

Master of Arts in Liberal Studies Thesis Rubric

Updated: 5/12/2016

The purpose of the thesis project is to demonstrate the student's ability to study a problem or issue, utilizing the resources available within the Liberal Studies program and to develop a central thesis by drawing on the methodologies of at least two different scholarly disciplines. The thesis must be a critical, focused, and thoughtful analysis based on the liberal arts tradition.

Student Name and Thesis Title:

Rating	Does the student clearly formulate a problem and/or describe an issue within a specific cultural/historical context?	Does the student make good use of primary and secondary sources in developing his/her thesis?	Does the student make connections between at least two academic disciplines?	Does the student evaluate and analyze claims using the theory, methods, and practical implications of at least two academic disciplines?	Does the student demonstrate mastery of research methods and the presentation of scholarly arguments?
Level 4	Student provides a clear description of his/her problem or issue. The description is thoughtful and insightful regarding its cultural/historical context.	Student skillfully uses primary and secondary resources to identify claims and incorporate elements from diverse disciplinary perspectives and traditions that best support/challenge his/her argument.	Student identifies and explores at least two different disciplinary perspectives, effectively using them to develop his/her argument.	Student uses his/her sources to construct a thoughtful, coherent, convincing argument for his/her position, noting its relation to the theory, methods, and practical implications of at least two academic disciplines.	Student shows exemplary mastery of interdisciplinary research methods and formal academic writing.
Level 3	Student provides an acceptably clear description of his/her problem or issue, at least touching on its cultural/historical context.	Student identifies and incorporates appropriate references to primary and secondary sources, but fails to choose those that best support/challenge his/her argument.	Student identifies and explores at least two different disciplinary perspectives, but fails to choose those that best develop his/her argument.	Student uses his/her sources to support an argument, but that argument is not consistently thoughtful, coherent, convincing, and/or it doesn't coherently relate the argument to the theory, methods, and practical implications of at least two academic disciplines.	Student shows adequate mastery of interdisciplinary research methods and formal academic writing.
Level 2	Student attempts to describe his/her problem or issue, but the thesis lacks clarity, cohesion, and/or appropriate awareness of its cultural/historical context.	Student includes some references to primary and secondary sources, but the references are few in number, vague, and/or unpersuasive.	Student includes some reference to different disciplinary perspectives, but the references are few in number, vague, and/or unpersuasive.	Student makes an inadequate argument for his/her position, makes only broad statements, provides only personal conclusions, and/or makes superficial connections to the theory, methods, and practical implications of at least two academic disciplines.	Student shows little mastery of interdisciplinary research methods and formal academic writing.
Level 1	Student is unable to clearly and coherently describe his/her problem or issue.	Student does not include significant references to primary and secondary sources.	Student does not include references to different disciplinary perspectives.	Student is unable to develop a persuasive argument for his/her position.	Student shows no mastery of interdisciplinary research methods and formal and academic writing.

Comments:

Evaluator's Signature:

Date: