

Department: Marine Sciences

Course number: 4895W

Course title: Senior Research Thesis

Credits: 3

Contact Person: Patricia Kremer

Q/W: W

Catalog Copy:MARN 4895W [295W]: Senior Research Thesis Either semester. Three credits. Hours by arrangement. Prerequisite: Three credits of MARN 299, which may be taken concurrently. Recommended preparation: MARN 255W. Open only with consent of instructor. Not limited to honors students. Senior thesis reflecting independent research.

Course Information:

a. The goal of this course is to have the student write in manuscript format the work he/she has been doing for independent research. Within this overall goal the student will get practice writing clearly and concisely within the constraints of the accepted scientific format.

b. Please note that there will be no exams, weekly reading assignments, or problem sets for this course. Precise scheduling of writing assignments is up to the faculty mentor in consultation with the student. It is likely that the various sections of the thesis (e.g. methods, results) will be submitted and revised in installments.

c. The topic of the thesis will pertain to the topic of the student's research.

W Criteria:

1. The writing of the senior thesis is the entire content of this course. Writing about the student's own study in the accepted scientific format demands the student know thoroughly about the scientific context in which the study takes place, examine the results closely, and reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of the study. The overall writing required for the thesis includes a review of the relevant scientific literature along with the rationale for the study (Introduction); clear description of the methods used in the study (Methods); figures and tables along with descriptive prose of the findings (Results); analysis of the results including how these results compare with other studies (Discussion).

2. Writing instruction will be provided at individual conferences of the faculty mentor and student, and by written commentary from the professor on sequential drafts of portions of the thesis.

3. The end product will be a thesis of a minimum of 15 pages that has been revised at least once. This thesis will determine the entire grade for the course. Failing to complete satisfactorily the W component means failure in the course.

4. Whenever a student registers for this course, there will be an information sheet (in lieu of a formal syllabus) to be signed by both the student and faculty mentor. This signed sheet will describe the professor's expectations for successful completion of the course including information about the requirement of a minimum of 15 revised pages and the requirement of a passing grade on the "W" portion of the course.