Thesis Proposal Guidelines
American Studies, Film Studies, Humanities Concentrations

Requirements
Thesis proposals are 3 to 4 pages, not counting the accompanying bibliography. Full-time students defend their proposals early in the fall term of their second year.

Format
The thesis proposal consists of the following:

- **Paragraph 1 / Statement of Purpose**
  Describe the central problem or question your thesis investigates. Explain why this problem or question matters for your field or subfield. Name the original materials you have selected to examine this problem or question. Include a working thesis.

- **Paragraph 2 / Context**
  Situate your thesis in relevant aesthetic, social, and historical contexts. Why are these contexts important for the problem or question your thesis pursues? How do they contribute to the significance or consequences of your investigation?

- **Paragraph 3 / Related Literature**
  Explain your project's relationship to existing scholarship in your field or subfield. You need not cite individual thinkers; rather, summarize dominant approaches to your problem or question and situate your work within them. How does your thesis corroborate and / or challenge these approaches? How would you describe the value of your contribution the field or subfield?

- **Paragraph 4 / Original Materials**
  Describe the texts you plan to deploy as evidence for your argument—i.e., the novels, poems, philosophical or scientific texts, artworks, songs, films, video games, etc. that sustain and develop your thesis statement. What ideas or themes do these texts investigate? How would you characterize their form or style? Why are they suited to the problem or question posed by your thesis?

- **Paragraph 5 / Theoretical Literature**
  Name and describe the theoretical concepts that most influence your approach to your thesis. Why are these best suited to the problem or question it analyzes? You need not cite individual thinkers; rather, summarize the terms or strategies your project adopts from them.

- **Preliminary Bibliography**
  Provide a working bibliography for your project, including contextual, related, original, and theoretical sources. Distinguish items you have read from those you have not.