

## ITALIAN STUDIES

### SENIOR COURSE AND HONORS

#### Guidelines for Class of 2009

Students seeking to qualify for honors in ITALIAN STUDIES are required to enroll in the 99-level course in their senior year. Normally a 3.5 average in courses taken for the major is required for permission to enroll in the ITAL 99-level course. Permission to enroll must be obtained from the Advising Head of the Program.

Those not electing to pursue honors are required to take either ITAL 97a or 97b course. In this one-semester course the student is asked to write an essay rather than a thesis.

Enrollment in the 99 course does *not* guarantee that honors will be awarded. Departmental honors are awarded on the basis of cumulative excellence in all courses taken for the major, including the senior honors course (99). The degree of honors, if any, is voted at a meeting in spring upon review of a student's complete and final record.

#### A. **Nature of the honors thesis** (99-level course)

The 99 course requires that the student conduct research on an approved topic and write a thesis of substantial length (normally 50-75 pages). The course is directed by a professor who becomes the Thesis Director. The Second Reader of the thesis is chosen according to the thesis topic. There are two basic requirements of an Honors Thesis:

1. It must be a **research paper**, one that assesses previous **scholarship** on the theme or topic under analysis. This means the student will review all relevant criticism and incorporate into the thesis citations and references in support of views and interpretations. A **bibliography** of secondary sources is essential.
2. **Citations** of primary and secondary material must be cited in the **original language** for the languages in which the student is proficient. The paper itself may be written in English.

#### B. **Protocols**

1. As one of the two readers, the **Director** is primarily responsible for guiding the student in his or her research, and a **Second Reader**. The **Program Head**, who may or may not be a reader, is primarily responsible for advising the student about the formal requirements of the course (i.e., enrollment procedures, certification, selection of Director, common due dates, etc.). The Director and Second Reader will consult with each other regarding the grade to be assigned for work in the 99 course.
2. Two drafts of the thesis are required, a first and a final draft, each read by both readers. Any other work written in preparation of the thesis (e.g., description of topic, etc.) should be given to each reader.
3. The writing of a thesis involves conducting a research project (i.e., a student must consult and be familiar with the critical literature or apparatus on his or her subject and integrate a knowledge of it

into the paper, and provide a bibliography and note structure). In most instances theses take the form of literary criticism, but critical editions of texts or translation projects are also possible.

4. All work must be submitted in [Word and sent by email attachment](#) to each reader. Only the final version is required to be printed and bound.

5. Quotations from texts in the literature of the major must be in the original. Translations may be provided with the original, if desired.

6. Both copies of the thesis should be bound in a suitable binder, preferably springboard binders. The title page should observe the indicated format.

7. Due dates for the first and final drafts will be established in the fall of the senior year.

8. It is occasionally possible for students who at first decide to enroll in the 97a course to enter the honors course at mid-year. With the permission of the Program Head, students in this instance will enroll in 99b *in the spring term*. Unlike the 99 course which receives a single grade at the end of the year, separate grades for the 97 and the 99 courses will be given.

9. Students electing honors in two different but related majors may arrange to satisfy the requirements of each major with a single thesis. Double majors should consult with the Advisors of each major to determine their academic responsibilities. Students who are undertaking to write a thesis in one major may be excused from having to enroll in a 99 level course in the second major. These students will be permitted to qualify for Honors by enrolling in a 97 level course.

One copy of the thesis will be presented to Goldfarb Library; the other will be placed in the Italian Studies library in Shiffman Hall.

#### C. **The Essay** (97-level course, either semester of the senior year)

The essay project differs from the thesis primarily by being a research project of more limited scope. Generally, essays run [20-30 pages in length](#) and have a less developed critical apparatus. Students should observe the [same common guidelines](#) in writing an essay as in writing a thesis, namely submission of all written work, two readers, work in the original language (for citations, not the text itself), research topic and format, etc.

D. The student should consult (and purchase) either the **MLA Handbook** on Style or Diana Hacker's **Rules for Writers** for matters of citation and bibliography formats and other issues of style. See [www.dianahacker.com/rules/](http://www.dianahacker.com/rules/) and [www.mla.org/store/CID24/PID159](http://www.mla.org/store/CID24/PID159).