



Master of Arts in Humanities
Student Handbook
October 2006

Introduction

Welcome to the Master of Arts in Humanities program at Hood College. This handbook will help you understand the requirements specific to the Humanities program. Please refer to the Hood College Catalog for general Graduate School policies.

Overview

The Master of Arts in the Humanities is a 30-credit interdisciplinary degree program. It is designed primarily for individuals with a baccalaureate in art, history, literature, music, philosophy, and religion, although it also attracts students from areas outside of the humanities. It is intended for students who would like to integrate their particular expertise with corollary fields in the humanities.

The curriculum rests on a three-stage structure. First, two foundational seminars—required of all students in the program—introduce students to the idea of interdisciplinary inquiry. These four-credit-hour courses—HUM 501, “Humanities and the Western Tradition, Part I,” and HUM 502, “Humanities and the Western Tradition, Part II”—offer both a survey structure of Western civilization and a core theme.

The core of the program is the Concentration, which comprises eighteen-credit hours. Each student, in consultation with an advisor, develops a plan of study for a cohesive Concentration of no fewer than twelve-credit hours, or four courses. The Concentration can be historical, topical, or thematic.

The final stage of the program is the Capstone Project (HUM 595), a four-credit experience involving extended independent work, usually in the form of research and writing. The student works with a faculty advisor to develop a topic and complete the project. Two other faculty members serve on the Project Committee.

Planning the Course of Study

The M.A. in Humanities offers students great flexibility in designing a course of study to meet their interests and goals. To take full advantage of that flexibility, however, it is important to begin planning early.

Foundation Courses

The program rests on the foundation of two courses, HUM 501, “Humanities and the Western Tradition, Part I,” and HUM 502, “Humanities and the Western Tradition, Part II.” These courses are taught by faculty from across the humanities, thus the core theme varies from semester to semester. There are no substitutes for these courses, and transfer credit will not be accepted as exemptions for HUM 501 or HUM 502.

Students are strongly encouraged to take either HUM 501 or HUM 502 before enrolling in other graduate courses, and to take both HUM 501 and HUM 502 early in the program. HUM 501 and HUM 502 introduce students to the rigor of graduate study and the idea of interdisciplinary inquiry, and to the nature of research in the humanities. Taking these courses as you begin your program also introduces you to your peers and builds relationships that will be of great value as you move through the program. Additionally, most instructors invite faculty from disciplines

other than their own to meet with students in the course, which affords opportunities to forge additional faculty relationships.

The Concentration

The Concentration is the heart of the M.A. in Humanities program. Students, in consultation with their advisor, design their own Concentration, an 18-credit-hour plan of study. The plan may take the form of historical concentration (Reformation Studies, Renaissance Studies, American Studies) or may take a thematic or topical focus (Art and Ideology, The Representation of Women, Literature and Ethics). At least twelve of the eighteen elective credit-hours must define a clear, coherent, and cohesive Concentration.

After completing twelve-credit hours in the program, students must complete two forms: the “Degree Candidacy Form,” or DCF (Appendix A), and the “Concentration Agreement Form,” or CAF (Appendix B). The DCF cannot be completed without first submitting the CAF for the approval of the M.A. in Humanities Advisory Committee (MAHAC). The MAHAC typically meets in September, November, January, and April to consider student proposals and petitions. Students should submit forms requiring the approval of the MAHAC to the program director well in advance of any Graduate School deadline.

On the CAF, the student lists the elective courses and briefly describes the Concentration. In reviewing the CAF, the MAHAC looks for evidence that the Concentration is clearly-defined, coherent, and cohesive, and that the description provides an apt rationale for the Concentration’s design. As this is an interdisciplinary program, the MAHAC expects the Concentration to consist of courses from more than one discipline. Additionally, students may take no more than two non-humanities courses (i.e., graduate courses in education, the social sciences, the natural sciences, or business) as electives in the program. Before registering for any non-humanities course, a student must petition the MAHAC, which will grant permission to register if the proposed course is clearly related to the student’s Concentration.

It is critical that students begin thinking about the Concentration as soon as they begin the program. In developing a Concentration, students should consult the Hood College Catalog to explore the range of humanities courses offered. It is important to remember that courses listed in the catalog are not offered each semester or academic year.

Capstone Project

The Capstone Project (HUM 595) is the culminating experience of the program. It involves extended independent work, usually in the form of research and writing, done in close collaboration with a faculty advisor. Two other faculty members serve on the Project Committee.

The Capstone requires planning on the part of the student well in advance of the semester in which the student wishes to enroll in HUM 595. Students first must submit a project proposal, developed in consultation with the Project advisor, for approval to the MAHAC. Once the proposal is approved, the student submits a “Permission to Enroll Form” (Appendix C) to the Graduate School, and formally enrolls in HUM 595.

The Capstone proposal should describe a project appropriate in scope, one that can be completed in a timely manner. The proposal should include a clear statement of the main research question; a statement of the project's hypotheses and arguments; a brief discussion of the sources the student will consult in researching the project, as well as a working bibliography; and a timetable for completion of the project. The proposal should be clear and precise, written so it can be understood by scholars outside of the main field of inquiry.

The Capstone can be completed in a semester, assuming that the student has secured an advisor, formed a committee, and submitted a project proposal for the approval of the MAHAC prior to the start of the semester. It is not uncommon for the project to require two semesters, or a semester and summer, to complete. If the project is not completed in the first semester, the project advisor submits a grade of "IP" (in-progress) until the project is completed and a final grade is submitted.

The student must form a project committee, which consists of the project advisor and two other faculty members, or qualified individuals approved by the director and the Dean of the Graduate School. The student must notify the program director in writing of the two additional committee members. The student and the project advisor will work together to develop and complete the project. Each Capstone will follow its own path and trajectory based on the relationship between student and faculty advisor. It is advisable for students to meet with their faculty advisors and discuss the project, and set down a process and schedule that is mutually agreeable and in a manner that facilitates the completion of the project. The other members of the committee participate in advising the student and grading the work.

Expectations

A project in the form of a research paper is expected to be at least forty pages in length, exclusive of footnotes or other documentation. Drafting and rewriting are integral components of the written research paper; further criteria will depend on the field and will be made clear by the advisor.

After submission of the final project, the student and committee members will meet for an hour-long discussion of the student's work. The Capstone is assigned a letter grade, which will reflect not only the quality of the final product, but also the student's performance throughout the project, including the culminating discussion.

It is essential that the student begin planning for the Capstone—and most importantly, securing an advisor—well before the term in which it is to begin. The program director will assist students in finding an advisor for the project.

Style

The project must conform to the Guidelines established by the Hood College Graduate School, available at http://www.hood.edu/documents/pdf/graduate_thesisGuidelines.pdf

Grading

The project advisor, in consultation with the project committee, assigns a letter grade to the Capstone Project.

Other Matters

The following are some common questions and concerns that might arise. This is not an exhaustive list; if you have questions, please call the program director.

M.A. in Humanities Advisory Committee (MAHAC)

The M.A. in Humanities Advisory Committee reviews and approves student proposals for Concentrations and Capstone Projects. It also advises the director, who chairs the committee, in setting program policies and goals. It meets twice each semester, in September and November, and January and April. Students who need to submit proposals for MAHAC's approval should send them to the director well in advance of the committee's meeting dates.

Degree Candidacy Form (DCF)

After you have completed twelve credit hours in the program, the Graduate School will send you the Degree Candidacy Form. In addition to noting the date on which you began the program and any transfer credits, you must also attach a copy of your Concentration Agreement Form (see below). The DCF requires the signatures of your academic advisor (with whom you complete the form), the program director, and the Dean of the Graduate School.

Concentration Agreement Form (CAF)

The Concentration Agreement must be approved by the MAHAC before you can submit the DCF to the Graduate School. On the CAF, please list the courses in the Concentration, both by course PREFIX-NUMBER and course title, and provide a brief description of the Concentration. You may submit the CAF to the program director, who will take it before MAHAC. Please remember that the MAHAC meets twice each semester, so plan accordingly.

Independent Study (XXX 575) and the Permission to Enroll Form

Up to six credit hours of Independent Study may count toward the degree. You are responsible for arranging an Independent Study course with an appropriate and willing faculty member. Before you can enroll in HIST 575, ART 575, HUM 575, or another Independent Study course you must file the Permission to Enroll Form with the Graduate School. This form requires the signatures of the course instructor, the program director, and the Dean of the Graduate School, as well as a written proposal that includes the course title, a description of the course, and identifies the work (amount of reading; number of meetings with instructor; number of written assignments and research) to be done in the course.

Credit for double-numbered courses previously taken at Hood College

Students who have taken a double-numbered course at Hood College as an undergraduate may not take that course for graduate credit in the M.A. in Humanities program.

Transfer Credit

Hood College accepts up to six hours of credit for prior graduate course work taken at another accredited institution. Please see the Hood College Catalog for the full policy. The M.A. in Humanities program may accept transfer credit toward the degree if the work is clearly related to a humanities discipline or has a clear and substantial humanities focus or content.

Academic Advisor and Capstone Project Advisor

Once accepted into the program, the director assigns each student to a faculty member who serves as the student's academic advisor. The academic advisor's role is to help the student plan a course of study, and the advisor must approve student schedules before registration. Students and academic advisors work closely to design student Concentrations. The director makes every effort to match student academic interests with faculty expertise, but this is not always possible.

The Capstone project advisor may be—but does not have to be—the student's academic advisor. At this point in the program the project advisor's scholarly interests and strengths should closely match the student's proposed project.

The Capstone project advisor will assist the student in designing the project. The advisor must approve the project proposal before it is submitted to the MAHAC, so it is in the student's best interest to begin discussing the project with their advisor well before planning to enroll formally in HUM 595.

Master of Arts in the Humanities

DEGREE CANDIDACY FORM

Print Name _____ Social Security No. _____
Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____
E-mail Address _____
Street (and Apt. No.) _____
City, State, Zip _____

1. Date of first course in the program _____. Date of expiration of seven-year time limit (see catalog) _____.

2. Please indicate courses (6 credit maximum) approved for transfer by the Dean of the Graduate School. Official transcript(s) and course description(s) or syllabus(i) must be on file in the Graduate School before this form can be submitted. Indicate the department number, course number, course title, credits earned, date completed, institution and grade(s) earned. Please read the section of the Hood College Catalog regarding transfer of credit for full details of the transfer policy.

3. Put a CHECKMARK by the courses listed that you have satisfactorily completed at Hood. CIRCLE the courses in which you are currently enrolled or plan to take. Fill in the details where indicated. Place a "T" by courses you listed for transfer in section number two (2) above.

Seminars (No transfers allowed): ____HUM 501 ____HUM 502
Elective Courses: Place a "C" after the four electives of the concentration
1. _____ 5. _____
2. _____ 6. _____
3. _____
4. _____
Capstone: ____HUM 595 * * Requires Permission to Enroll Form

4. CONCENTRATION AGREEMENT FORM: Please attach the Concentration Agreement Form for review and approval. The Graduate School Office will keep an approved copy for the official student file.

5. SIGNATURES: The student is responsible for obtaining signatures from the advisor and department chair before the form is submitted to the Dean. Do not mail this form to your advisor. You MUST schedule an appointment with your advisor to complete this form together.

Student _____ Date _____
Advisor _____ Date _____
Program Director _____ Date _____
Dean _____ Date _____

Copies: Graduate Office, Advisor, and Candidate

Hood College

Master of Arts in the Humanities

CONCENTRATION AGREEMENT FORM

Candidate Name: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Advisor's Name: _____ Phone: _____

Courses in Concentration:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Describe the concentration in a brief paragraph: _____

Action of the Master of Arts in the Humanities Advisory Committee:

_____ ACCEPT Program Director's Signature: _____

_____ RETURN for reassessment; comments below:

HOOD COLLEGE GRADUATE SCHOOL
PERMISSION TO ENROLL FORM

NAME: _____ SOCIAL SECURITY #: _____

E-MAIL: _____ SEMESTER/TERM YEAR: _____

THE ABOVE NAMED STUDENT HAS PERMISSION TO ENROLL IN THE FOLLOWING (*A written course proposal must accompany this form*):

- _____ ART 571 – Archaeological Fieldwork; Indicate Number of Credits (1-3): _____ Credits
- _____ BMS 585 – Master’s Field Work Project (3 Credits)
- _____ CSCI 595 – Software Engineering Project (6 Credits)
- _____ ENV 579 – Independent Research Project (3 Credits)
- _____ HUM 595 – Humanities Research Project (4 Credits)
- _____ THAN 530 – Practicum in Thanatology; Indicate Number of Credits (1-6): _____ Credits
- _____ 575 – Independent Study; Indicate Program and Number of Credits (1-6): _____ Program _____ Credits
- _____ 595 – Independent Research Project (3 Credits) Circle Program: MGMT GERO THAN PSCI PSY

THE ATTACHED WRITTEN PROPOSAL FOR THIS PROJECT/INDEPENDENT STUDY WAS APPROVED BY:

Instructor’s Name: _____

Instructor’s Signature: _____ Date: _____

THE TITLE FOR THE ABOVE ENROLLMENT IS:

SIGNATURES:

Program Director: _____ Date: _____

Dean of the Graduate School: _____ Date: _____

White Copy/Registration Form
Yellow Copy/Student File
Pink Copy/Graduate Office Manager

A CULTURAL HISTORY OF HOOD COLLEGE

by

Margaret Smith Jones

B.A. (University of Maryland) 1992

CAPSTONE PROJECT

Submitted in partial satisfaction for the requirements

for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in

HUMANITIES

in the

GRADUATE SCHOOL

of

HOOD COLLEGE

May 2006

Accepted:

[name]
Committee Member

[name]
Director, M.A. in Humanities

[name]
Committee Member

[name]
Committee Member

[name]
Dean of the Graduate School