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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The purpose of this course is to prepare you for the Jepson School’s Honors Thesis, completed during your Senior year. Our goal for this semester is to introduce you to a variety of methods and topics so that you can better choose a focus for your own thesis project. By the end of the semester, you will produce a five-page thesis proposal and identify your primary honors thesis advisor.

In order to receive honors in the Jepson School, students must meet the following requirements.

To qualify, a student must be a leadership studies major, hold at least a 3.30 cumulative GPA and at least a 3.30 leadership studies GPA, and have earned a B or higher in at least four leadership studies courses. The application form is available for qualified juniors from the associate dean for academic affairs.

Once accepted to the honors track, in order to receive honors in leadership studies, a student must:

- Enroll in **LDST 399** Junior Honors Tutorial, for spring semester of junior year.
- Submit a five-page proposal and preliminary bibliography to be accepted by the course instructor and a Jepson faculty thesis advisor.
- Enroll in **LDST 497** and **LDST 498**, Senior Honors Thesis I and II, during senior year.
- Successfully present one chapter, bibliography, and chapter-by-chapter outline of thesis to the student's committee by the last day of classes in the fall semester of senior year.
- Successfully defend thesis before the student's committee by the last day of classes in the spring semester of senior year.
- Complete undergraduate program with at least a 3.30 cumulative GPA and at least a 3.30 leadership studies GPA.

Students in the honors track must complete all aspects of the standard Jepson curriculum. **LDST 497** and **LDST 498** can count for a maximum of one unit of advanced course credit.

(“Honors in Leadership Studies”: http://jepson.richmond.edu/academics/honors.html)

**REQUIRED TEXT**

*How to Write a BA Thesis: A Practical Guide from Your First Ideas to Your Finished Paper*,  
by Charles Lipson
**Course Requirements**

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<th>Requirement</th>
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<td>Attendance/Class Participation</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<td>Research Proposal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Short Writing Assignments</td>
<td>25%</td>
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**Attendance/Class Participation (25%)**
All students are expected to attend classes regularly and to contribute to class discussions. Frequent absences will impact a student’s ability to participate in discussion, particularly in a seminar like this one. Students absent more than one class period must either provide adequate documentation of a serious illness, injury, or other emergency, or receive a penalty to their grade. Students unable to participate or uncomfortable participating verbally may write a 600-word discussion response to the day’s material and class discussion to be turned in by midnight on the day of the class in question.

**Correspondence Students:** Those of you taking this course from abroad (or at least not from Richmond) will have a slightly different schedule of assignments to make up for the fact that you will not be present in the room and able to contribute to discussions.

**Short Writing Assignments (25%)**
Throughout the semester, students will be given short assignments designed to enhance their understanding of research methods or to help them streamline their own ideas. These will be graded based on effort, thoughtfulness, and completeness, and are expected to be due at the beginning of the class period for which they are assigned. These assignments should be submitted to the class blog so that all students can comment on them: http://blog.richmond.edu/LDST399SPRG2016/

**Final Research Proposal (50%)**
This proposal is the final product of the course, and will include the student’s working hypothesis on a major research question, a brief review of some of the work in the chosen subject area, a bibliography of proposed sources, and a research plan to move forward with the project over the course of the following year.

**Classroom Policies**
Students are expected to be on time to class. Lateness will impact a student’s attendance grade.

Students are expected to be attentive to and respectful of the professor and the ideas of their peers.

Laptops are permitted, but use of the internet (via laptop, cell phone, or PDA) during classtime is strictly prohibited unless specifically required for an activity or assignment. Please make sure all cell phones are silenced or turned off. Students will not be allowed to use or answer their phones during classtime.

All written work is expected on time. Assignments turned in late will be penalized one full grade for each day they are late. All assignments are expected to be the student’s original work. The Jepson School follows the provisions of the Honor System as outlined by the School of Arts and Sciences.
If emergency circumstances inhibit a student from attending class or completing an assignment, the professor should be notified as soon as possible (preferably before class or the due date of the assignment). Extensions and make-ups are given only at the discretion of the professor. Exams cannot be made up except under the most extenuating of circumstances. Students needing accommodations should speak to the professor.

**COMMON JEPSON POLICIES**

**Awarding of Credit** To be successful in this course, a student should expect to devote 10-14 hours each week, including class time and time spent on course-related activities.

[http://registrar.richmond.edu/services/policies/academic-credit.html](http://registrar.richmond.edu/services/policies/academic-credit.html)

**Disability Accommodations** Students with a Disability Accommodation Notice should contact their instructors as early in the semester as possible to discuss arrangements for completing course assignments and exams.

[http://studentdevelopment.richmond.edu/disability-services/policies.html](http://studentdevelopment.richmond.edu/disability-services/policies.html)

**Honor System** The Jepson School supports the provisions of the Honor System. The shortened version of the honor pledge is: “I pledge that I have neither received nor given unauthorized assistance during the completion of this work.”

[http://studentdevelopment.richmond.edu/honor/](http://studentdevelopment.richmond.edu/honor/)

**Religious Observance** Students should notify their instructors within the first two weeks of classes if they will need accommodations for religious observance.

[http://registrar.richmond.edu/planning/religiousobs.html](http://registrar.richmond.edu/planning/religiousobs.html)

**STUDENT RESOURCES**

If you experience difficulties in this course, do not hesitate to consult with me. There are also other resources that can support you in your efforts to meet course requirements.

**Academic Skills Center** ([http://asc.richmond.edu](http://asc.richmond.edu), 289-8626 or 289-8956): Supports students in assessing their academic strengths and weaknesses; honing their academic skills through teaching effective test preparation, critical reading and thinking, information processing, concentration, and related techniques; working on specific subject areas (e.g. calculus, chemistry, accounting, etc.); and encouraging campus and community involvement.

**Career Services** ([http://careerservices.richmond.edu/](http://careerservices.richmond.edu/) or 289-8547): Assists students in exploring their interests and abilities, choosing a major, connecting with internships and learning experiences, investigating graduate and professional school options, and landing a first job. We encourage students to schedule an appointment with a career advisor during their first year.

**Counseling and Psychological Services** ([http://caps.richmond.edu](http://caps.richmond.edu) or 289-8119): Assists students in meeting academic, personal, or emotional challenges. Services include assessment, short-term counseling and psychotherapy, crisis intervention, psychiatric consultation, and related services.
Speech Center (http://speech.richmond.edu or 289-6409): Assists with preparation and practice in the pursuit of excellence in public expression. Recording, playback, coaching and critique sessions offered by teams of student consultants trained to assist in developing ideas, arranging key points for more effective organization, improving style and delivery, and handling multimedia aids for individual and group presentations.

Writing Center (http://writing.richmond.edu or 289-8263): Assists writers at all levels of experience, across all majors. Students can schedule appointments with trained peer writing consultants who offer friendly critiques of written work.

Boatwright Library Research Librarians (http://library.richmond.edu/help/ask.html or 289-8669): Assist students with identifying and locating the best resources for class assignments, research papers and other course projects. Librarians also assist students with questions about citing sources correctly. Students can schedule a personal research appointment, meet with librarians at the library’s main service desk, email, text or IM.
COURSE SCHEDULE

Tuesday, January 12th
Overview of the Honors Tutorial and the Senior Honors Thesis

Tuesday, January 19th
Important things to know when doing research – Including a visit from Dr. Jonas of the IRB
Reading: Lipson, Ch. 1-2
Web Assignment (due BEFORE class): Take the basic online IRB Training here: http://irb.richmond.edu/training-requirements/students/index.html and bring any questions or comments about the process to class (and post them on the blog).

Tuesday, January 26th
What is it like to write an Honors Thesis in Jepson? A Q&A with current Senior Honors students Molly Collins, Diane Gremillion, Matt Jones, and Amelia Mitrotz
Reading: Lipson, Ch. 3-4
Writing Assignment (due today on the course blog): Make a list of 5-10 questions you have about starting the research process. These can be simple, big questions, or nuanced, complex ones – it all depends on what you already know!

Tuesday, February 2nd
Research Spotlight: Dr. Forsyth
Reading: Lipson, Ch. 5-6
Writing: Make a list of 3-5 general topics of interest to you with 1-2 sentences that explain why you’re interested in them as potential thesis topics. They can overlap!

Tuesday, February 9th – Boatwright Library Seminar Room 1
Where do I find…? – How to do research in a library and with a librarian, with Ms. McCulley from Boatwright Library.
Reading: Lipson, Ch. 7-8
Writing: Make a list of 3-5 possible research questions that could lead you to a thesis (you do NOT need to have a thesis). These can be BIG questions, and you aren’t going to be held to any of them.

Tuesday, February 16th
Research Spotlight: Dr. Goethals
Reading: Lipson, Ch. 9-10
Writing: Pick one of your research questions and find three sources that could help you answer it. Pick one and read it, taking notes about how it changes or helps to answer your research question. Post the citations for all three and the notes for the one source—images of a notebook or article page or typed text are both fine.
Tuesday, February 23rd
Research Spotlight: Dr. Hayter
Reading: Lipson, Ch. 13-14 (you can skip 11-12)
Writing: Pick one of the following: A) Read a second source from your list and take notes (posting, etc.) OR B) Pick a different research question and repeat the assignment from last week (three sources, notes on one).

Tuesday, March 1st – Jepson Alumni Center
Leader in Residence: David Gardner
Writing: Pick one of the following: 1) if you completed assignment A) read the last source and take notes; 2) If you completed assignment B) for last week would like to pursue your second research question – read a second source; or 3) If you are not happy with your research question from last week, pick a new question and choose three sources, etc.

March 5-13 SPRING BREAK

Tuesday, March 15th
Research Spotlight: Dr. Hoyt
Reading: Find at least two short sources or one long source (two articles, or one book) NOT from one of your lists of three for your chosen area of interest, and read them. Write up a one-paragraph summary of each which relates the source your topic and/or to the other sources you’ve read.

Tuesday, March 22nd
Research Spotlight: Dr. Flanigan
Reading: At least two short or one long additional sources in your area of interest.
Writing: Narrow yourself to 1-3 major research questions. Contact the faculty in Jepson whose research best matches with your proposed ideas and talk with them individually about your thoughts. Ask each of them to recommend at least one really important source for you to read in the field. Write up 1-3 paragraphs about each meeting – what are your thoughts about pursuing each direction?

Tuesday, March 29th
Narrowing it Down
Reading: At least two short or one long more sources (including at least one recommended to you by a faculty member).
Writing: Pick a research area and a faculty mentor, and ask that mentor if they would be willing to work with you on your project (if not, move on to the next-most-qualified mentor). Remember that faculty don’t say “no” because they don’t like you – they’re busy people and sometimes just can’t make the time, even if they want to! Bring in the materials you’ve accumulated relating to that topic – your meeting notes, notes from other classes, research question ideas, and any outlined plans. Add a list of sources in the area that you think are most important to read (at least five).
**Tuesday, April 5**
*Trimming the Excess*

**Research:** Find at least three articles that talk about your chosen method of research (even if they aren’t perfectly suited to your specific question). Read them, then try to adapt their methods to your own chosen topic and research question. (These can be some of the sources you have already read.)

**Writing:** Outline your research plan based on the above assignment (you only need one plan). Include other sources that you will (eventually) need to read, things you need to learn more about, and people you might need (or want) to talk to.

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**Tuesday, April 12**
*Drafting*

Work together on your proposals – ask each other questions, ask Dr. Bezio questions, talk about how you can best organize the materials you have with you into a coherent proposal.

**Writing:** Bring in a draft of your proposal. It should be at least an annotated outline, but would ideally be in a more finalized paragraph form. You should have a bibliography of things that you plan to use in your thesis research, and you should have a one-paragraph-per-source summary of the articles or books that you have already read. **You should also send this draft to your advisor for his or her comments.**

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**Friday, April 15**
*Go to the Senior Research Symposium (free food!)*

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**Tuesday, April 19**
*Redrafting*

Bring in your draft, along with the comments from your advisor, and talk about where you are still struggling with the class.

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**Friday, April 22**
*Proposals Due to Dr. Bezio by 5pm*