Senior Thesis in the time of COVID

Keck science labs will NOT be accessible to students during the Fall 2020 COVID lockdown.

This means that all theses will be what we have traditionally called “library” theses – i.e. an original exploration of a dataset derived from:

- Your own summer research (if applicable)
- Internet databases – see below
- Published literature.

The four possible types of thesis are:

- Summer+Fall (“2FR” – register for 189L and 190L)
- Fall 2020 one-semester (“1F” – register for 191)
- Spring 2021 one-semester (“1S” – no fall registration; register for 191 in Spring)
- Fall 2020 + spring 2021 two-semester (“2S” – register for 188L in Fall and 190 in Spring)

(188L, 189L, 190L, and 191 are listed as “BIOL188L”, or “CHEM, or NEUR, or PHYS or EA as appropriate to your major)

Please note that a two-semester thesis is two course credits, two grades, and TWICE as much work as a one-semester thesis. Not all topics are suitable for a two-semester thesis. A one-semester thesis spread over two semesters is NOT a two-semester thesis. Consult your proposed Keck Science reader before committing to a two-semester thesis.

Please see the KSD “Covid thesis” webpage for general information on syllabus, etc:

http://faculty.jsd.claremont.edu/dmcfarlane/Thesis/
Fall 2020 Revised Timetable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organizational meeting</td>
<td>(online - available August 4th)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KSD registration</td>
<td>Friday Sept 11th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal use forms</td>
<td>Friday Sept 18th</td>
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<tr>
<td>1F progress reports</td>
<td>Friday October 2nd.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2S progress presentations</td>
<td>Mon-Fri October 5th-9th</td>
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<tr>
<td>1F Draft theses due to readers</td>
<td>Monday November 2nd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1F Poster &amp; Abstract uploads</td>
<td>Monday 16th November</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poster Session</td>
<td>Friday Nov 20th (likely to be Virtual)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written Thesis uploads</td>
<td>Monday 23rd November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final check-out</td>
<td>Tuesday 24th November</td>
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Data Sources

Examples of open-access databases of research-quality data, with their internet links, can be found on the Covid Thesis webpage:

http://faculty.jsd.claremont.edu/dmcfarlane/Thesis/

Seminars

All thesis students complete attend 6 research seminars per semester. Since we don’t have on-campus speakers this Fall, you will meet this requirement via webcasts and/or podcasts. Online seminars in any discipline of science are acceptable; consult with your keck reader if you are unsure. You are required to submit a short written summary of each seminar to your first (or Keck) reader (worth a total of 10% of your final grade). The following web-“seminars” are optional, but you are welcome to use them. Your readers can direct you to other options.

The Poetry of Science: Richard Dawkins and Neil deGrasse Tyson
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9RExQFZzHXQ

Something From Nothing - a conversation w/ Richard Dawkins & Lawrence Krauss
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gH9UvnrARf8

Royal Institution -Explosive Science - with Chris Bishop
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uFQdcKJUijQ

Stephen Fry & Steven Pinker on the Enlightenment Today
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8aT61w3Q6vl
Posters

In normal times, an important part of our thesis program is the poster presentation. As a COVID-19 substitute, you will prepare a narrated powerpoint, and that will be followed with a Zoom Q&A session with your two assigned poster graders. Further details will be available later in the semester.

Deadlines

Thesis deadlines (listed above) are taken seriously, and grade penalties apply for missing them.

Questions?

If you have questions related to the science of your thesis, address those to your thesis readers. If you have questions related to thesis administration, rules, or grading, please don’t hesitate to contact me,

Donald McFarlane:  dmcfarlane@kecksci.claremont.edu