

# English Department Senior Project Question and Answer Sheet

## What is a senior project in English?

The senior project in English represents the culmination of a student's experience as an English major. The projects will vary according to the sub-disciplines (literature, creative writing, technical communications, and linguistics), and will be determined by the student and the instructor. Projects in literature and linguistics, for instance, are often an expanded version of a seminar paper; projects in technical communications may be a website, a DVD, or other multi-media creation; projects in creative writing are usually portfolios of student work.

## When should I do my senior project?

Ideally, students should take their senior project in one of the last two quarters of their coursework.

## How do I sign up for Senior Project?

Students take the senior project adjunct (English 461, 1 unit) in conjunction with a 400-level English class (in literature, technical communications, linguistics, or creative writing). **Students must sign up for the senior project before registration opens for the upcoming quarter.** To sign up for a 400-level class and the corresponding English 461, get the senior project form in the English department office. Then meet with the instructor of your chosen 400-level class to sign the form. Take your form back to the English department office where it will be kept on file and will guarantee you a seat in both courses. **Do not enroll in these courses during the regular registration period;** instead, on the first day of school ask your instructor for permission numbers for both the 400-level class and the corresponding English 461. You will then register for both courses.

## How should the manuscript look?

*Please read these directions carefully – you are responsible for submitting your senior project in the proper format.*

Most matters of format are left for the student and his or her senior project professor to decide, but be sure to follow the [MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers](#).

Other format instructions include:

|                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Paper type:                       | Good quality white printer paper  |
| Print type:                       | Laser or inkjet print quality   |
| Page size:                        | 8½" X 11"   |
| Margins:                          | 1½" left, 1" right, top and bottom  |
| Abstract:                         | Single spaced, no number, <u>do not</u> include in pagination count   |
| Title page:                       | No number, <u>do</u> include in pagination count (next page is <i>ii</i> )<br>[if poetry or fiction, a second Title Page without the author's name is sometimes included with the first page of poem/fiction] |
| Approval page:                    | Number on page, lower case Roman numeral ( <i>ii</i> )  |
| Table of Contents:                | Number on page, lower case Roman numeral ( <i>iii</i> )   |
| List of Illustrations and Tables: | (Optional) Number on page, lower case Roman numeral   |
| Page numbers:                     | Arabic numbers beginning with a "1" ( <u>do</u> include number on page one); upper right hand margin, ½" down   |
| Spacing:                          | Double-spaced throughout, except:   |

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Heading to text:            | Three spaces  |
| Quotations over four lines: | Indent margins ten spaces and double space  |
| Citations:                  | (Author, page number) immediately after quote.<br>Do not include <i>p.</i> or <i>pp.</i> before the number. |
| Chapter number:             | Centered, 1" from top, upper and lower case letters   |
| Chapter heading:            | Centered, drop three lines, all capital letters   |

### Once I've completed my project, how do I turn it in?

The senior project is graded by the instructor of the course you take. Usually, you will turn in drafts of the project for feedback during the quarter. At the end of the quarter, you will turn in the final project to your instructor, who will sign all the forms and assign it a grade. Then you will bring your senior project to the English department office. We will have the department chair sign off on it and then we will forward it to the library to be reproduced on microfiche or in an electronic format.

### What should I submit with my final manuscript?

The following materials should be submitted, unbound and in a 9 x 12 manila envelope, to your senior project instructor:

- 1) The original receipt (white copy) for the Library microfiche fee (the \$6 fee should be paid at the Cashier's window, Administration building, first floor);
- 2) Three copies of the Senior Project Requirement Form online at [www.lib.calpoly.edu/srproj/forms/senior.pdf](http://www.lib.calpoly.edu/srproj/forms/senior.pdf)
- 3) An Approval Page with the name of your instructor and the department chair typed on it (sample on page 4);
- 4) A 50 word or less Abstract (see page 3);
- 5) A Title Page (see sample on pg 5);
- 6) Your original manuscript.

*Please note that your instructor needs to sign both the Senior Project Requirement Form and the Approval Page.*

### What about non-print materials and World Wide Web or multimedia projects?

Photographs attached to manuscript pages can be put on microfiche but those in color will appear black and white. Non-print materials, such as DVDs or CDs, will be catalogued and placed in the Learning Resources and Curriculum Department of the Library. *These cannot be returned.*

Please see the Library web site (<http://www.lib.calpoly.edu/srproj/www/WWWguide.html>) for complete submission requirements. A copy of the project will need to be downloaded to the library server, and a printed copy will need to be submitted for microfiche.

### What should my Abstract look like?

The abstract is a short synopsis of your paper (about 50 words). It is not a summary or introduction; it is shorter than a summary, yet often gives more detail, and unlike an introduction it is intended to substitute for the article rather than help readers understand all the details of the article. If you already know how to write an abstract, write an informative rather than a descriptive one. If you do not know the difference, here are the steps to follow to write a good informative abstract. In addition, your instructor can help you with the abstract.

- 1) Look the report over and find or write a sentence to summarize each major idea you have presented. Include a statement of your major findings and the recommendations you make based on them.
- 2) If you need it, write a lead sentence to state the subject, purpose, and scope of the report.
- 3) Combine the lead sentence with the summary sentences.
- 4) Condense and cut the abstract to keep it under fifty words. (We will accept slightly longer abstracts, but we prefer a very condensed form.)

- 5) Type the abstract on a separate sheet from the rest of your paper in the same form as the samples shown below. The abstract should be single-spaced.

***Sample 1:***

Your Name: "Title of Your Project"

Many reports of using computers to grade student papers are available. Work to quantify indicators of good writing and relate these to human judgments is promising, but the methods used to grade content and style are not satisfactory for high school English teachers yet. Developments should be watched.

***Sample 2***

Your Name: "Title of Your Project"

Novelists purposely arouse their reader's curiosity about the identity of the author. Philip Roth, John Irving, and Norman Mailer have done this extensively, and it seems to be a common element in contemporary fiction. We should devise critical tools to judge the effectiveness of the technique.

**Fiction and Poetry Abstracts**

If you have chosen to write fiction or poetry for your senior project, write a descriptive abstract instead of an informative one. A descriptive abstract describes the contents, methods, and goals of the project, but does not summarize it. No statement of findings or recommendations should be included.

***Sample 1***

Your Name: "Title of Your Project"

This short story tells of the adventures of a college girl and her pet dog Flush. It focuses on the end of a love affair and the beginning of a new life. It is told from the point of view of the dog to provide a modern view.

***Sample 2***

Your Name: "Title of Your Project"

This is a manuscript of original poetry.

*(Sample Approval Page)*

APPROVAL PAGE

Title: Title of Your Project

Author(s): Your Name

Date Submitted: June 10, 2006

Professor Jane Doe  
Senior Project Instructor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

Dr. Sally Smith  
Department Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

*(Sample Title Page)*

TITLE OF YOUR PROJECT

by

Your Name

English Department

College of Liberal Arts

California Polytechnic State University

San Luis Obispo

2006