Course Description
ENG 590: Writing and defense of the M.A. thesis. Prerequisite: ENG 589 and instructor consent.

ENGL 5390 "Thesis Writing" (3 credits) is for students who are writing a Master’s thesis, which can consist of an analytical or creative writing final deliverable, depending on the track in which the student is enrolled (Literature or Creative Writing). Students work independently, according to the plan of the approved thesis proposal, under the direction of the thesis director (who is listed as the course instructor of record). The student will meet regularly with the director, and as needed with other members of the thesis committee, and will submit drafts of the thesis as per the schedule outlined in the thesis proposal and until the thesis is successfully defended and approved by the committee, a process that must be occur according to university deadlines. Students are expected to produce 100-140 pages of formal writing. May be repeated up to three hours.

Required Readings
The works in your own bibliography produced in 589.

Thesis Requirements
Your thesis should consist of a well-defined, clearly stated, researched-based scholarly argument of limited scope, supported by a literature review, a clear explication of the major critical method(s) that inform your approach, a collection of well-organized chapters detailing your argument, and a bibliography. Your thesis must follow MLA 8th edition guidelines, as well as the SFA Thesis Guidelines.

Introduction: This chapter should introduce the reader to the subject of study and clearly summarize your specific argument, the purpose of the proposed study, and how the study will add to present knowledge on your topic within your discipline. It should also include the following sections: Literature Review, Proposed Methods of Study, and Conclusion.

The remaining chapters should develop your thesis in a coherent argument supported by sources, as noted in your introduction.

Your Conclusion should synthesize your findings from each chapter, highlight the implications of your study, and describe how it contributes to the scholarly conversation.
The **Bibliography** should include all cited sources that the you used in all chapters of the thesis, correctly formatted following MLA 8th edition.

**Grading**

According to university policy, your final grade for the course will consist of a letter grade only (no plus or minus). If your grade is borderline, class participation, enthusiasm, and punctuality can help your final grade; lack of participation, disrespectfulness, and tardiness can hurt your final grade.

All of your writing for this course should adhere to the rules of standard English grammar, punctuation, and spelling (American). Here is a general description of my letter grades:

A – 90-100% - This grade denotes superior composition, content, style, and mechanics; thoughtfulness, originality, and excellence in topic development, including vividly concrete details, insightful examples, and sophisticated analysis and synthesis of subject matter. Writing is mechanically pristine with only the smallest grammatical defects present (such as a missing comma or a single typo).

B – 80-89% - This grade denotes very good composition, content, style, and mechanics; thoughtful and adequate topic development; clear and complete details and examples; and consistency in style. Slight problems may be present in one or two areas, but the paper shows strength in others. The paper is not heavily impacted by mechanical errors.

C – 70-79% - This grade denotes acceptable content, but style, organization and mechanics are uneven and need revision, OR the composition is lacking in content and does not sufficiently consider the subject matter as evidenced by inadequate topic development and lack of concrete details, AND/OR the ethos of the writer is damaged by mechanical errors.

D – 60-69% - This grade represents below average, unsatisfactory work. On essays and written responses, the paper (whether through lack of effort, revision, editing, or some other reason) is not clear or focused. The paper is very uneven in its content, organization, and style. The meaning of the paper is obscured by mechanical errors.

F – Below 60% - The student did not do the work assigned. See me as soon as possible.

**Academic Honesty**

Acts of plagiarism and/or cheating are against university policy and can result in failure and/or disciplinary action. According to the SFA policy manual, “Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating
the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit.” For more specifics, please refer to the university’s policy on academic honesty: http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp.

Students with Disabilities
To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/.

General Calendar

1. Establish your schedule by Jan 31.
2. Write chapters according to your schedule.
3. Give Chapters to your Director for review, and then to your Committee as agreed in the proposal phase. Revise based on feedback.
4. Format thesis proposal according to SFA standards, submit complete proposal to the Director, and revise based on my review.
5. Schedule your defense.
6. Submit complete proposal to the Committee.
7. Defense and revisions.
8. Final Production according to Graduate School Instructions.

PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR ENGLISH M.A.

1. The student will be able to write well-organized, substantial, grammatically and syntactically clean essays on literary and/or related topics.
2. The student will be able to demonstrate retention of key contents of selected literary texts as well as key concepts and themes informing literary study.
3. The student will be able to analyze a literary text with respect to form, contextual, and thematic matters.
4. The student will be able to conduct sophisticated literary research involving a variety of primary and secondary materials and/or library catalogues and databases and properly document that research.
5. The student will understand and be able to apply both traditional (e.g., New Critical) and current (e.g., postcolonial, feminist) literary theories/critical methodologies.