



Writing the MA and PhD Research Proposal: Guidelines

2016

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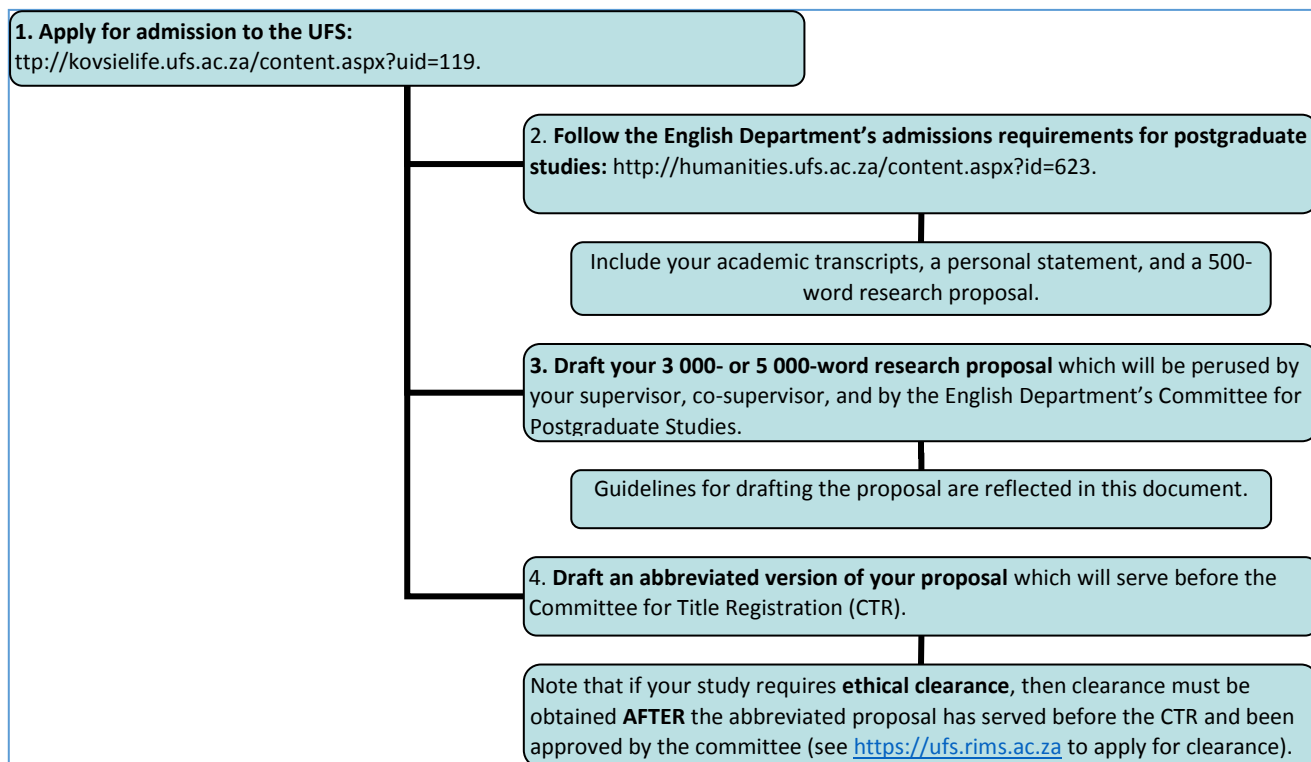
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1. Applying for Admission to Postgraduate Studies at the UFS



2. Important Dates

There are three opportunities to submit your detailed proposal to the Department of English.¹

- Submit your detailed proposal to the English Department's Postgraduate Committee BEFORE the abbreviated version serves at the CTR.

First opportunity: 3 March before noon

Second opportunity: 16 May before noon

Third opportunity: 1 August before noon

There are three dates on which the abbreviated proposal must reach your supervisor so that it can be submitted to the CTR.

- If ethical clearance is required, then this should be obtained AFTER the CTR has approved your title.

First date: 10 March before noon

Second date: 23 May before noon

Third date: 8 August before noon

- These are not the dates on which the CTR meets, but an earlier date is required for you to submit your abbreviated proposal so that changes/corrections can be made.

Below are the dates on which your ethical clearance application should be submitted online.

- Please note that by this time, you must have obtained your permission letter from Prof. Corli Witthuhn (see Section 1 and Footnote 1 for details). Make sure that your supervisor is able to scrutinise your ethical clearance application BEFORE you upload it to RIMS.

1 March; 26 April; 6 June; 19 July; 22 August; 22 September; 7 November

¹ Please note that your ethical clearance application must be done online (<https://ufs.rims.ac.za>) (1) BEFORE the Research Ethics Committee meets, but (2) ONLY AFTER the Title Registration Committee has APPROVED your title. Note also that when you apply for ethical clearance on RIMS, you need to first write a letter to Prof. Witthuhn (Vice-rector: Research) in which you request permission to use UFS students in your study. Your letter should be accompanied by a copy of your abbreviated proposal, a copy of the consent form(s) to be given to students and copies of, for instance, questionnaires and interview schedules. Contact one of the following individuals for assistance when it comes to completing the online application: Willem Kilian (kilianw@ufs.ac.za) or Geraldine Meyers (meversgj@ufs.ac.za). Please let your supervisors scan your correspondence and online submissions before you email Prof. Witthuhn and upload your application to RIMS. Remain polite and professional in your correspondence.

RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (FGG 201) (14:15)

Upload of Ethics applications on RIMS	Research Ethics Committee meeting dates	Applications serve at Faculty Board meeting of
Tuesday 1 March	Thursday 17 March	Friday 20 May
Tuesday 26 April	Thursday 12 May	Friday 20 May
Monday 6 June	Thursday 23 June	Friday 12 August
Tuesday 19 July	Thursday 4 August	Friday 12 August
Monday 22 August	Thursday 8 September	Friday 21 October
Thursday 22 September	Thursday 13 October	Friday 21 October
Tuesday 7 November	Thursday 24 November	March 2017

COMMITTEE FOR TITLE REGISTRATIONS:

Submission of CTR applications	CTR meeting dates	Applications serve at Faculty Board meeting of
Monday 14 March	Thursday 14 April	Friday 21 May
Friday 27 May	Monday 27 June	Friday 12 August
Thursday 11 August	Friday 9 September	Friday 21 October

1 February 2016 - Last date on which dissertations and thesis may be submitted with the view of the degree being conferred at the June graduation.

29 June 2016 - Last date on which dissertations and thesis may be submitted with a view to the degree being conferred at the December graduation.

3. Postgraduate Studies in English: Admissions Requirements

Please note that the University of the Free State (UFS) has its own minimum admissions requirements for postgraduate studies. As a general rule, students are admitted to postgraduate studies and to each higher level of postgraduate study only if they fulfil the university requirements for registration, have completed the preliminary degree with a mark of 60% or more, and are accepted to the course they wish to study by the applicable academic head of department.

However, the Department of English requires a mark of at least 65% in the preliminary degree before admitting a student to the PhD programme in English. Exceptions should be submitted to the Committee for Postgraduate Studies for deliberation. The Department also reserves the right to ask prospective student to write an entrance assessment for a more thorough evaluation.

4. Writing the 3 000- or 5 000-Word Research Proposal: Guidelines

4.1 Introduction

This document provides guidelines for writing the research proposal at MA as well as at PhD level. Please take note of the following before you work carefully through it:

- The detailed proposal the English Department requires you to complete should not be confused with the short three-page proposal which needs to be submitted to the Committee for Title Registration (CTR).

Length of the detailed proposal for MA candidates: 3 000 words

Length of the detailed proposal for PhD candidates: 5 000 words

- The detailed proposal should be submitted **before** the abbreviated version which serves at the CTR.
- If your study requires ethical clearance, this clearance must be obtained **after** the abbreviated version of the proposal serves at the CTR.
- Writing a meticulous proposal will help you establish the groundwork for your research study. It will also help you pre-empt any problems you may experience during the course of your writing and research.
- The proposal is perused by your supervisor and co-supervisor as well as by the English Department's Committee for Postgraduate Studies. Please note that it is the Committee's aim to be supportive, constructive, and helpful, and **not** to disparage you as a researcher.

4.2 Writing a Thesis or Research Proposal

4.2.1 *What is a thesis or research proposal?*

A thesis proposal, often referred to as a research proposal,

is something like an architect's plan. It is a carefully prepared document and it proposes a set of actions...It sets forth a plan of action that you intend to follow. Although you will not have to adhere slavishly to the plan, the general thrust and directions are clearly outlined (Anderson and Poole, 2009: 27).

More importantly, the proposal not only **justifies** your idea and plan of action, but also **lays the groundwork** for your research study.

4.2.2 *What are the requirements and Elements of a Proposal?*

A research proposal should provide **a context** for your work and clearly signal **how** you intend achieving your research objectives. It should also indicate why you believe there is **a need** for your research or why your research question is one that is worth being answered. Your proposal should reflect the following elements which have been adapted from O'Leary (2014: 75):

Element	Description (Requirements)
Title	Your title should be clear and unambiguous , reflecting what your research is about. (Of course, the title you choose may be a working or tentative title only; in fact, it will in all likelihood change as your research evolves.)
Abstract	The abstract or summary should answer the why, what, how, and when of your research study. (It often requires several drafts and is not written first.)
Aims or Objectives	Under aims or objectives, you need to describe the nature of your research topic or problem as well as explain why it is important . (Make sure that your objectives are clearly articulated; avoid vague, cryptic statements.)
Research question or	The research question or hypothesis reflects the essence of your research study . Articulating a research question or hypothesis is fairly challenging, and so Kinmond (2012)

Hypothesis	proposes that formulating and then developing a research question should be preceded by identifying a research area and then selecting a research topic. For guidance, read Kathryn Kinmond's (2012) useful chapter, 'Coming up with a research question' online: http://www.sagepub.com/upm-data/47619_Sullivan.pdf .
Literature Review	Here, you need to critically assess studies/theories that are important to your research. Please remember that the literature review constitutes a piece of argumentative writing in which you critically engage with relevant scientific/academic sources. The literature review does not simply provide background information to your study; it justifies your research question/hypothesis/theoretical framework/method and signals your in-depth knowledge of recent studies in your field. Diana Ridley's (2012) <i>The literature review: A step-by-step guide for students</i> (Sage) is a useful textbook and two copies are available at the UFS's Sasol Library.
Theoretical Perspectives	You need to position your research study within a specific conceptual or theoretical framework . In other words, whichever framework you adopt ² should inform your study.
Methods (This includes the Research Design.)	<p>You need to provide a blueprint for how you intend carrying out your research. You should include the following:</p> <p>Your particular methodology/approach: for example, a researcher studying media violence may opt for an experimental methodology; an analyst interested in students' online interaction may employ conversation analysis.)</p> <p>Your data collection methods: Will you, for instance, conduct semi-structured interviews, carry out a survey, make audio-visual recordings or utilise archived data?</p> <p>Methods of analysis: Will you conduct a statistical analysis or will you conduct a qualitative analysis, for example?³</p>
Ethical Statement	You are reminded that if you are using animals or people in your research study, then you are required to submit an ethical clearance application to the Faculty of the Humanities' Research Ethics Committee. The Committee needs to approve your proposal before you are allowed to gather your data. Your supervisor will advise you about the

² Note that you may have more than one theoretical perspective.

³ If you already have preliminary data, then this data and your initial findings should be referred to in the proposal.

	processes involved, but you can also contact Ms Charné Vercueil (vercueilcc@ufs.ac.za).
Limitations	Include any weaknesses in your study, making sure that you take into account ways to resolve these weaknesses.
Bibliography	Finally, your proposal should be accompanied by a bibliography so that your supervisor and the Department's Committee for Postgraduate Studies are aware of the quality of the sources you have used. (They may recommend additional sources.)
Timeline	It is strongly recommended that your proposal be accompanied by a timeline reflecting the estimated time devoted to each stage of the research process, from data collection to the writing up of the dissertation/thesis. In this regard, you may find it useful to employ a Gantt chart to plan your research study. Visit https://www.smartsheet.com/blog/where-do-you-find-best-gantt-chart-spreadsheet-templates to download such a chart. Alternatively, your Excel whether older or newer, allows you to create such a chart.

5.The Format of the Research Proposal

The proposal should be typed in **Times New Roman (font size 12)**, using **1.5 line spacing**. As per the English Department's rules and guidelines, all cited material should be referenced in full using the **Harvard Referencing Style**. Academic dishonesty, including plagiarism and other types of academic deception is viewed in a serious light and has severe consequences.

6.Expectations: Assessment Rubric

To meet expectations, you may find it useful to utilise the following rubric which has been taken from http://web.uri.edu/assessment/files/ResearchProposalRubric.2.17.12_000.pdf. Note that not all the criteria are applicable to a proposal.

Criterion	Does not meet expectations = 1	Meets expectations = 2	Exceeds expectations = 3	Score
1. Mastery of theories and concepts in the field demonstrated in problem statement and literature review	<input type="checkbox"/> Arguments are sometimes incorrect, incoherent, or flawed <input type="checkbox"/> Objectives are poorly defined <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates limited critical thinking skills <input type="checkbox"/> Reflects limited understanding of subject matter and associated literature <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates limited understanding of theoretical concepts <input type="checkbox"/> Documentation is weak <input type="checkbox"/> Inadequate statement of hypotheses	<input type="checkbox"/> Arguments are coherent and reasonably clear <input type="checkbox"/> Objectives are clear <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates acceptable critical thinking skills <input type="checkbox"/> Reflects understanding of subject matter and literature <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates understanding of theoretical concepts <input type="checkbox"/> Documentation is adequate <input type="checkbox"/> Generates adequate hypotheses	<input type="checkbox"/> Arguments are superior <input type="checkbox"/> Objectives are well defined <input type="checkbox"/> Exhibits mature, refined critical thinking skills <input type="checkbox"/> Reflects mastery of subject matter and associated literature. <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates mastery of theoretical concepts <input type="checkbox"/> Documentation is excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Generates well-reasoned and well-supported hypotheses	
2. Mastery of methods of inquiry	<input type="checkbox"/> Design inappropriate to questions <input type="checkbox"/> Confused or ineffective plan for analysis <input type="checkbox"/> Lacks anticipation of regulatory compliance requirements	<input type="checkbox"/> Design reasonable for questions <input type="checkbox"/> Plan for analysis reasonable, acknowledges some limitations <input type="checkbox"/> Considers regulatory compliance	<input type="checkbox"/> Design, analysis plan, excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Plan for analysis goes beyond the obvious, acknowledges limitations and critically considers alternatives <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates regulatory compliance	
3. Quality of writing	<input type="checkbox"/> Writing is weak <input type="checkbox"/> Numerous grammatical and spelling errors apparent <input type="checkbox"/> Organization is poor <input type="checkbox"/> Style is not appropriate to discipline	<input type="checkbox"/> Writing is adequate <input type="checkbox"/> Some grammatical and spelling errors apparent <input type="checkbox"/> Organization is logical <input type="checkbox"/> Style is appropriate to discipline	<input type="checkbox"/> Writing is publication quality <input type="checkbox"/> No grammatical or spelling errors apparent <input type="checkbox"/> Organization is excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Style is exemplary	
4. Originality and potential for contribution to discipline	<input type="checkbox"/> Limited potential for discovery <input type="checkbox"/> Limited extension of previous published work in the field <input type="checkbox"/> Limited theoretical or applied significance <input type="checkbox"/> Limited publication potential	<input type="checkbox"/> Some potential for discovery <input type="checkbox"/> Builds upon previous work <input type="checkbox"/> Reasonable theoretical or applied significance <input type="checkbox"/> Reasonable publication potential	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceptional potential for discovery <input type="checkbox"/> Greatly extends previous work <input type="checkbox"/> Exceptional theoretical or applied significance <input type="checkbox"/> Exceptional publication potential	
Additional criterion #1:				
Additional criterion #2:				
Overall judgment	<input type="checkbox"/> Does not meet expectations	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets expectations	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds expectations	

7. Sample Proposals

The proposals in this section are not meant to be replicated to the letter; they are simply examples of what proposals in the social sciences/humanities look like.

7.1 Sample 1

The following is a sample research proposal in the social sciences and has been taken from https://www.bcps.org/offices/lis/researchcourse/images/Harvard_proposal_samples.pdf. (Please note that the proposal follows the MLA citation style and not the Harvard system.)

Proposal
for a Thesis in the Field of
English and American Literature and Language
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Master of Liberal Arts Degree

Harvard University
Extension School
June 1, 2002

Nancy Kelley
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Milburn, MA 02899
nkelley@bvd.com
(617) 555-1212

Appendix 1: Sample Proposals | 75

I.

Tentative Title:

“On the Home Front: Gender Disruption and the Great War”

II.

Research Problem

One of the contributions of recent feminist literary scholarship has been to question the absence of female authorial representation from the widely acknowledged canon of World War I literature. This canon has been established and upheld by substantial and well known critical studies including Paul Fussell’s *The Great War and Modern Memory*¹ and Stanley Cooperman’s *World War I and the American Novel*.² The implication is that the “classic” writers of the Great War are not only male, but soldiers as well, and that women’s contributions have largely been ignored or dismissed.

In this thesis, I will analyze selected works of three major female writers of the 20th century—Willa Cather, Edith Wharton, and Virginia Woolf—which thematize and are set against the background of World War I: Cather’s novels *One of Ours* and *The Professor’s House*; Wharton’s novels *A Son at the Front* and *The Marne* as well as the short stories “Coming Home,” “The Refugees,” and “Writing a War Story”; and Woolf’s novels *Jacob’s Room*, *Mrs. Dalloway*, *To the Lighthouse*, and *Between the Acts*.

The chief questions I will investigate are: Why have female writers been excluded from the WWI canon? What contributions has each writer in this investigation made to modernism? How did the war enable her to articulate the problems of being female, of being a female artist?

¹Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (London: Oxford University Press, 1975).

²Stanley Cooperman, *World War I and the American Novel* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1967) 1.

How did the female artist respond to male war texts? How do the selected works illuminate her work as a whole? Is there a feminine response to violence and war?

While male-authored WWI texts are marked by states of alienation, despair, nihilism, and impotence—in other words, a lamentation of the obsolescence of individual male agency, I hypothesize that the female-authored texts in this study are marked by a sense of female power. This is evidenced by the appropriation of a masculinist tradition (the sheer act of writing about the war at all), and by the emergence of some common themes—the effect of war on the community, the preservation of culture through art, and a critique of the patriarchy. These themes are worked out through an exploration of the effects of socially constructed notions of masculinity and femininity. As such, they represent a uniquely feminine contribution to modernism.

In testing my hypothesis, I will compare and contrast selected short stories and novels, analyzing each for the social and psychological implications of war in the context of gender relations. I will include autobiographical materials that directly contribute to the artist's *oeuvre* on war, and such secondary sources as biographies and critical studies. My anticipated conclusion is that each artist in her own way used the war between nations to examine the nature of war between the sexes, a war which endorses gender polarization with direct consequences for both women and men.

III.

Definition of Terms

“The Great War”: World War I (WWI), general armed conflict between the Allies and the Central Powers, 1914-1918.

“Modernism”: a post-Victorian artistic and literary movement marked by disillusionment with industrialism and imperialism, by the rise of capitalism and commercialism, and by the decline of religious certainty in an age of anxiety.

“The New Woman”: a term coined around the turn of the century to denote the emergence of women into the public sphere, a term closely associated with the suffrage movement, and connoting profound social transformations of the time.

IV.

Background

One of the many contributions of recent feminist scholarship has been the documentation of an enormous range of female-authored texts written during and shortly after World War I.³ For instance, novelists Gertrude Stein, Katherine Mansfield, Radclyffe Hall, Rebecca West, May Sinclair, Winifred Holtby, H.D., and poets Isabel Eccleston McKay, Alice Meynell, and Jessie Pope are just some of the female artists included in Sandra Gilbert⁴ and Susan Gubar's comprehensive two-volume study *No Man's Land*. That these texts have been missing from the literary "canon" of the Great War has been cause for little questioning. Over the last decade, this issue has been and continues to be redressed by provocative new analysis, included in such collected essays as *Arms and the Woman*, *Behind the Lines*, and *Virginia Woolf and War*.⁵ However, in my research I have not located a comprehensive study of Cather, Wharton, and Woolf in relation to one another. I am interested in these three because they are contemporaneous, early practitioners of modernism, each having published her first work at the turn of the century. This thesis, therefore, will be an opportunity to examine the responses of three major women writers to the historic event of their time, which eclipsed an equally compelling social phenomenon, the rise of the "New Woman."

The years which preceded the war are critical to understanding feminine literary responses to it. The Victorian legacy of gender polarization, which relegated women to the private sphere and men to the public, was coming to an end. By the late 19th century, women were

³Lynn Hanley, *Writing War: Fiction, Gender & Memory* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1991) 6.

⁴Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, *No Man's Land*, vols. 1 and 2 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988, 1989).

⁵Helen Cooper et al., eds., *Arms and the Woman: War, Gender, and Literary Representation* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989); Margaret Higonnet et al., eds., *Behind the Lines: Gender and the Two World Wars* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987); Mark Hussey, ed., *Virginia Woolf and War: Fiction, Reality, and Myth* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1991).

entering new fields in greater numbers than ever before—in factories, in education, in letters, and to some degree, the professions. Despite other important social phenomena associated with modernism (the discontents spawned by industrialization, the rise of commercialism, loss of empire, and the decline of religious faith) it was the “woman problem” which permeated every aspect of society.⁶ The very fabric of life as it was known was shredding, and the symbol of its undoing was represented, namely, by the suffrage movement and its archetype of revolt against masculine dominance and cultural feminization,⁷ the “New Woman.” In other words, a battle of the sexes was being waged at the turn of the century. Because war itself is a gendering activity which reinforces gender polarization,⁸ the resulting tension became the subject of much of feminine war literature. This body of literature, as Gilbert and Gubar have documented in *No Man’s Land*, represents a variety of responses to war. Some texts exhibit susceptibility to propaganda. Some reveal disillusionment and despair. Some show women’s empowerment. Most, however, were critical of patriarchal society to some degree. Furthermore, what they had in common was an experience of war different from that of men.

In this thesis I am interested in exploring the responses of Cather, Wharton, and Woolf to the Great War and to the underlying crisis of gender disruptions. I will interpret these responses in the context of current critical opinion and biographical information, identifying major recurring themes and where those themes overlap among the three authors. I will devote one section to each author for a discussion of the selected works specified above.

Despite its Pulitzer Prize, Willa Cather’s *One of Ours* (1922) was harshly criticized by such contemporaries as Ernest Hemingway, H.L. Mencken, and Sinclair Lewis for a perceived romantic glorification of war.⁹ Even feminist critics have noted that *One of Ours* can be read as

⁶Gilbert and Gubar, vol. 1, 20-21.

⁷Gilbert and Gubar, vol. 2, 129.

⁸Higonnet, et al., eds., *Behind the Lines: Gender and the Two World Wars* 4.

⁹Hermione Lee, *Willa Cather: Double Lives* (New York: Vintage Books 1989) 167-68.

either soliciting support for the war¹⁰ or for presenting war as the means for bringing purpose to a mediocre life.¹¹

Many scholars, however, have discovered other meanings which I will explore. Citing the critical work of Susan Rosowski, Gilbert and Gubar, Blanche Gelfant, Maureen Ryan and others, I will link Cather's romanticism to her desire to be free from constraints of feminization. Usurping the masculinist tradition, she creates her own male/soldier hero. She rewrites that tradition by portraying female desire and possibilities in relation to society's (men's) fatal idealization of women.¹² It is not Cather who is romantic; it is the hero whose romanticism will ultimately lead to his death. As Cather's biographer Hermione Lee states, *One of Ours* is a story of a "knight's quest for redemption through renunciation in the wasteland."¹³ While Cather longs for a new quest to replace that of the spiritual pioneer of her earlier works,¹⁴ her modernism now locates the quest in renunciation of gender roles and in an attainment of androgyny. Her feminized hero rejects masculine rituals, heterosexual love, and homoerotic possibilities for ideals beyond sex roles and sexual antagonism. This is a major theme that I will explore in the thesis, following its development in her later novel *The Professor's House* (1925). In the Wharton section, my primary focus will be *A Son at the Front* (1923). Like Cather, Wharton has been criticized by males for a perspective on war "too distant" to be relative.¹⁵ Also as with Cather, critics note Wharton's

¹⁰Shari Benstock, *Women of the Left Bank: Paris 1900-1940* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986) 124.

¹¹Sharon O'Brien, "Combat Envy and Survivor Guilt: Willa Cather's 'Manly Battle Yarn,'" *Arms and the Woman: War, Gender, and Literary Representation* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989) 137.

¹²Maureen Ryan, "No Woman's Land: Gender in Willa Cather's *One of Ours*," *Studies in American Fiction* 18 (Spring 1990): 70.

¹³Lee 178.

¹⁴Lee 171.

¹⁵Benstock 27.

enthusiasm for the war effort¹⁶ while still others have argued against the novel's naive idealism.¹⁷ Judith Sensibar, however, takes on critics of this work (R.W.B. Lewis, Cynthia Wolff, and Shari Benstock), and sees it as marking the beginning of an experimental later period.¹⁸ During this period Wharton attempts to say the "unsayable," a term Gilbert and Gubar use in their discussion of Wharton's ghost stories.¹⁹ In this case, the unsayable is the homoerotic content of the father/son story. Whereas Cather rewrote the male soldier/hero story in the context of her own female desire, Wharton rewrites an essential masculinist trope of WWI stories and poetry—homoeroticism—by suggesting that it is not the result of male bonding in a gender polarized war, but has a "perennial presence in a homophobic world."²⁰ That she appropriates the valorized relationship of father and son, and encodes it with the father's possessiveness, commodification, and idealization of the son is as significant for its critique of consumerism as it is for its incestuous homoeroticism. I will explore similar themes as they are played out in *The Marne* (1918).

In addition, I will analyze Wharton's three short stories as a reflection of concerns about herself and her writing at the time²¹—including anxiety over female authorship within a masculinist tradition in "Writing a War Story" (1919), paternal corruption and female desire in "Coming Home" (1916), and the tension between sympathy for the war effort and the artist's need for distance in "The Refugees" (1930).

¹⁶Gilbert and Gubar, vol. 2, 283.

¹⁷Judith Sensibar, "Behind the Lines" in Edith Wharton's *A Son at the Front: Rewriting a Masculinist Tradition*, *Journal of American Studies* 24 (August 1990): 70.

¹⁸Sensibar 189.

¹⁹Gilbert and Gubar, vol. 2, 157.

²⁰Sensibar 188n.

²¹Barbara A. White, *Edith Wharton: A Study of the Short Fiction* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1991) 85.

Unlike Americans Cather and Wharton, Virginia Woolf has a different take on patriarchal culture. While the Americans looked to the Old World (both were devotees of France) for a possible antidote to ideals lost in a “genderized,” “commodified” New World, Woolf had her own argument with Europe. Consequently, she would never be accused of romanticizing her subject as her contemporaries had been. Virginia Woolf looked inward for her answers, directly at individual consciousness where predominantly masculine aspects of reality²² are the source of psychic malaise and gender disruptions. This aesthetic informs her style, the most experimental and closely modernistic among the three authors. It is also the most polemical indictment of the patriarchy. As Karen Schneider theorizes, Woolf connects masculine dominance in the home to the tyranny of England’s own patriarchal culture to a greater tyranny from abroad, which threatened destruction of that culture. This, in turn, produced a tension between making an artistic stance against many aspects of English society and feeling an attachment to others about to be destroyed.²³ Thus she captures not only a difference between genders, but within gender, ultimately endorsing a theory of androgyny not unlike that of Willa Cather. I will trace these themes as they are worked out in all of the novels under investigation in this thesis. By citing *Three Guineas* (1938) and critical essays by Mark Hussey, James Longenbach, Nancy Topping Bazin, Jane Hamovit Lauter and others, I will argue that war and its root causes in gender issues is the focus of all of Woolf’s novels in question. I will also look at how Woolf’s personal experiences informed her aesthetic vision.

With the publication of many new works on women, war, and gender as mentioned above, it is my hope that this research will add to the existing scholarship by defining how the war helped each writer achieve a certain stage in her artistic development. By identifying that stage for each one, I hope to illuminate an understanding of her work as a whole. The war did not transform Cather, Wharton, and Woolf into great writers by its sheer historical importance; they transformed

²²Nancy Topping Bazin, *Virginia Woolf and the Androgynous Vision* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1973) 91.

²³Karen Schneider, “Of Two Minds: Woolf, the War, and *Between the Acts*,” *Journal of Modern Literature* 16 (Summer 1989): 94.

Note: The author briefly describes how she intends to undertake her research, making specific reference to procedures in the relevant academic disciplines.

the war into a metaphor for their more personal concerns—culture and female expression. Ultimately, I hope to prove that Cather, Wharton, and Woolf invested the war on the home front with as much significance as the one fought on the battlefields.

V.

Research Methods

My research methods will consist of interpreting and comparing/contrasting primary sources. I will also use biographical and historical materials in order to establish the social and political climate in which the artists wrote. I will support my findings with a significant number of critical essays on Cather, Wharton, and Woolf, which deal specifically with the subject of gender and war.

VI.

Research Limitations

The major limitation of this thesis is the necessity of restricting the number of works selected for this investigation. There are many additional stories written during the war years which all three writers left behind, and these might also have been included. In order to examine an individual work more closely, I have elected to focus on those where the war functions as either a central theme or an important backdrop. A second limitation is the need to restrict the number of female authors represented. Any attempt to argue for the inclusion of female-authored texts in the war canon places one in the happy predicament of discovering too many worthy candidates. Last, my research has uncovered few full critical studies of the selected Edith Wharton short stories as well as of her short novel *The Marne*.

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III. Works to Be Consulted

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VII.

Tentative Schedule

Initial submission of proposal	February 4, 1994
Proposal returned for revision	March 4, 1994
Submission of proposal for final revisions	June 1, 1994
Proposal accepted by research advisor	August 1, 1994
Thesis director assigned	September 10, 1994
First draft completed	November 10, 1994
Thesis director returns corrected first draft	November 30, 1994
Revised draft completed	January 24, 1995
Thesis director returns revised draft	February 10, 1995
Final text submitted to thesis director and research advisor	April 1, 1995
Bound copy approved	May 15, 1995
Graduation	June, 1995

7.2 Sample 2

The sample below comes from

http://www.urop.uci.edu/SURP/sample_proposals/SURP%20Humanities%201.pdf:

Moving From Culture Shock to Cosmopolitanism: The Position of Students Immersed in Educational, Cross-Cultural Experiences

Objective

In a world where globalization is rapidly on the rise, possessing cross cultural understanding and affinity is increasingly important. I am interested in studying the experiences of students studying abroad as they endeavor to acquire a cross-cultural experience, including acquisition of a language, exposure to diverse socializations, and world views, and resulting in an educational experience on scholastic and personal levels. Through the use of questionnaires, surveys, and detailed journaling I will be charting the progress of students and myself in our respective cultural immersion programs. Specifically, I will be monitoring the progress of 10-20 students who are studying abroad in France.

Literary Background

As I have been preparing for my time abroad in the past months, I have interacted with interesting literature and studies which have confronted issues of cross cultural experiences, studying abroad, and culture shock. Exposure to this material in addition to input from my faculty advisors has inspired me to incorporate research into my time abroad in order to formulate an organized perspective which I may share with and benefit others through. In particular I am interested in the writings of Paul Pederson who writes of the common experiences encountered while abroad, as well as F. Schumann's work on the effectiveness of journaling in charting linguistic acquisition. In his work, *The Five Stages of Culture Shock: Critical Incidents Around the World*, Pederson follows in the path of previous studies on culture shock, namely P.S. Adler's publications in the *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*. As discussed in Pederson's work the prescribed stages experienced by an individual while living abroad include; the honeymoon, disintegration, reintegration, autonomy, and interdependence (Pederson, 26-263). Schumann's work on the other hand, has resulted in the identification of six variables which affect individual foreign language acquisition. While I have referenced Pederson's approach as an inspiration for monitoring the progress of my focus group and myself, I intend to follow Schumann's example by incorporating my own progress in a more personal and detailed manner. I will be applying Schumann's technique of composing detailed journals on a daily basis in order to situate myself within the template of his variables, specifically as a second language learner in the context of cultural immersion.

Details of Pedersonian Stages

While Pederson has distinguished the stages of culture shock as distinct, he also stresses that they are unique in the experience of each individual; "[culture shock] is a process and not a single event, [and] may take place at many different levels simultaneously." (Pederson, vii) Using Pederson's definitive work as my guide, I intend to chart the progress of my own experiences and those of the focus group of students I will be communicating with.

Honeymoon stage

Individual is characterized by a sense of adventure and freedom upon recent arrival in host country. Any differences or difficulties merely heighten and encourage the individual's sense of excitement at new experiences encompassing time abroad (26).

Disintegration stage

As the individual becomes more aware of their own differences from the host culture they experience feelings of disorientation and weakened self-confidence as they feel inadequate. They misinterpret cultural signs, while becoming detached from their own cultural links and supports. Feelings of depression, loneliness, and withdrawal (79).

Reintegration stage

The observed differences are rejected by the individual and become a source of frustration, anxiety, and pre-occupation. Preferences and dislikes in culture are emphasized for the individual. Self-esteem grows as individual asserts opinions (134).

Autonomy stage

Individual experiences confidence in own capabilities and becomes relaxed and comfortable in setting. Increased feelings of control and independence (201).

Interdependence

Celebration of cultural differences. Individual experiences wide range of emotion and create meaning for situations leading to productivity and a sense of responsibility (245).

Through using these stages as a frame of reference I will administer surveys and questionnaires that will result in the charted progress of my focus group's time abroad. The results from this portion of the research will demonstrate the position of the students within Pederson's schema.

Schumann's Factors

Schumann emphasized the use of detailed journaling to chart the progress of a language learner on a personal level (as featured in the Selected Papers from the Los Angeles Second Language Acquisition Research Forum). This task was accomplished by using "journals as research tools for self-investigation in second language learning (SLL)." (Schumann, 51) I will be applying his principles within the context of language acquisition within the setting of education in cultural immersion. As a second language learner, this method is appropriate and applicable to my research. In agreement with his findings, I believe that such a tool will contribute to my research through identifying my personal "language variables". Schumann's work establishes six language variables as the factors, which contribute and effect a student's language acquisition and can be identified through detailed journaling.

Nesting Patterns

Language learning is affected by the manner in which students situate themselves in their host country, as evidenced in journal entries. (51)

Reactions to Pedagogical Techniques

The manner in which students interact and respond to teachers and teaching methods within the classroom setting. (52)

Motivation for Choice of Language Learning Materials

The student's relation to and reception of a specific classroom text or material can improve or hinder their learning (52).

Desire to Maintain One's Own Language Learning Agenda

Journaling may evidence that tension arises as student's plan for language learning conflicts with the instructor's agenda (52).

Eavesdropping vs. Speaking as a Language Learning Strategy

Some students show a preference for learning through active listening, rather than having to speak themselves in order acquire language. (53)

Competition vs. Cooperation in SLL

Students can identify through journaling whether or not they benefit in competitive or cooperative learning settings when acquiring second languages (53).

Method

By administering surveys, questionnaires, and interviews at stages of pre-departure, arrival, mid-stay, pre-return, and post-experience, I will chart the personal progress of the focus group in their unique relations to Pederson's stages (please see surveys #1-4). Factors to be considered are as follows, but not limited to; personal motivations, expectations (of self, country, and experience), educational background (such as foreign language proficiency and knowledge of country), personal characteristics (personality, traits, adaptability to change etc), perception (of self in relation to host country and of host country culture), and emotional state (as occurring throughout process). Aspects such as these will be monitored in research to gauge the progress of the students, but also enable results that will evidence patterns of experience while abroad. This data will also serve as a contemporary and specific focus group, the results of which will be compared to the stages elaborated by Pederson. For, I am not interested in merely interpreting his stages, but observing how the schema set out by Pederson applies to the specific experiences of my focus group in the real life scenario of a definite student experience, specifically those studying abroad in France.

In addition to utilizing Pederson's stages as a frame of reference for my research, I will also be recording my own progress to incorporate a highly detailed and personal aspect into my research. In addition to taking part in the surveys and questionnaires of my focus group, I will be maintaining a journal including such elements as my linguistic acquisition and relation to the variables established by Schumann. These journal entries will be completed in conjunction to the Pederson studies, in order that I may utilize this experience to identify my personal language variables, in addition to understanding the personal processes of a student abroad.

Purpose

As a result of this research in conjunction with my time abroad, I intend to gather and organize information that will compose an insightful and educational study in cross-cultural educational experiences. The opportunity to share the results of this summer research project with individuals at the symposium will grant me the opportunity to share the findings with a broader audience, in the hope that such findings may benefit individuals who desire to study abroad and or acquire a second language through such a cross-cultural experience.

Projected Timeline

- Spring Quarter- continue meeting with academic advisors to refine survey questions.
- Spring Quarter- meet with selected focus group members and administer pre-departure surveys and questionnaires (see Survey #1), and establish reliable form of correspondence to be used while abroad (most likely to be conducted through email).
- By week 10 of Spring Quarter- complete any unread literary and academic works from the 'sources' list and incorporate any appropriate information into research.
- Pre-departure- begin personal journal of expectations to be continued throughout time abroad (after Schumann) and incorporated into research presentation upon return.
- Pre-departure- final in person meeting with advisor(s) prior to departure.
- Arrive in France July 2 and begin cultural immersion program at University of Burgundy in Dijon. Establish contact with advisor(s) and with members of focus group as they arrive at their respective destinations at various French institutions.
- July 9: administer Survey #2 to focus group (tentatively via email). Collect and organize results. Maintain communication with advisor(s), relaying data.
- Mid-program: administer Survey # 3 to individuals, then collect and organize results. Maintain communication with advisor(s), relaying data.
- Pre-return: administer Survey #4 to individuals, then collect and organize data.
- Post program: organize all data in comprehensive manner to show variance of experiences in relation to Pederson's "Stages", interview participants about experience and conduct comparison of initial

expectations (referencing Survey #1 results) with actual outcome of time abroad (tentatively to be recorded on cassette and transcribed).

- Spring: Present Results to Research Symposium at UC, Irvine.

Sources

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Survey #1: Pre-departure

Please answer the following questions by selecting the answer that reflects your position. For selections ranging 1-5: 1 (strongly disagree), 2(disagree), 3 (neutral/not applicable), 4 (agree), and 5 (strongly agree).

1) Primary reason for studying abroad:

- a. education b. language acquisition c. leisure d. cultural experience
other:

2) How many years did you study French before college?

- a. 1 b. 2 c. 3 d. 4 e. 5 f. more than 5 years

3) How many years of French instruction have you taken at the college level?

- a. less than 1 b. 1 c. 2 d. 3 e. 4 f. more than 4 years

4) Have you studied abroad before?

- a. yes b. no

5) If so, where and when did you study?

country: _____; date: _____.

6) Have you traveled abroad before?

- a. yes b. no

7) If so, where and when did you travel?

Country(ies)/ dates _____.

8) Where will the credit from the courses you take abroad be applied? (check all that apply)

- a. not applicable, not taking courses for credit
b. courses contributing to degree requirements
c. classes contributing towards credit to graduate but not degree requirements
d. courses counting towards both elective credit and degree requirements

9) While abroad I will be living:

- a. with a host family b. in a dormitory c. in an apartment d. other:

10) I will have roommates in this living situation.

- a. true b. false

11) I am currently taking part in the following activities to prepare for my time abroad (circle all that apply):

- a. speaking with students that have studied abroad in my country
b. speaking with individuals who have traveled abroad
c. researching the location I will be studying in
d. watching French films, plays, or productions
e. listening to French music
f. reading French publications
g. taking French language classes
h. speaking to individuals from France

12) On a weekly basis I speak in French (outside the classroom):

- a. for less than 1 hour b. 1-2 hours c. 2-3 hours d. 3-4 hours e. 4-5 hours

f. more than 5 hours (if so, please specify: _____ hours per week)

13) I am acquainted with some of the individuals I will be studying with while abroad.

- a. true b. false

14) I am currently participating in the following activities at my home university:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| a. volunteer work | g. political groups |
| b. religious activities | h. academic/educational groups |
| c. sports/fitness | i. music events |
| d. outdoor/recreation | j. interaction with faculty/staff |
| e. artistic events/activities | k. social groups/organizations |
| f. student clubs | |

15) When at my host university abroad I would like to take part in the following on campus activities (circle all that apply):

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| a. volunteer work | g. political groups |
| b. religious activities | h. academic/educational groups |
| c. sports/fitness | i. music events |
| d. outdoor/recreation | j. interaction with faculty/staff |
| e. artistic events/activities | k. social groups/organizations |
| f. student clubs | |

16) The following word(s) describe my relation to my future experience abroad:

(circle all that apply)

- | | |
|-------------|-----------------|
| a. anxious | e. not prepared |
| b. excited | |
| c. calm | |
| d. prepared | |

II. Rate the following statements in accordance with how they apply to your circumstance. '1' meaning you strongly disagree, '2' you disagree, '3' meaning you are neutral, '4' you agree, and '5' you strongly agree.

11) I have fears and anxieties about studying abroad.

1 2 3 4 5

12) I am confident in my French language abilities.

1 2 3 4 5

13) I am expecting to improve my French language skills while abroad.

1 2 3 4 5

14) I am knowledgeable about the area I am studying abroad in.

1 2 3 4 5

15) I enjoy change and experiencing new situations.

1 2 3 4 5

16) I actively seek out educational and challenging experiences.

1 2 3 4 5

17) Before my departure I am actively seeking out situations and activities that will prepare me for my time abroad.

1 2 3 4 5

18) I am an outgoing person/extrovert.

1 2 3 4 5

19) I am a reserved person/introvert.

1 2 3 4 5

20) When I study abroad I expect to undergo changes in my outlook on life.

1 2 3 4 5

21) While abroad I intend to keep in touch/communicate with my family and friends at home.

1 2 3 4 5

22) I intend to make friends with French students at my host institution.

1 2 3 4 5

23) I intend to make friends with foreign students like myself while abroad.

1 2 3 4 5

24) When abroad I expect to be welcomed by those native to my host country.

1 2 3 4 5

25) I anticipate disliking my study abroad experience at some point during my stay.

1 2 3 4 5

26) I anticipate regretting my abroad experience at some point during my stay.

1 2 3 4 5

27) I expect that I will not want to return to my home at the end of my abroad experience.

1 2 3 4 5

28) Feelings of homesickness will accompany my time abroad.

1 2 3 4 5

29) I expect I will assimilate to cultural practices and customs while abroad.

1 2 3 4 5

30) After returning from my experience abroad, I expect I will desire to re-visit my host country.

1 2 3 4 5

31) During my time abroad I expect to form lasting friendships/connections.

1 2 3 4 5

Survey #2: Arrival

1) I experienced difficulties during my trip to my destination.

1 2 3 4 5

- 2) I am experiencing feelings of homesickness.
1 2 3 4 5
- 3) My living arrangements are satisfactory.
1 2 3 4 5
- 4) The 'locals' have been welcoming and receptive.
1 2 3 4 5
- 5) My language skills have been adequate for situations I have encountered.
1 2 3 4 5
- 6) French is the language I am expected to speak in by the individuals I have interacted with.
1 2 3 4 5
- 7) I am comfortable speaking French.
1 2 3 4 5
- 8) I have observed different customs and social interactions.
1 2 3 4 5
- 9) I am able to act as I did while I was in my home country.
1 2 3 4 5
- 10) I have no regrets about choosing this experience.
1 2 3 4 5
- 11) I feel confident in my abilities to accomplish my goals while abroad.
1 2 3 4 5
- 12) I feel anxious about the experience that awaits me.
1 2 3 4 5
- 13) I have been using English frequently.
1 2 3 4 5
- 14) I have easily found individuals who are willing to answer my questions and assist me.
1 2 3 4 5
- 15) I expect to be able to continue daily activities that I am accustomed to.
1 2 3 4 5
- 16) I have been utilizing a guidebook to acquaint me with my surroundings.
a. true b. false
- 17) I have contacted my family and or friends at home.
a. true b. false
- 18) I will have access to internet and email while abroad.
a. true b. false

19) I will be using the following methods to contact friends and family at home (check all that apply):

- a. email
- b. phone
- c. letters/postcards
- d. do not plan to contact friends/family

20) Differences have been observed in the following categories:

- a. gender roles
- b. social greetings
- c. status/class interactions
- d. observance of meals
- e. travel procedures
- f. climate
- g. social interactions
- h. attire/dress

21) Individuals I have encountered are able to tell that I am not a native.

- a. true
- b. false

22) I feel I could have better prepared myself for this experience.

- a. true
- b. false

Survey #3: Mid-Stay

1) I am experiencing feelings of homesickness.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

2) I am satisfied with my housing situation.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

3) I have difficulty sleeping.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

4) I have become more proficient in my French language skills.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

5) French natives have been willing to converse with me in French.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

6) I have experienced difficulty when communicating in French with native speakers.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

7) I have become active in student and community activities.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

8) I am annoyed at some cultural customs and differences I have observed.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

9) I have encountered criticism of my country of origin and political beliefs

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

10) My academic program is more difficult than that at my home institution.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

11) (Since the last survey) Individuals can tell that I am not a native.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 4

- 12) The student population is:
- more diverse than my home institution
 - less diverse than my home institution
 - as diverse as my home institution
- 13) I have been spending the majority of my time with:
- American students
 - Foreign students
 - French students
 - individuals met outside of school setting
- 14) I have been participating in the following activities at my host institution:
- | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| g. volunteer work | g. political groups |
| h. religious activities | h. academic/educational groups |
| i. sports/fitness | i. music events |
| j. outdoor/recreation | j. interaction with faculty/staff |
| k. artistic events/activities | k. social groups/organizations |
| l. student clubs | |
- 15) I have been participating in the following activities in the community outside my host institution:
- | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| a. volunteer work | g. political groups |
| b. religious activities | h. academic/educational groups |
| c. sports/fitness | i. music events |
| d. outdoor/recreation | j. interaction with faculty/staff |
| e. artistic events/activities | k. social groups/organizations |
| f. student clubs | |
- 16) I frequently interact with the individuals I live with.
- true
 - false
- 17) French is the main language of communication for me.
- true
 - false
- 18) I have begun to 'think' in French.
- true
 - false
- 19) I could have taken steps to better prepare myself for this experience.
- true
 - false
- 20) I have taken trips outside the area I am studying.
- not at all
 - once
 - 1-2 times
 - 2-3 times
 - 3 or more times
- 21) I have had dreams in French.
- true
 - false
- 22) I feel "at home".

- a. true b. false

- 23) I have been communicating with my family and friends at home.
a. true b. false

Survey # 4 Pre-Return

- 1) I am prepared to return home.
1 2 3 4 5
- 2) I am satisfied with my experience abroad.
1 2 3 4 5
- 3) I plan to return to visit the area I studied in.
1 2 3 4 5
- 4) I made the most of my opportunities while abroad.
1 2 3 4 5
- 5) I am satisfied with my language improvement as a result of this program.
1 2 3 4 5
- 6) I embraced the differences I encountered in my host country.
1 2 3 4 5
- 7) I now view my home country from a different perspective.
1 2 3 4 5
- 8) I was able to establish a 'home' for myself while abroad.
1 2 3 4 5
- 9) I became comfortable using French in everyday situations.
1 2 3 4 5
- 10) My pre-departure preparation was beneficial.
1 2 3 4 5
- 11) I learned the most through my interactions outside the classroom.
1 2 3 4 5
- 12) I felt homesick throughout my stay.
1 2 3 4 5
- 13) I am currently feeling homesick.
1 2 3 4 5
- 14) I was able to form friendships with natives.
a. true b. false
- 15) I made friends who plan to visit me in my home.
a. true b. false

8. The 3 000-word or 5 000-Word Proposal Form Template

Your detailed research proposal should be submitted in **electronic format** as well as in **hard-copy format** to your supervisor and co-supervisor.

Research Proposal: Department of English

Please tick the applicable box:

MA Dissertation

☐

PhD Thesis

☐

A research proposal by:

Full names:

Student

number:

Postal address:

Contact number:

Email:

Supervisors:

Statement:

I have read the University's Policy on the Prevention of Plagiarism and Dealing with Academic Writing Misconduct:

(http://www.ufs.ac.za/faculties/documents/H1/HD1/policies/Plagiarism_Prevention_Policy.pdf).

I understand that in writing and submitting this proposal, I must:

- abide by all the directives of this Policy, the Assessment Policy, course guides, specific and general regulations and assessment requirements;
- seek assistance if I am unsure about appropriate citation and referencing techniques;
- accept responsibility for having full knowledge of the Policy;
- submit only my own work for any form of assessment, except where:
 - the work of others is appropriately acknowledged; and
 - the supervisors have required, or given prior permission for, group or collaborative work to be submitted;
- refrain from intentionally or negligently deceiving the reader by preventing my own work from being copied by another student, who may or may not have an intentional or negligent aim to deceive the reader; and
- be aware that according to the Policy, measures for all Level Four violations and repeated Levels One, Two and Three violations are reported and investigated in accordance with the *UFS Statute* on Student Discipline (see Chapter XIII, pp 50-58).

Signature: _____

Date: _____

9. The Abbreviated Proposal Template

Once you have completed your detailed proposal to the satisfaction of your supervisor(s) and the Postgraduate Committee, you are required to use this proposal to draft the abbreviated proposal which is scrutinised by the CTR. Below you will find the template, but this will also be emailed you.

FORM L5: TITLE REGISTRATION

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE
FACULTY OF THE HUMANITIES
TITLE REGISTRATION: MASTER'S & DOCTORAL
STUDENTS

Particulars <u>must</u> be typed.

1 STUDENT'S PARTICULARS

1.1 Title (e.g. Mr/Ms):

1.2 Surname:

1.3 Christian or given names:

1.4 Student number:

1.5 Postal address:

1.6 Telephone number:

2 PARTICULARS OF QUALIFICATIONS

2.1 Qualification(s) currently held

Degree	University	Year

2.2 Degree in respect of which title is to be registered:

2.3 Department:

2.4 Supervisor/Promoter:

2.5 Co-supervisor/Co-promoter:

3 RESEARCH PARTICULARS

3.1 Proposed title (do not type entire title in capital letters):

3.2 Research proposal (not more than 1000 words):

Use the given space to outline your research proposal in terms of the suggested aspects to be included on page 4. A maximum of three pages (including page 4) may accompany this page.

.....
	Signature of student
Date	

4 CONFIRMATION THAT THE RESEARCH PROPOSAL WAS DISCUSSED IN THE DEPARTMENT/PROGRAMME CONTEXT:

4.1 Supervisor/Promoter..... Date:

4.2 Co-supervisor/Co-promoter Date:

4.3 Head of Department/Departmental
Chairperson/Programme Director: Date:

5 COMMENTS/RECOMMENDATION OF THE COMMITTEE FOR TITLE REGISTRATIONS

(CTR)

5.1 Ethical aspects have been considered by the CT ☐ YES ☐ NO

5.2 Ethical aspects are referred to the Committee for Research ☐ YES ☐ NO

Chairperson:

Date:

6 COMMENTS/RECOMMENDATION OF THE COMMITTEE FOR RESEARCH ETHICS

.....

.....

Chairperson:

Date:

ASPECTS TO BE INCLUDED IN THE RESEARCH PROPOSAL

1. Background/rationale

This section should include the reasons for studying this particular phenomenon. Clearly indicate the relevance and scholarly contribution of the proposed research to the discipline concerned. Delimit the focus of the research by stating the relevant field/subfield within the discipline and describe the theoretical tradition/perspective within which the study fits.

2. Research problem and objectives

Provide a clear and unambiguous (what is included and what not) statement of the object of study (unit of analysis), as well as the general aim(s) and the research objectives of the study. The problem statement could take the form of specific research or investigative questions, or research hypotheses.

3. Research design and research methodology

Provide information regarding the type of study which will be undertaken to provide acceptable answers to the research problem or the research questions. Also provide details of the research method(s), which should match the stated objectives. The premises upon which the method(s) is/are based should be described clearly.

4. Value of the research

Assess the value of this research to scholarship in general, to the specific profession or discipline and/or to any other interested parties.

10. Rules and Procedures of the Committee for Research Ethics

RULES AND PROCEDURES OF THE COMMITTEE FOR RESEARCH ETHICS

FACULTY OF THE HUMANITIES⁴

1. NAME

The name of the Committee shall be the

RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE: FACULTY OF THE HUMANITIES

hereinafter referred to as the Committee.

2. POINT OF DEPARTURE

The Committee's decision-making shall be carried out in accordance with acknowledged national and international ethical norms and standards applicable to research.

In accordance with the South African Constitution, a high premium is to be put on aspects such as cross-cultural differences, as well as people's psychological, physical and social well-being, their human dignity and their right to privacy and confidentiality. The Committee will therefore strictly monitor research practices which may be detrimental to individuals or groups participating in the research, or which may be offensive or discriminatory.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE COMMITTEE

3.1 To ensure that high ethical standards are an intrinsic trait of all research in the Faculty of the Humanities.

3.2 To stimulate awareness with regard to the ethical aspects of research in the Faculty of the Humanities.

3.3 To prevent ethically unacceptable research practices.

4. FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Committee is responsible for ensuring that ethical standards are maintained in research projects in order to protect the interests of the

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https://intranet.ufs.ac.za/sites/01/_layouts/WordViewer.aspx?id=/sites/01/Research%20%20Navorsing/Rules%20and%20Procedures%20of%20the%20Committee%20for%20Research%20Ethics.doc&Source=https%3A%2F%2Fintranet%2Eufs%2Eac%2Eza%2Fsites%2F01%2FResearch%2520%2520Navorsing%2FForms%2FAIItems%2Easpx&DefaultItemOpen=1

research participants, the researcher and the institution. The Committee must therefore

- 4.1 create guidelines for ethically accountable research to which all research in the Faculty involving human subjects/participants must adhere,
- 4.2 compile and administrate application forms for the approval of ethical aspects of a research proposal,
- 4.3 consider the ethical implications of proposed research projects involving human subjects/participants and certify such research projects as complying with the stated guidelines (see 4.1 above),
- 4.4 ensure, in consultation with departments, that effective mechanisms be introduced for the security and/or destruction of confidential data obtained during the research process and that monitoring of this occurs from time to time.

5. COMPOSITION

- 5.1 This Committee will consist of:
 - 5.1.1 four members of the Faculty Board, of whom at least two are experts in the field of research ethics,
 - 5.1.2 one legal expert, and
 - 5.1.3 one person not employed by the University.
- 5.2 The Committee will be appointed for three years by the Faculty Committee and the members will be eligible for re-election.
- 5.3 The chairperson will be appointed by the committee members.
- 5.4 In discharging its responsibilities, the Committee may seek the assistance of such experts as it may deem necessary.
- 5.5 A quorum consists of 50% of the members plus one.

6. STATUS

The Committee will report to the Faculty Committee.

7. CATEGORIES OF RESEARCH SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY THE COMMITTEE

- 7.1 All staff research involving human subjects/participants and all such theses and dissertations.⁵
- 7.2 Any data collection relating to people (and organisations) by means of interviewing, surveys, questionnaires, observation of human behaviour and audio/video recordings.
- 7.3 Any use of archival data in which individuals are identifiable.
- 7.4 Any study of illegal activities.

8. METHOD OF OPERATION

- 8.1 The ethical aspects of staff research projects which are subject to approval by this Committee in terms of paragraph 7, will be scrutinised at the commencement of the research.
- 8.2 In the case of theses and dissertations, the ethical aspects of research proposals subject to approval by this Committee in terms of paragraph 7, will be scrutinised after approval by the various Committees for Title Registration.
- 8.3 The Research Ethics Committee will evaluate the ethical aspects of a research proposal and approve it or make recommendations on improving it.
- 8.4 In the event of any amendments to an approved research proposal which affect the ethical aspects, the proposal must be resubmitted to the Committee.
- 8.5 Decisions will be reached by majority vote. In the event of a tie, the chairperson has a casting vote.
- 8.6 Where the Committee finds that further information is required to enable it to reach an informed decision, it could request that such information be furnished in writing.
- 8.7 Minutes of meetings are to be submitted to the Faculty Committee.

9. DISPUTES AND APPEAL PROCEDURE

- 9.1 The Committee's approval or rejection of the ethical aspects of a research proposal must be communicated to the applicant in writing

⁵ Mini-dissertations are excluded

as soon as possible. This also applies to the approval or rejection of amendments to research proposals.

- 9.2 In all cases where the Committee finds that the ethical aspects of a research proposal cannot be approved, clear reasons for this decision must be stated and properly minuted.
- 9.3 The applicant must be afforded the opportunity to make written and/or oral representations to the Committee regarding proposed amendments, or conditions set, or the non-approval of the ethical aspects of a research proposal.
- 9.4 If such representations do not result in a resolution to the satisfaction of the parties involved, the matter may be referred to an Appeal Committee – appointed by the Faculty Committee – for resolution.
- 9.5 The Committee may revoke or amend a decision after receiving additional information or in the event of a successful appeal.

11. References

(An asterisk indicates that the source listed is available at the UFS's Sasol Library.)

- * Anderson, J. and Poole, M. 2009. *Assignment and thesis writing*. (South African Edition) Cape Town: Juta and Company Ltd.
- * Kinmond, K. 2012. Coming up with a research question. Pp. 23-36 in C. Sullivan, S. Gibson and S. Riley (Eds.), *Doing your qualitative psychology project*. London: Sage.
- * O'Leary, Z. 2014. *The essential guide to doing your research project*. London: Sage.
- * Ridley, D. 2012. *The literature review: A step-by-step guide for students*. London: Sage
- * Rudestam, K.E. and Newton, R.R. 2015. *Surviving your dissertation: A comprehensive guide to content and process*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.

12. Additional Sources

Take a look at the following texts too. (They have not necessarily been written with the social sciences/humanities in mind, but they are useful nevertheless.)

- **Creating the title for a research proposal:**

http://www.wtamu.edu/webres/File/Academics/Graduate%20School/Sponsored%20Research%20Services/Craft_A_Winning_Title.pdf

- **Writing sound abstracts:**

<http://www.uky.edu/academy/sites/www.uky.edu.academy/files/How%20to%20Write%20Research%20Abstract.pdf>

- **Developing a research question/hypothesis:**

http://twp.duke.edu/uploads/media_items/research-questions.original.pdf

- **Writing a literature review:**

<http://www.lboro.ac.uk/media/wwwlboroacuk/content/library/downloads/advisesheets/literature%20review.pdf>

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/994/04/>

- **Developing a conceptual framework:**

<https://drannejonesuas.files.wordpress.com/2013/10/recipe-for-a-theoretical-framework.pdf>

- **Taking ethical considerations into account:**

http://www.sagepub.com/upm-data/34088_Chapter4.pdf

- **Employing qualitative research methods:**

https://mthoyibi.files.wordpress.com/2011/05/qualitative-research-methods-for-the-social-sciences_bruce-l-berg-2001.pdf

- **Employing the Harvard referencing style:**

<http://isites.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=k70847&pageid=icb.page357682>

(This site contains several useful links about, amongst other things, citing sources, avoiding plagiarism, and integrating sources.)

13. Frequently Asked Questions

- *What is the difference between a dissertation and a thesis?*

A thesis [emphasises] research to a higher degree of academic achievement whereas dissertation denotes detailed references combined with observations made by the author, often at the graduation level. Both are research oriented activities, with thesis leading to the attainment of a doctorate or PhD degree while a dissertation culminates in a post graduate degree like MPhil....⁶

A thesis has to be on an original subject, based on a hypothesis that is submitted as a 'synopsis, allotted by a university and written under the overall supervision of a university-designated guide. For a dissertation one has to [synthesise] information collected, adding original thoughts to it...
(<http://www.transcriptionwave.com/dissertation-thesis.html>).

- *May I apply for ethical clearance while I am working on my dissertation/thesis?*

You are obliged to apply for ethical clearance **before** you collect your data; attempting to apply for clearance during your studies is regarded as retroactive in nature and is therefore not allowed.

- *Can anyone assist me when it comes to applying for ethical clearance?*

In addition to receiving assistance from your supervisor(s) and members of the Postgraduate Committee, you may also need assistance, contact the Postgraduate School on campus: email rabanyemc@ufs.ac.za or postgrad@ufs.ac.za.

- *What happens if my research proposal is deemed not to be viable?*

You may be asked to revise your proposal, and given guidelines on the changes you need to make.

⁶ What sometimes confuses the issue is that the reverse may apply at some universities overseas.