

Kent State University College of Arts and Sciences
MASTER OF LIBERAL STUDIES DEGREE PROGRAM

Essay Approval Form

Date: _____

Name _____

Address _____

ID Number _____

E-mail address (checked on a daily basis): _____@kent.edu

Proposed Title of Essay: _____

We acknowledge that we are members of the Graduate faculty at KSU, that we have received a copy of this form which explains the roles of the Adviser and Reader of the Liberal Studies Essay, that we have received a copy of the student's proposal for the Essay, and that we find this project worth directing and agree to do so, subject to the student developing the Essay in a manner that we find to be appropriate for graduate-level work.

Adviser's signature: _____

Please print name: _____

Department _____ Email _____@kent.edu

Reader/Co-Adviser's signature: _____
(Circle one above)

Please print name: _____

Department _____ Email _____@kent.edu

Approved by the Graduate Coordinator of the Masters of Liberal Studies

Coordinator's signature: _____/_____

Procedures for Approval of Proposed Essay

A student starts by coming up with an interdisciplinary topic for their Essay and writing a preliminary proposal which they discuss with a potential Faculty Advisor (around 300 words). If a student needs assistance in identifying a potential advisor, they may consider a professor with whom they have studied, or consult with the graduate coordinator of the Liberal Studies program for guidance.

Conversation with a potential Advisor about a preliminary proposed thesis for the Essay may be fruitful for the further development of the final proposal. Advisors often have useful suggestions, and their input to the proposal usually serves to focus the thesis being proffered and serves to enrich the academic quality of the proposal. A student should keep in mind that they are prepared to write a Master's Essay by demonstrate their competence with quality work each time they meet with an Advisor or potential Advisor.

Once the proposal is developed and the thesis clarified, the student fills out the header to the Essay Approval Form (above), attaches the Form to the Proposal, and circulates the packet for the review and signatures of the Advisor and Reader/Co-Advisor. Once the Faculty signatures are secured, the student submits the original to the Coordinator of the Master of Liberal Studies program for review and approval. The Coordinator will then distribute by email to the student and the Faculty, the completed Essay Approval Form. And, will open a section of AS 61098, Liberal Studies Essay, and authorize the student to enroll. The Advisor may start by working out a timetable and procedure for working on the Essay with the student. (A student can choose to have Co-Advisor, rather than an Advisor and a Reader. In this case the student should work out the details of a timetable and procedure with the two Advisors on how they will proceed together.)

Students then work on their Essay first and primarily with their Advisor or Co-Advisors, developing and refining the Essay in consultation with the Advisor until the Advisor assesses that the essay is of a quality to go to Oral Defense. At this point, the student will submit the draft Essay to the Reader with the approval of the Advisor.

In working with the Advisor (and subsequently the Reader), students should be careful not to abuse the generosity of the Faculty member by turning in work that has not been polished to the very best of the student's ability in terms of form as well as content. Remember that the Advisor or Reader, if they find that the student is not doing graduate-level work, may at any time inform the Director that they are withdrawing directing the Essay, in which case the student will have to find another graduate faculty member willing to advise a Master's Essay.

Style Guidelines for the Production of the Essay

The Liberal Studies Essay should conform to the standards of the academic style guidelines selected by the Advisor of the Essay. The Advisor is responsible for assessing the student's application of the standards of the selected academic style guidelines. The approval by the Advisor of the Essay for Final Submission to the Liberal Studies Program, covers in addition to the assessment of the academic quality of the content of the Essay, that the Essay as produced sufficiently fulfills the selected academic style guide.

Please note, an Essay for the Masters of Liberal Studies, like all non-thesis graduate programs which require an Essay, is not submitted to the Office of Graduate Affairs in the College of Arts and Sciences. The style guide requirements for a Master's Thesis are not in force for an Essay.

Procedures for Proceeding to Submission of Essay for Oral Defense

When the Essay is assessed by the Advisor as complete, the Advisor will inform the Reader by email (and copy the Graduate Coordinator) that the Essay is ready for review. In the event of Co-Advisors, they will make the assessment together and together inform the Graduate Coordinator. The student will then copy and distribute the Essay (in paper format) in the edition approved to the Reader and the Coordinator. Once the reader has reviewed the Essay, and has communicated the reader's observations to the student and the advisor, the student in consultation with the advisor is expected to address the issues. When the student has addressed the concerns raised by the Reader to the satisfaction of the Reader and the Advisor, then the revised edition of the Essay is ready for Defense. The student will submit the revised edition of the Essay in paper format to the Advisor, Reader or Co-Advisor, and the Graduate Coordinator.

The Advisor schedules the Oral Defense with the Reader and the Student, and informs the Graduate Coordinator of the date, time and location of the defense by email. The Coordinator may choose to participate in the defense as an Ad Hoc non-voting member of the Defense.

Upon successful completion of the Oral Defense of the Essay, the Advisor and the Reader will sign off on the Essay Completion Form, which the Advisor will submit to the Graduate Coordinator.

Upon receipt of the Essay Completion Form, the Graduate Coordinator will complete the student's Graduation Clearance Form. The Faculty Advisor who is listed as the instructor of record, is responsible for submitting the Student's course grade for the Liberal Studies Essay. In the event that the student was granted an IP (In Progress) mark for the Essay course from a previous semester, the Advisor is responsible for submitting a Change of Course Grade.

Further matter

Students should take notice that Faculty have many demands on their time, and serve as Advisors and Readers as a service to the College and University as Graduate Faculty. Faculty cannot be expected to read an Essay at the drop of a hat. Students should allow sufficient time for the Adviser, Reader, and Coordinator to review the Essay. The submission of the Final Edition of the Essay for the Final Oral Defense should be delivered ten (10) weekdays prior to the Oral Defense. Failure to provide the Essay in a timely manner for review may delay the Oral Defense and delay the graduation of the student. Keep in mind that the deadline for the submission of the student's Graduation Clearance form by the Coordinator is set by the University and is non-negotiable. The deadline for the Graduation Clearance Form is often three or four weeks before the end of the semester. It is not uncommon for students to find it difficult to complete the Essay in one semester.

Remember: the Essay does not have to be completed in the semester the student first enrolls in AS 61098. Graduate Essays, Thesis and Dissertations course work provide students and faculty the option of submitting the course mark of IP (In Progress). And the course mark of IP remains on the student's transcript until which time as the work is completed in a subsequent semester. Upon completion, the faculty advisor submits a change of grade workflow and the IP is replaced with the earned letter grade. And good news for the graduate student, the student is not charged tuition again for the Essay course in the subsequent semester(s).

Submit to: Graduate Coordinator of the Masters of Liberal Studies, Center for Comparative and Integrative Programs, 105 Bowman Hall, dodellsc@kent.edu.