



Wayland Baptist University Mission Statement: Wayland Baptist University exists to educate students in an academically challenging, learning-focused, and distinctively Christian environment for professional success and service to God and humankind.

Course Name: ENGL 5361 Thesis II (second term), VCO1

Term and Year: Fall 2026

Full Name of Instructor:
Dr. Erin Heath

Office Phone and WBU Email Address:
erin.heath@wbu.edu 806-291-1110 (Feel free to leave a voicemail, although this is my office phone and I will not see it if Wayland's Plainview campus is not in session.)

Office Hours, Building, and Location:
Gates Hall 206-B and Online, various times, and by appointment

Class Meeting Time and Location:
WBU's Virtual Campus

Catalog Description:
Research toward the completion of the master's thesis; supervised by full-time faculty.

Prerequisite: ENGL 5360

Required Textbook and Resources: Various books, articles, and resources related to thesis topic

Course outcome competencies: Upon the conclusion of this course, students actively engaged in learning at the graduate level will be able to:

1. work closely with thesis chair and other committee members to complete a study on a selected topic;
2. discuss, through the use of intelligent, scholarly conversation, issues related to the selected topic and specialties as informed by reading, research, and graduate coursework;
3. successfully complete an oral presentation and justification of the thesis before committee;
4. submit fully revised, completed, and approved thesis to Dean of School of Languages and Literature by the end of the term.

The more the student puts into the course, the higher his or her outcome competencies will be.

Attendance Requirements:

We will meet regularly online or by email to discuss progress on the literature review, thesis outline, and writing. Any student who misses 25 percent or more of the regularly scheduled class meetings may receive a grade of F in the course. Additional attendance policies for each course, as defined by the instructor in the course syllabus, are considered a part of the University's attendance policy.

Due Dates and Late Penalties:

Assignments are due by 11:59 p.m. (Central Time Zone) on the date posted. Be sure that your clock matches the clock in WBU's Blackboard. All assignments must be submitted to the Blackboard site to receive a grade. These deadlines, like most deadlines in life, are not negotiable. *Any late assignment will receive a 15 point deduction if it is late.* Nothing will be accepted after the last regular day of the course.

If for any reason you have trouble submitting your assignment online, send me an email with the attached assignment (in Microsoft Word) before the due date/time, with an explanation of the technical problem. I will note the submission time of the email in order to assess removing late penalties. You will be required to re-submit the assignment within 24 hours, or once the technical problem is resolved.

Expectations, Communication, & Other Information:

Announcements and important information will be posted on the Blackboard site. Be sure to check the site often. Additional information may be sent to your WBU emails, so make sure you've set up a WBU email and are checking it often. Always feel free to email me or chat online anytime I'm signed on if you are concerned about the course or your progress. I am available to help you, provide resources, and give direction—but I cannot help you if I do not know you're struggling.

Students should contact me by using my wbu.edu email. I am also available on zoom by appointment. I have an office on the Plainview campus, as well, so Plainview campus students can set up an appointment to visit with me there. Please note that the phone number listed in this syllabus is my office number, which may be checked periodically throughout the week during the spring and fall Plainview semesters, but not often during the summer. The best way to get in touch with me quickly is through email.

Technical Support:

If you need assistance with your Wayland email, call IT @ (806) 291-3540, OR go here:

[student IT help](#)

If you encounter other technical problems, contact the Virtual Campus (VC) via this link:

[Virtual Campus Online](#), or feel free to call direct (866) 547-9192 or email virtualcampus@wbu.edu

Course Requirements and Grading Criteria:

- 1.) Weekly meetings, each with individualized assignments related to the student's early development of thesis material and ideas, as listed below in schedule. (5% each, 50% of the total grade for meetings)

- 2.) Final submission of the following (50% total):
 - a.) revised, cumulative annotated bibliography divided into “families” of sources 10%
 - b.) 1 or 2 page working description of the thesis that includes its central claim(s) 10%
 - c.) a working outline of the full thesis 15%
 - d.) A full draft of chapter one (revised from week 9 but can still be rough). 15%

Statement on Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty:

Wayland Baptist University observes a zero tolerance policy regarding academic dishonesty. Per university policy as described in the academic catalog, all cases of academic dishonesty will be reported, and second offenses will result in suspension from the university. Plagiarism is described in part as:

1. asking or paying someone else to write your paper;
2. copying, stealing, or “borrowing” another’s paper, or portions of a book, article, or

website, without using quotation marks and proper acknowledgement.

Submitting your own work for more than one course without permission of both instructors can also constitute plagiarism. For any work submitted in this course, documentation should follow current MLA form; the current MLA guide is available at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/>. If you have questions about fair use or documentation, please do not hesitate to consult me.

Generative AI tools permitted in specific context and with proper citations.

1. Students are allowed to use, reference, or incorporate generative AI tools into specific assignments for this course. When used, students must properly cite the generative AI tool in their submitted work.
2. While there is no true substitute for direct help and instruction for your instructor, students may be allowed to use generative AI tools to provide further explanations of course content, readings, and other assignments. Any use of generative AI tools to help further explain or translate content must be properly referenced and cited.
3. Specific parameters for generative AI usage are provided by the instructor.
4. Any use of generative AI tools outside of the approved instructor parameters will be considered a form of plagiarism and academic dishonesty.

AI can be used to generate works cited formatting, asked for suggestions and advice about your writing. It can also be used to check spelling or grammar. **AI CANNOT be used for generating words or arguments. All ideas must belong to you!**

Disability Statement:

“In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), it is the policy of Wayland Baptist University that no otherwise qualified person with a disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any educational program or activity in the university. The Coordinator of Counseling Services serves as the coordinator of students with a disability and should be contacted concerning accommodation requests at (806) 291- 3765.

Documentation of a disability must accompany any request for accommodations.”

Grade Appeal:

“Students shall have protection through orderly procedures against prejudices or capricious academic evaluation. A student who believes that he or she has not been held to realistic academic standards, just evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course by using

the student grade appeal process described in the Academic Catalog. Appeals may not be made for advanced placement examinations or course bypass examinations. Appeals are limited to the final course grade, which may be upheld, raised, or lowered at any stage of the appeal process. Any recommendation to lower a course grade must be submitted through the Executive Vice President/Provost to the Faculty Assembly Grade Appeals Committee for review and approval. The Faculty Assembly Grade Appeals Committee may instruct that the course grade be upheld, raised, or lowered to a more proper evaluation.”

Tentative Schedule:

Week 1 Meet to discuss course outline, goals, due dates, procedures, and related plans; review and discuss revised thesis and outline from last semester. Complete working draft of chapter 1 and complete working outline of chapter 2. Additionally, turn in a working bibliography that moves forward into your ideas for Thesis Intro and/or Conclusion and Chapter 2.

Week 2 Submit a revised draft of ch. 1 and the first 6 pages of ch. 2.

Week 3 Submit at least 12 pages (roughly half) of ch. 2.

Week 4 Submit a complete working draft of chapter 2 and updated/revised outline or brainstorming writing of Thesis Intro, including a working Works Cited page.

Week 5 Submit a cleaner and/or fuller version of ch. 2 and working drafts of Thesis Intro.

Week 6 Submit the following to your chair:

- final draft of chapter 2 (20-30 pages)

- full working drafts of thesis introduction and conclusion chapters (together, I do not expect these documents to exceed 20 pages.)

(By week 6, you should have a full “working” draft of the entire thesis, which you will continue to revise to send a complete draft to your committee by week 7.)

- confirm defense date with committee. Book the room with L&L Administrative Assistant (806-291-1100).

Week 7 Submit complete revised draft of entire thesis to committee members (aim for Friday previous to Week 7).

- Defense

Week 8 Submit revised and edited draft of full manuscript including front and back matter (title/signature page, abstract, table of contents, appendix of title abbreviations). One more full proofread for the chair and thesis writer.

- Tie-up any loose ends concerning final submission of completed thesis. Submit final document to chair for final review. Chair will collect signatures for sig. page. (*Breathe!*)

- If you want bound copies, send approved final manuscript to administrative assistant to send to the binder.

FYI: related Thesis II FAQs:

1. Defense: Schedule the defense for Week 7 of an 8-week term. Choose any day, time, and room for the defense that works for the student, professor/chair, and the rest of the committee members. Reserve a room with the L&L administrative assistant, and inform the L&L Dean of the time and location. Phone, Skype, Zoom, or related formats are an option for students in distance situations.

2. Thesis format: Your basic thesis template is Title Page, Table of Contents, Introduction, Chapter 1, Chapter 2, and Conclusion. In general, adhere to MLA style. Examples of recently completed theses are available from the associate dean, Dr. Strovas, upon request. As long as students adhere to the standard format and order, slight differences may be allowed.

3. Defense “format”: The student begins by briefly explaining her research and summarizing her thesis (10-15 minutes)—some use PowerPoint or a similar presentation device, but not always. Committee members follow the student’s presentation with questions related to the thesis and presentation (30-40 minutes). The student generally leaves the room (or hangs up the phone, logs out of Zoom, etc.) after addressing questions, and the committee members privately discuss whether they believe the thesis is complete and of high enough quality to be approved—with, perhaps, some adjustments or edits (5 minutes). The student returns, chair shares committee’s decision, and the session closes by giving the student marked copies of the thesis and/or typed comments so that she can make necessary adjustments. Setting a specific due date for (no more than a week or two) is always a good idea.

4. Thesis submission: After the student adequately handles any edits or revisions the committee deems necessary, the student or chair will need to finalize the signature page, print it, get necessary signatures, and then scan and insert it into the final pdf version of the thesis. Student or chair should then send the complete pdf of thesis to the School of Languages & Literature administrative assistant (Asta Edlin, asta.edlin@wbu.edu) for binding.

5. Binding: As the LRC/library does not yet offer electronic housing of theses, we continue to use Houchen Bindery at 340 First Street in Utica, NE, 68456. The School of L&L administrative assistant orders copies once a final pdf version, with signature page completed and inserted, is received. The administrative assistant completes order form and electronic submission of the thesis at www.houchenbindery.com. Copies run about \$65/each. The School of L&L pays for one copy for the library archives, and one copy for the School of L&L gallery. Students must pay in advance for any personal copies.