

The Thesis and Exhibition Thesis Proposal Process

Preparing a proposal, whether for a standard thesis or an exhibition thesis project, is a different task than writing a term paper. Following research on a specific subject (often undertaken in the graduate Proseminar [[ARTHIST 700](#)] or in other coursework) proposals are developed in consultation with an Art History faculty member who will serve as supervisor or “First Reader” for the thesis. The input of the supervisor is essential for the success of the proposal. Students can expect to submit multiple drafts to the supervisor before approval. This process does not require registration for a particular course. Rather, the student must request a meeting with the appropriate faculty member to discuss expectations and deadlines for the submission of drafts and completion of the proposal. It is incumbent upon the student to initiate this process. If assistance is required at any point in the process, the student should contact the Director of Graduate Studies.

Upon approval by the supervisor (the “First Reader”), the completed proposal is circulated to the faculty for consideration. A majority vote from the faculty is necessary before a student can register for thesis research. Faculty comments on the proposal are shared with the student by the supervisor as appropriate. Upon approval, students on the standard thesis track register for [ARTHIST 990](#) (“thesis research”). Those on the exhibition thesis track register for [ARTHIST 991](#) (“exhibition research”). **Registration is completed by the department administrator only after the proposal has been approved.** In order to register, the student must share with the administrator the name of the faculty supervisor and the appropriate course number. Two terms of thesis research are required in order to complete the MA degree. At the end of the second term the student is expected to defend the project. A description of the standard thesis defense and submission can be found [here](#). A description of the exhibition thesis defense and submission can be found [here](#).

Deadlines for the submission of proposals, regardless of track, are as follows:

May 1: for students who wish to begin research in the Fall term

December 1: for students who wish to begin research in the Spring term

Questions about these guidelines should be directed to the Director of Graduate Studies.

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