

## Senior Project Methods

Hartwick College  
ENGL 489-1  
(1 Credit, Promise Capstone)  
Fall 2026

Dr. Bradley J. Fest  
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W 8:00–8:55 a.m., Clark Hall 251

Office Hours: by appointment

### Required Text

*MLA Handbook*. 9th ed., Modern Language Association of America, 2021.

### Prerequisites

The successful completion of ENGL 190 is required before taking this course.

### Catalog Description

Guided group preparation prior to the individual directed study of English.

### Course Description and Purpose

In this section of Senior Project Methods, students will do work that will prepare them to write their senior thesis in creative writing. As students are expected to write the majority of their senior thesis when enrolled in ENGL 490 Senior Project, this preparatory course focuses particularly on research and reading and is largely self-directed. As such, students in this course will write and revise an abstract of their project, form a reading list, and create an annotated bibliography; they will also draft a portion of their thesis, and we will discuss various drafts as a group throughout the semester.

### Learning Outcomes

In addition to writing creatively and performing literary analysis, students in this course will: 1) research their topic or genre or read the work of influential writers to gain greater knowledge of their project area; 2) compose an annotated bibliography that demonstrates the usefulness of their research for their project; 3) begin drafting portions of their senior thesis in poetry, fiction, and/or creative nonfiction; and 4) prepare and position themselves to complete their thesis in ENGL 490 Senior Project.

### Other Course Requirements and Assignments

*Texts*—Students will select and acquire texts to read on their own and will verbally agree to how much they will read for each class meeting. Students are expected to have done this reading and be prepared to briefly discuss it in class. If students have not read what they agree to for any given week, they will lose 5% off their total grade. Please bring your chosen texts to class along with your peers' work. Expect to read a whole book every three weeks.

*Abstract*—The first few meetings will be devoted to drafting an abstract of your project and a reading list for the semester. Abstracts will receive a completion check. Failure to complete the Abstract assignment will result in 5% deducted from a student's total grade. See assignment for more details.

*Annotated Bibliography*—Over the course of the semester, students will be keeping an annotated bibliography, which they will turn in during the last class meeting. Students will be expected to turn individual entries of their bibliography in every few weeks for a completion check (see due dates in the calendar below). Students who fail to turn in a bibliography entry will lose 25% off their Annotated Bibliography grade. Annotated Bibliographies will be graded at the end of the term. In addition to a hard copy, students must share with me via Google Docs a link to each entry. See the assignment for more details.

*Writing*—Throughout the semester, students will be given verbal writing assignments that ask them to draft portions of their senior thesis (e.g., “Write five pages” or “revise your first five pages”), due usually three-or-so weeks later. By Sunday night, students should share via email with everyone in class writing that will be discussed on Wednesday. Failure to turn in an assigned draft will result in 15% off your Writing grade. I will provide marginal comments and verbal feedback on this writing, though I will not grade individual drafts.

*Google Docs*—Students *must* use Google Docs to compose *all* of their writing in this class, including annotated bibliography entries, and also *must* add me as an editor on every document they write so that when I go to open the writing you share via email, I should have editorial access to your writing. Students will receive a zero for any assignment I receive in which I am not added as an editor, and I will *not* remind students who have forgotten to add me as an editor. I will also not comment on any work I receive in which I have not been added as an editor. Further, when I look at a document, if I am unable to see the *human process* of a student composing all their writing *themselves* without *any* help from generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) or other digital tools (including Grammarly), students will receive a zero for the assignment and may be reported for an academic integrity violation. For instructions on how to share your Google Doc with me and the class, see “Using Google Docs for This Course.” (Also see “Plagiarism and Academic Integrity” section below.)

*Feedback*— Students should print out each other's work, comment on it, and be prepared to discuss and hand it back to the writer on days where it says on the calendar below “discuss writing.” Failure to do so—including the failure to print out each other's work—will be reflected in a student's participation grade.

*Communicating*: Other than posting the course syllabus and assignments under “Content,” I will not be using D2L in this course. Please send any work via email and as hard copy when requested.

*Paper-Based Classroom*: Students should not have phones or laptops out at any time (unless asked to) and should *print* out all student writing and have hard copies of any necessary reading material.

*Participation*—This is a small class devoted to preparing its participants to write their senior thesis and will involve group discussion of student work and student-led discussions of what they are reading. As such, engaged participation is essential. Students are expected to be well prepared for class and to actively participate. Among other things, I expect students to have read everything they agree to have read for each class meeting, and students should also make sure to read and comment on their peers' work. Since this class will rely heavily on student participation, your attendance is a necessity. *More than two absences will negatively affect your grade, in which case you may want to consider withdrawing from the course and taking it again under better circumstances. Students who are marked absent for more than four total classes will automatically fail the course.*

That said, I understand that it is possible that a student may miss significant class time due to illness or other unforeseen circumstances. In such cases, it is each individual student's responsibility to communicate with me regarding any issues they might have attending class sessions or doing the work of the course. If students communicate with me about legitimate issues that may cause them to miss class time, I will do my best to work with them to make sure that they are given the opportunity to succeed.

### **Grading**

Participation: 20%

Annotated Bibliography: 40%

Writing: 40%

### **Plagiarism and Academic Integrity**

Plagiarism will not be tolerated in this course in any way. It will result in a zero for the assignment and a formal charge will be filed with the Office of Academic Affairs. More than one count of plagiarism in this course will be grounds for failure. Plagiarism could also result in more serious action, including a student being suspended or expelled from the College. *Plagiarism includes: Lack of proper citations when quoting from someone else's work; representing someone else's work as your own; and knowingly allowing one's work to be submitted by someone else. Plagiarism also includes: Copying online (or offline) sources without quotation or attribution; using online paraphrase tools (such as QuillBot) to change other people's words or your own and then submitting those tools' output as your own; using generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) or large-language models (LLMs such as ChatGPT) and submitting without attribution any portion of its output as your own, including any ideas or topics it may have generated; and turning in handwritten work that is not your own, original work.*

In this class, *students are prohibited from using generative AI in any way unless an assignment says otherwise, and any unattributed use of GenAI constitutes plagiarism and will be considered a violation of Hartwick's Academic Integrity Policy.* Further, as different writing software such as Grammarly is increasingly incorporating GenAI—indeed, Grammarly advertises itself as an “AI writing partner”—any writing software other than Google Docs, dictionaries, thesauruses, or similar resources are prohibited; prohibited software includes Grammarly, paraphrase tools (such as QuillBot), reference generators, and plagiarism checkers, and the use of any such software will be considered plagiarism in this class. Finally, as stated above, students *must* use Google Docs to compose *all* of their writing for this course, and students must give me access as an editor to everything they write for the course. Failure to do so could result in a zero for the assignment and a charge of violating Hartwick's academic integrity policy. Such violations are not limited to plagiarism, so students also should familiarize themselves with the College's policies at <https://www.hartwick.edu/academics/student-services/academic-affairs/academic-policies/>.

### **Academic Adjustments and/or Modifications**

Students must present me with an updated Academic Plan Letter for the fall 2026 semester in order to be eligible for academic adjustments. Hartwick College is committed to the creation of an inclusive and safe learning environment for all students and welcomes students with disabilities into all the College's educational programs. The AccessAbility Services Office is responsible for the determination of appropriate modifications for students who encounter barriers due to a disability. If a student with a disability wishes to request academic accommodations, they should contact Lara Sanford, Director of AccessAbility Services and Academic Inclusivity, at [sanfordl@hartwick.edu](mailto:sanfordl@hartwick.edu) or [AccessAbilityServices@Hartwick.edu](mailto:AccessAbilityServices@Hartwick.edu). To serve you best, requests should be made as early as possible. Please let me know if you have questions or need assistance. I am committed to creating a course that is inclusive in its design. If you encounter barriers, please let me know immediately so that we can determine if there is a design adjustment that can be made or if an accommodation might be needed to overcome the limitations of the design. I am happy to consider creative solutions if they do not compromise the intent of the assessment or learning activity.

### **The Writing Center and Tutoring Services**

The Charlotte Orr Hotaling Writing Center (Clark 230) offers free one-on-one writing support for any stage of writing, including brainstorming, outlining, drafting, and revising. The Writing Center offers personalized feedback on short assignments, essays, senior theses, résumés, graduate school applications, scholarship applications, and other documents. Students can request in-person or online video support by scheduling thirty-minute or one-hour appointments. Asynchronous email support is also available by emailing your assignment prompt, assignment, and email any questions to [WritingCenter@hartwick.edu](mailto:WritingCenter@hartwick.edu). The Writing Center is open Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. Drop-in visits are welcome. More information about the Writing Center can be found here: <https://www.hartwick.edu/academics/student-services/writing-center/>. Tutoring services are available here: <https://www.hartwick.edu/academics/student-services/center-for-student-success/css-services/tutoring-services/>.

### **E-mail Communication Policy**

Each student is issued a college email address (username@hartwick.edu) upon admittance. This email address may be used by the college for official communication with students. I will also communicate with students via their hartwick.edu address. Students are expected to regularly read email sent to this account. Failure to read and react to communications from either the College or from me in a timely manner does not absolve the student from knowing and complying with the content of the communications. If email is lost as a result of forwarding, it does not absolve the student from responding to communications sent to their Hartwick email address.

### **Health and Success**

Success in this course depends on your personal health and wellbeing. Recognize that stress is an expected part of the college experience, and it often can be compounded by unexpected setbacks or life changes outside the classroom. Your other instructors and I encourage you to reframe challenges as an unavoidable pathway to success. Reflect on your role in taking care of yourself throughout the term, before the demands of exams and projects reach their peak. Please also feel free to reach out to me about any difficulty you may be having that may impact your performance in this course as soon as it occurs and before it becomes unmanageable. In addition to your academic advisor, I strongly encourage you to contact the many other support services on campus that stand ready to assist you. Hartwick offers free counseling for students who are experiencing personal or emotional difficulties. The Counseling Center is available to help with these issues and may be reached by calling (607) 431-4420 or emailing [counselingcenter@hartwick.edu](mailto:counselingcenter@hartwick.edu). Counseling services are *free of charge* and confidential. Heart, a peer counseling service, is also available if you are more comfortable talking with a fellow student who has been trained to offer information and support in a safe, nonjudgmental atmosphere. To reach a Heart Peer Counselor, email [heart@hartwick.edu](mailto:heart@hartwick.edu).

### **Sexual Misconduct and Title IX Reporting**

Hartwick College faculty are committed to creating a safe learning environment for all members of our community, free from gender and sex-based discrimination, including sexual harassment, domestic and dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking, in accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. The Title IX Coordinator will reach out to provide resources, support, and options after receiving a report of violations of this policy, but recipients are not required to respond to such outreach. Please note that faculty members are considered nonconfidential employees. Under the College's Title IX, Discrimination and Harassment Policy, nonconfidential employees must report disclosures of sex or gender-based discrimination or violence to the Title IX Coordinator (Geoffrey Gabriel, [gabrielg@hartwick.edu](mailto:gabrielg@hartwick.edu)). If you or a student you know has experienced any sex or gender-based discrimination or violence and wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact the following resources: Perrella Wellness Center, Health (607) 431-4120, the Counseling Center (also located in Perrella) (607) 431-4120, or Opportunities for Otsego's Violence Intervention Program (607) 432-4855.

### **Statement on Classroom Recording**

To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may not record classroom lectures, discussion, or activities without the advance written permission of the instructor, and any such recording properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student's own private use.

## Calendar<sup>1</sup>

- 9.2 Syllabus and check-in
- 9.9 **First Draft of Abstracts due by email by 9.6**  
Discuss abstracts and reading plans
- 9.16 **Revision of Abstracts due by email by 9.13**  
Aidan: discuss writing (5 pages due by email by 9.13)  
Haley: reading due  
Jenna: reading due  
Brandi: reading due
- 9.23 **2nd revision of Abstracts due by email by 9.20 (if necessary)**  
Aidan: reading due  
Haley: discuss writing (5 pages due by email by 9.20)  
Jenna: reading due (and annotated bibliography entry)  
Brandi: reading due (and annotated bibliography entry)
- 9.30 Aidan: reading due (and annotated bibliography entry)  
Haley: reading due (and annotated bibliography entry)  
Jenna: discuss writing (TBD by email by 9.27)  
Brandi: reading due
- 10.7 Aidan: reading due  
Haley: reading due  
Jenna: reading due  
Brandi: discuss writing (5 pages due by email by 10.4)
- 10.14 Aidan: discuss writing (TBD by email by 10.11)  
Haley: reading due (and annotated bibliography entry)  
Jenna: reading due (and annotated bibliography entry)  
Brandi: reading due (and annotated bibliography entry)
- 10.21 Aidan: reading due (and annotated bibliography entry)  
Haley: discuss writing (TBD by email by 10.18)  
Jenna: reading due  
Brandi: reading due
- 10.28 Aidan: reading due  
Haley: reading due  
Jenna: discuss writing (TBD by email by 10.25)  
Brandi: reading due (and annotated bibliography entry)

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<sup>1</sup> Please note that additional readings or handouts may be assigned when appropriate and that the schedule is subject to change.

- 11.4 Aidan: reading due (and annotated bibliography entry)  
Haley: reading due (and annotated bibliography entry)  
Jenna: reading due (and annotated bibliography entry)  
Brandi: discuss writing (TBD by email by 11.1)
- 11.11 Aidan: discuss writing (TBD by email by 11.8)  
Haley: discuss writing (TBD by email by 11.8)  
Jenna: reading due (and annotated bibliography entry)  
Brandi: reading due (and annotated bibliography entry)
- 11.18 Aidan: reading due (and annotated bibliography entry)  
Haley: reading due (and annotated bibliography entry)  
Jenna: discuss writing (TBD by email by 11.15)  
Brandi: discuss writing (TBD by email by 11.15)
- 11.25 Thanksgiving Break, no class
- 12.2 **Annotated Bibliographies due (should contain at least one more entry)**  
**Final *Rough* Draft of whatever writing of your thesis you have completed this term**  
**due as hard copy in my mailbox (on 2nd floor of Clark) and shared to**  
**[festb@hartwick.edu](mailto:festb@hartwick.edu)**  
Group Reading  
Reflection on Semester and Looking Forward to J-Term