

English 496

Timothy Sweet, ENGL 496, Fall 2003, Senior Thesis

ENGL 496

Senior Thesis

Fall 2003

TR 1:00-2:15

Professor Timothy Sweet <tsweet@wvu.edu>

Overview:

In the Senior Thesis course you will pursue an extensive research project in literary or cultural studies, culminating in a substantial scholarly essay. The course will help you develop your research and writing skills. If you are considering graduate school in English or a related field, you may find the course useful as you work on a writing sample to support your application. In any case, you will have an opportunity to explore in depth a particular topic that interests you.

The format will be partly a seminar in research methods and partly a writing workshop. With the help of the professor and the other students, you will formulate a topic and a plan of research. These will lead to a prospectus and preliminary bibliography for the final paper. As you work on your project, you will share your progress periodically with the class; these progress reports will provide an opportunity for the class to discuss research strategies and solutions to particular problems of content, analysis, and presentation. You will share a draft of your final paper with others in the class in a workshop atmosphere. At the end of the semester, you will present the results of your research to the class and submit your final paper for a grade.

Graded assignments:

Prospectus (~500 words)

Annotated preliminary bibliography (~10 entries)

Final Presentation

Final paper (20-25 pages, with appropriate documentation)

Texts:

Harner, James. *Literary Research Guide*. 4th ed. NY: M1LA, 2002.

Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 5th ed. NY: MLA, 1999.

A note on prerequisites and requirements:

While there are no special prerequisites, it is recommended that you take at least one 3xx-level (Junior-Senior) English course before enrolling in Senior Thesis, so that you are comfortable with advanced undergraduate work in English studies. Additionally, papers written in 3xx-level English courses might be sources of ideas for your project in 496.

Senior Thesis is an option for the Capstone Experience in English, which will be required for graduation for all students who enroll at WVU beginning with the fall, 2002 semester. Students who have enrolled prior to that date are encouraged to participate in the Capstone.