SIP Handbook in Religion
What is a Senior Individualized Project (SIP) in Religion?

The SIP is (usually) an essay that deals in a sustained way with a topic that is of particular interest to the student and that raises broader questions for the study of religion. In selecting a topic students should keep in mind both of these criteria as well as the fact that the paper should be an example of what the word *essay* means: a careful effort to develop and test the writer's analytical and interpretative powers. The SIP is not to be a small-scale Ph.D. dissertation. An exhaustive command of the topic is not required. Ideally the project should address a significant question that has a future, i.e., that is capable of sustaining interest and generating dialogue among scholars over an extended period of time. An effective thesis, however, will address such a question by focusing on a specific, manageable aspect of it. The subject matter of the theses will naturally vary widely, by virtue of the nature of the field of religion. In every case, the subject should be specific enough to allow for depth of treatment. At the same time, however, it should not be so narrowly and technically construed as to allow the writer to lose sight of its relations to broader issues in the study of religion. Students are strongly encouraged to build on projects they have already explored in a junior tutorial or other coursework. The senior thesis is the capstone of the undergraduate curriculum in the Religion, and has the potential to be a significant experience of intellectual and personal growth.

The final SIP in Religion is usually a minimum of 45 pages and (preferably) no longer than 60 - 70, including bibliography and notes. The critical feature of a SIP in Religion is not length, but acuity of insight and keenness of observation. We expect each SIP to go through at least two and more often three drafts. It is expected that students be in consultation with their advisors during the writing process, so that no surprises will be in store for either the advisors or the students by the time the second draft is completed. The final draft, formatted according to the University of Chicago Manual of Style guidelines, is due on the first day of the term following your write-up quarter. Students should check with advisors by the end of the sixth week to receive their grades.

There are several components to the SIP in Religion.

- Research Prospectus in Junior Seminar
- Formal SIP proposal due Friday, Week 8 in Spring Quarter Junior year to Junior Seminar instructor.
- Successful completion of deadlines in Fall SIP Workshop in Religion
- Final submission of SIP in Week 1 of Winter Quarter Senior year.
II. Calendar of Deadlines and Events for Religion SIPs

Spring Quarter Junior Year
Junior Seminar in Religion is required of all students who are writing in a SIP in Religion. In that seminar students will write a research prospectus that must be approved by the department before summer research begins.

Summer Research for Rising Seniors
Students shall conduct the research and writing described in their research prospectus. It may be useful to continue to develop your outline from your Junior Research Prospectus. Refining your outline provides you with an opportunity to begin to think through (in written form) how you will use the data you are collecting in your research to support, and perhaps to reformulate, the argument of your thesis. Your outline should include preliminary, yet detailed overviews or outlines of each chapter that you envision. The goal of this task is to help you to begin the process of revising your research in a coherent manner.

Fall Quarter Senior Year

Week 1:
A printed draft of three chapters, not including introduction and conclusion, is due at the first Religion SIP meeting. Each chapter draft must present a coherent, focused, and structured argument that is supported by appropriate citations and analysis. Your submissions should represent carefully considered and researched drafts of the more polished arguments that you will produce in the final thesis. Free-writing, though very helpful in the process of producing these assignments, is not appropriate in this context.

Please remember, however, that a draft is, by definition, preliminary. We do not expect these submissions to be in their final form, and assume that you will revise your work multiple times throughout the thesis-writing process. Additionally, these drafts need not follow a rigid chapter-by-chapter progression. For example, you may choose to submit a draft of what will ultimately become your third chapter at the first deadline.

Each chapter draft should be roughly 12-15 pages, although you may submit longer drafts if you desire. It is essential to stick to the deadlines so that your advisors have time to give you comments, and so that you have time for revisions.

Workshop: Introductions

Week 2:
Research Week. Use this week for wrapping up any research you have not yet completed that will supplement your rewrites in future weeks.
Workshop: Source Analysis, Organization, and Making Effective Arguments
Discussion of close analysis of sources and the transition from raw ‘data’ to written prose and various strategies for organizing a thesis, along with discussing what distinguishes a good argument from a poor argument.

Week 3:
Revised draft of chapter 1 due. This rewrite should take into consideration feedback from your adviser and represent a completely researched draft.

Workshop: The Art of Revision
Structure and organization: outgrowing your outline. Transitions between chapters. Macro vs. micro revision. (Bring in 1 page of writing with four paragraphs: thesis and description of each chapter.)

Week 4:
Revised draft of chapter 2 due. This rewrite should take into consideration feedback from your adviser and represent a completely researched draft.

Workshop: Writing Strategies
Discussion of issues, challenges, and problems in the writing process including questions of time management and procrastination, and moving from free-writing or outline to chapter draft. We will also discuss expectations for the first chapter draft.

Week 5:
Revised draft of chapter 3 due. This rewrite should take into consideration feedback from your adviser and represent a completely researched draft.

Workshop: Meet with advisers to discuss future revisions.

Week 6:
Nothing is due. Spend this time revising your first three chapters.

Workshop: Presentations, Problem Solving and your Peers
Four students will present some aspect of their SIP. This is meant to be as painless and productive as possible. Presentations can range from simply describing one methodological question you’re stuck on to presenting a draft of your intro or conclusions. Each student will have 15 minutes to discuss and receive feedback on their work. (If you want the seminar to read a section of work, that should be distributed by the previous Monday at 5pm and should be no longer than 15 pages.)
**Week 7:**
Nothing is due. Spend this time revising your first three chapters.

*Workshop: Presentations, Problem Solving and your Peers (cont...)*

**Week 8:**
Write Conclusion.

*Workshop: No Meeting*

**Week 9:**
Write Introduction.

*Workshop: Styles and Formatting*
Putting the final touches on your work. Front matter, back matter, footnotes/endnotes, illustrations, appendices, length, format, binders, paper, etc!

**Week 10:**
Final Draft Due.

**Winter Quarter Senior Year**

**Week 1, Friday 5:00 PM**
Final Bound Due to Office Coordinator, Humphrey House

**Saturday, Week 5 or 6**
Religion SIP Colloquium

**Students who miss more than one of the weekly deadlines during fall quarter will not be eligible for honors on the SIP. Students who miss more than three deadlines will have to withdraw from the SIP and repeat the SIP the following year. Any extensions for the final copy due Friday of Week 1 Winter Quarter must be applied for in writing to the Department Chair of Religion no later than the first day of Winter Quarter. Grades will be available at the end of Week 6 of Winter term.**
III. Content and Style Guidelines

Format  The SIP has three parts: preliminaries, text, and back matter. The title page, a table of contents, and a very brief preface (or simply acknowledgments) are ordinarily the only necessary preliminaries. The text is the SIP itself. The back matter comprises: (1) the bibliography, which is always necessary; and (2) appendices (including glossaries, charts, indices, maps, etc.) when they are needed. The bibliography may take one of several appropriate forms, but it should always include full bibliographic information on every important source used in the preparation of the SIP. Whenever you make use of a book or other source—not simply when quoting directly from a text—you should include it in the bibliography.

Style  Good SIPs not only present illuminating and original arguments, but do so in lucid language and polished prose. Attention to the quality of your prose style should not be reserved for the final stages of editing the SIP; be sure to take into account issues of style as you are drafting and revising your essay, as well. Since you are devoting the better part of a year to examining and writing about a specific area of interest, you owe it to yourself to employ language that reflects your understanding of and enthusiasm for your topic. Please recognize, however, that you are addressing an audience that may not share your degree of expertise on your topic; be careful to avoid jargon and to define clearly any technical terms that you feel are crucial to your argument.

In the final stages of editing, be particularly attuned to misspellings, typographical and grammatical errors, and insufficient or inaccurate documentation. Errors of this kind, while they do not necessarily reflect the amount of work that has gone into the SIP, will distract your reader from the substance of your argument and suggest that the argument is as sloppy as the prose in which it is conveyed.
Style Manuals: Several publications offer help in matters of form and style. *The Elements of Style*, by William Strunk, Jr., and E. B. White (4th edition, 2000) is a useful starting point. *The Chicago Manual of Style* is the required citation and style guide in Religion. Unless another style is preferred in your sub-field, it should serve as the basic reference for your citation system and basic questions of form. A shorter work based on the Chicago manual and available in paperback is *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, by Kate L. Turabian.

Notes and Citations: A footnote or endnote supplies the reader with a reference to the source(s) of factual information, specific ideas, or direct quotations used in the text of the SIP. A note may also provide supplemental information that is relevant but tangential to your argument. The tendency of many writers is to use the first kind of note too sparingly, and the latter kind too much. The rule for the former is simple: any passage or idea that is not your own should be credited to its source. To do otherwise is to plagiarize. As to the use of notes for supplemental information, the discretion of the writer must suffice. Note, however, that the value of a piece of scholarship is not judged by the length and abundance of its notes. And recall that discursive endnotes are difficult to follow while reading the main text. If particular information is necessary to the argument, incorporate it into the main text. For guidelines on notation, see the manuals described above.

Direct Quotation: Direct citations from other sources must be treated with the utmost care and precision. To misquote someone else is a serious fault in any kind of writing. Every direct quotation must be reproduced exactly as it stands in the original. Except where integration of a quotation in your own sentence structure requires a change of type-case or end punctuation, the capitalization and punctuation in the quoted passage must be carefully reproduced. Italics in the original must be retained in your quotation. When using ellipsis to eliminate unneeded words or phrases from a quoted passage, be sure not to change or misrepresent the original author’s intention and meaning. Any addition to a quoted passage must be enclosed in brackets (not parentheses).
Foreign Words and Phrases

Foreign words and phrases should be underlined or italicized. Passages in foreign languages should be given in English translation when used in the text. If the translation is not your own, the translator must be acknowledged. When it is important to do so, the text in its original language and wording should be given in a note either in transliteration or in the appropriate script.

Illustrations and Photographs

Illustrations in a SIP may include graphs, charts, maps, line drawings, or photographs. These illustrations are normally placed on separate pages, with their legend typed either beneath the figure or on the front or back of the preceding page. Pages of illustrations and figures should be interleaved with the text of the SIP. If illustrations, as in the case of photographs, need to be mounted on the page, a good quality commercial paste or dry-mounting adhesive should be used. Like citations from other sources, illustrations must be credited to the appropriate sources.
IV. Format and Submission Guidelines

Length  The minimum length is 45 pages (in double-spaced, 12 point type). The maximum length is 80 pages (in double-spaced, 12 point type), although exceptions may be made by the SIP advisor. SIPs should be produced on a laser printer or an inkjet printer with a print quality of at least 600 dpi (i.e., letter-quality). The font used should produce between 9 and 12 characters per inch. These limits refer to the preliminaries and main text of the SIP, excluding endnotes and back matter such as appendices and bibliography. Within these limits, the length of the SIP should be determined by the demands of the particular topic. No SIP may fall outside of these limits without prior written permission from the chair of Religion.

Copies  One typescript copy on 8 1/2 inch by 11 inch paper is required, formatted and bound as described below. Binders are available at the Kalamazoo College Bookstore. The writer should retain a copy of the SIP for him- or herself. All SIPs that receive grades of honors will be placed in the College archives. The Department of Religion will keep one copy of every SIP, regardless of the grade received. If the SIP is to be entered in competition for a prize, additional copies should be prepared.

Format  The SIP should be typed on one side of the page, double-spaced (except for indented quotation and foot- or endnotes) with margins of 1 inch at the top, bottom, and on the right hand side, and 1 1/2 inch on the left hand side. Notes should be placed at the bottom of the page (footnotes). All pages should be numbered: preliminary matter with Roman numerals, and the remainder of the SIP, beginning with the first page of the Introduction and continuing to the last page of the bibliography, with Arabic numerals. The title page should conform exactly to the model on the following page.
Title centered horizontally, and it can be split on two lines

Full Name, Quarter, Year of Completion

Advisor:
Dr. XXX XXX
Department of Religion, Kalamazoo College

A paper submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts at Kalamazoo College
Appendix: Chicago Manual of Style Citation Quick Guide for SIPS

The Department of Religion
Kalamazoo College

We have adapted this "Quick Guide" from the Chicago Manual of Style web page [www.chicagomanualofstyle.org](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org) for use at Kalamazoo College in the Department of Religion. Students should consult with professors to be sure that their citations are accurately formatted. The text and examples that follow are taken from the Manual of Style web page. We require the “N” (Note) and “B” (Bibliography) formats for Senior Individualized Projects. Please familiarize yourself with this guide so you are familiar with the differences between these styles.

The humanities style is preferred by many in literature, history, and the arts. This style presents bibliographic information in notes and, often, a bibliography. It accommodates a variety of sources, including esoteric ones less appropriate to the author-date system.

Online sources that are analogous to print sources (such as articles published in online journals, magazines, or newspapers) should be cited similarly to their print counterparts but with the addition of a URL. Some publishers or disciplines may also require an access date. For online or other electronic sources that do not have a direct print counterpart (such as an institutional Web site or a Weblog), give as much information as you can in addition to the URL. The following examples include some of the most common types of electronic sources.

Please note: when using the “N” note format, you only need to use the full format found below for the first instance of each book, article, or source. Each subsequent reference to the same book should use an abbreviated version, as in Doniger, *Splitting*, 76. If you only have one source from an author, you can just use the author’s name, page number.

Book

One author


Two authors


Four or more authors


Editor, translator, or compiler instead of author


Editor, translator, or compiler in addition to author


Chapter or other part of a book


Chapter of an edited volume originally published elsewhere (as in primary sources)


Preface, foreword, introduction, or similar part of a book


Book published electronically

If a book is available in more than one format, you should cite the version you consulted, but you may also list the other formats, as in the second example below. If an access date is required by your publisher or discipline, include it parenthetically at the end of the citation, as in the first example below.


Journal article

Article in a print journal


Article in an online journal

If an access date is required by your publisher or discipline, include it parenthetically at the end of the citation, as in the fourth example below.


Popular magazine article


Newspaper article

Newspaper articles may be cited in running text ("As William Niederkorn noted in a New York Times article on June 20, 2002, . . .") instead of in a note or an in-text citation, and they are commonly omitted from a bibliography or reference list as well. The following examples show the more formal versions of the citations.


Book review


Web site

Web sites may be cited in running text ("On its Web site, the Evanston Public Library Board of Trustees states . . .") instead of in an in-text citation, and they are commonly omitted from a bibliography or reference list as well. The following examples show the more formal versions of the citations. If an access date is required by your publisher or discipline, include it parenthetically at the end of the citation, as in the second example below.


Blogs or comments

Weblog entries or comments may be cited in running text ("In a comment posted to the Becker-Posner Blog on March 6, 2006, Peter Pearson noted . . .") instead of in a note or an in-text citation, and they are commonly omitted from a bibliography or reference list as well. The following examples show the more formal versions of the citations. If an access date is required by your publisher or discipline, include it parenthetically at the end of the citation, as in the first example below.


Item in online database

Journal articles published in online databases should be cited as shown above, under "Article in an online journal." If an access date is required by your publisher or discipline, include it parenthetically at the end of the citation, as in the first example below.
