

# AIMS AND TASKS FOR SEMINARS

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Seminars in the major should reflect a capstone experience for upper-level students and should function as a way to ensure that students:

1. Pursue intensive study of primary and secondary material, as appropriate to the discipline, in a focused and directed way;
2. Demonstrate competence in advanced-level research, and the ability to take an independent role in the presentation of that research, as appropriate to the discipline;
3. Demonstrate independent critical thinking skills measured in a variety of ways, including written work and oral presentations, one of which will be a capstone paper, portfolio, or project reflecting substantial, prolonged work on the seminar topic;
4. Achieve some mastery in the scholarly debates that inform the topic and contribute to that debate in a meaningful way.

Rationale: Seminars offered in the department represent a wide variety of topics and approaches to learning, yet all work to fulfill the research goals and objectives from the department's mission statement for outcomes assessment. These aims and tasks reflect the following goals and objectives with respect to seminars in our current statement; that is, to present a competent seminar quality oral report; and to complete competent seminar quality research. Indirectly, they also reflect the objective of developing students' standards of personal judgment.