writing Without Teachers.
Begin writing 5 page thesis proposal.

October 6- Discussion of Proposals

Assignment 1: Write a 5 page thesis proposal and timeline. Email the proposal to everyone in class. Due October 3. This should include the following five parts:

1. Introduction (what is your argument?).
2. Literature review and major research strategy (What body of literature are you building on and how is your argument supported?).
3. Findings and analysis (what is the contribution of your thesis and how does your research illustrate this?).
4. Conclusion and significance (how does your research contribute to a broader humanistic and social science understanding and what difference does it make?).
5. A timeline (map out your time schedule to complete the thesis).

October 13- No class meeting- meet with your advisor and WRITE.

October 20- Introductions/ literature reviews

Assignment 2: Write a draft introduction outlining the chapters of the thesis and draft of your literature review. Due October 17.

October 27- No Class meeting. Meet with your advisors and WRITE.

November 3- The argument, thesis and methods.

Assignment 3: Revised literature review and methods. Revise your draft of the literature review (using your argument as a principal focus) and draft the methodology section of your thesis (what methods did you utilize and why). Email your work to everyone in class. Due October 31.

November 10- No class meeting. Meet with your advisors and WRITE.

For the next two class meetings we will discuss the final drafts of your introductions and literature reviews. Each “paper” will be reviewed by one of your colleagues and discussed generally in class. The feedback provided will be the basis for your final write up of the introduction and literature review.

November 17- Discussion of Final Draft of Introduction and literature review.

First set of papers

Assignment 4: Complete final draft of introduction and literature review.

First set of papers due November 14

November 24- no class Turkey Day.

December 1- Discussion of Final Draft of Introduction and Literature Review

Second set of papers. Due November 28.

December 8. Assignment 5--Final due date to turn in revised Introduction and Literature review:

Required Texts

Elbow, Peter

1998 Writing Without Teachers. 25th Anniversary Edition. Oxford University Press

Zinnser, William

1998 On Writing Well. The Classic Guide to Writing Non-Fiction. Harper and Row.

Grading:

Class participation 10%

Five page thesis proposal 10%

Draft One: Introduction and Literature Review 10%

Revised Literature and Methods 10%

Draft two: Introduction and Literature/ Argument Review

Final Draft: Introduction and Literature Review 50%

Ethnic Studies Major or Minor at UCSD

Many students take an ethnic studies course because the topic is of great interest or because of a need to fulfill a social science, non-contiguous, or other college requirement. Often students have taken three or four classes out of “interest” yet have no information about the major or minor and don’t realize how close they are to a major, a minor, or even a double major. An ethnic studies major is excellent preparation for a career in law, public policy, government and politics, journalism, education, public health, social work, international relations, and many other careers. If you would like information about the ethnic studies major or minor at UCSD, please contact Yolanda Escamilla, Undergraduate Advisor, Department of Ethnic Studies at (858) 534-3277 or yescamilla@ucsd.edu