

## Homework Assignment #1, Getting Started

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This assignment consists of three parts: (1) a working title for your thesis, (2) a synopsis of your thesis, *as you now envision it*, and (3) a preliminary outline for your thesis. Include all three parts, in this order, in one electronic file.

- (1) The title is a working title; it may change during the course of the semester as your thesis evolves, but try to conform to the [title-writing rules](#) we discussed in PHYS 496. You may also wish to review the [talk on outlining](#) presented in PHYS 496.
- (2) Your synopsis should explain, in one or two sentences each, the motivation for your project, the methods you employed, the results (or expected results) you achieved, and the conclusions you've reached.
- (3) Your outline should include all sections of your proposed thesis.

For this assignment, provide a bullet list of important points that you will include in each section of your thesis. Review your outline to be sure you have not omitted important points, and then arrange the bulleted items in a logical, coherent, persuasive order. While we will accept a topic outline (short phrases) at this point, try making the bulleted items full sentences so you can begin to see the narrative flow of your argument.

Your outline will be a working document that you will continue to add to and refine through the semester. This assignment represents the first step of writing your senior thesis.

Save the outline you write for this assignment as “v1.” Use a permanent name for the file, such as “YourSurname\_Thesis\_YYMMDD\_vx; *never* discard earlier versions. Having multiple versions of the outline is fine, provided you can differentiate later versions from earlier ones. Incorporating the current day's date (YYMMDD) in the file name makes it easier to identify the different versions and track the evolution of your ideas.

In this scheme, the outline you complete for this assignment will be the first file of your thesis (YourSurname\_Thesis\_150904\_v1). When you write the next section of your thesis (the background and introduction section), just replace that section of the outline with your narrative text—including figures, figure captions, tables, equations, and references, and save it as a new version. Keep the whole outline as your working file; just fill in each section as you work on it. This approach allows you to see the structure of the whole thesis at all times and gives us a context so we can provide better feedback.

Due: **Friday, September 4, 9:00 PM.** This assignment is not eligible for rewrite points. Remember to include all three parts in one electronic file.

Assignments submitted after the deadline will be subject to a 5-points/day late penalty.

Total—50 points

**Additional Notes/Questions to Ask:**