

WHAT STUDENTS CAN EXPECT FROM THEIR THESIS ADVISERS

Members of the Department have different views on a variety of scholarly matters, but we have agreed on the general nature of a senior thesis. It should involve research in primary sources, it should locate its subject in the pertinent secondary literature, and it should present a coherent argument based on the evidence of the sources. The role of the adviser is to help the student in framing a question, in identifying and interpreting the sources, and in constructing an argument.

1. Assistance in defining a topic and creating a bibliography.
Your adviser will not hand you a topic, but will give you some pointers on how to find one. Your adviser can also show you ways of exploring other writers' bibliographies and footnotes to discover obscure sources and scholarly articles from unindexed journals
2. Guidance in the use of primary sources
For instance, how much credence should be given to memoirs? How reliable are newspapers? What sort of tests should one apply in interviews?
3. Criticism of your argument and your writing, with particular attention to organization, style, sentence structure, and citations.
4. Some structure
For example, deadlines for the submission of a bibliography, an outline a prospectus, a rough draft, etc.

Miscellanies Resources:

[Library Resources](#)

[History Thesis Guidelines](#)

[The Writing Center](#)

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