

FOLK STUDIES THESIS PROCESS

1. Prior to registering for first three hours, student must meet with and formally ask advisor to serve as thesis director and select a committee. Serving is at the discretion of the faculty member. The committee consists of a minimum of three faculty members, at least two of which are WKU folk studies graduate faculty members.
2. Students must submit a preliminary proposal and bibliography and have it approved by the graduate folk studies faculty prior to registering for classes for the fall semester of their second year (minimum 3 pages, plus bibliography). Faculty may also consider prior classwork in approval for registration of first three hours of thesis credit. Preliminary proposal should be submitted at least two weeks prior to registration, preferably before the end of spring semester of 1 year.
3. Once the preliminary proposal is approved, students must register for thesis credits with their thesis advisor. Students may choose to take three credits per semester their last two semesters, or they may choose to take the full six credits in their final semester.
4. The student's final proposal (approximately 20 pages) must be submitted by no later than the day before the student sits for comprehensive exams. Submission early in the first semester in which the student is registered for thesis credit is preferable. The final proposal must be accompanied by a work schedule developed in conjunction with the advisor and based on the Graduate School deadlines for final submission of the thesis. After the full faculty have had adequate time to review it, the proposal must be defended to and accepted by the folk studies graduate faculty.
5. Students must arrange to submit their thesis draft to their committee members (excluding outside readers) chapter by chapter. A minimum of at least a week should be allowed to receive comments back.
6. Students are strongly encouraged to develop an alternative plan (completing requirements for public or preservation track) in case they become stalled *or their proposals are not accepted by the graduate faculty*.
7. **Students who have registered for six hours of thesis credit and have not submitted a rough draft of at least half the thesis by the end of the final semester of registration will be dropped from the track.**

Suggested timeline for completion of the thesis for a spring graduation

Spring, first year: Begin narrowing down thesis topic. Ask faculty member to serve as advisor and set up committee. Develop preliminary proposal and circulate among Folk Studies graduate faculty.

Summer after first year: Begin research. After approval from full faculty, register for three thesis credit hours for fall.

Fall semester, second year: Begin writing. Develop full proposal (20 pages minimum) and timeline and submit them before sitting for comprehensive exam in November (early fall is preferable). Defend proposal. Register for second set of three hour credits after successful defense of proposal. Begin submitting drafts chapter by chapter.

Spring semester, second year: A completed first draft should be submitted by the first of March. The final draft should be submitted by first of April and the defense should be scheduled.