

Global Cultural Studies Signature Work Paper Guidelines

There are two signature work paper types for GCULS students, those based on scholarly outcomes and those based on artistic and/or creative outcomes. Scholarly papers are conventional research papers that build an original argument by discussing and analyzing primary sources and engaging the scholarship about those sources. Creative Practice papers likewise draw on other scholarly and artistic works to explain the background, procedures, and outcomes of a student's original creative project. Refer to the list below to determine which creative practice signature work paper structure you should use and follow the guidelines in the appropriate section below the table.

Scholarly Signature Work Paper

I. Page Requirement

Scholarly signature work papers should be a minimum of 25 pages (excluding title, bibliography, and appendices). Normal margins, 12-point font, double spaced.

II. Citation Style

You must choose CMS or MLA as the citation style and use it consistently in the final signature work paper. Consult your SW mentors about the appropriate style to use. For questions about using and citing Chinese sources, please consult the *SW Style Guide for Humanities Papers using Chinese Sources*.

III. Bibliography

Signature work proposals must cite at least five sources in the bibliography, while final signature work papers must cite at least ten. Bibliographic formatting should adhere to CMS or MLA format chosen above, and should be approved by the SW mentor. Any source listed in the bibliography must be cited somewhere in the text.

IV. Writing Quality

Papers should be well-written with clear and concise language, thoroughly proofread, and free from significant formatting, grammar, and syntax deficiencies.

Creative Practice Signature Work Paper

The creative project requirements should be outlined in consultation with the SW mentor and will vary by project and genre (i.e. poetry, prose, translation). Beyond the creative project itself, Creative Practice signature works should include 10–15 pages that follow the guidelines for Scholarly SW papers above, comprised of the following sections.

I. Abstract

The abstract should clearly state the creative project's thesis, purpose, or research question. It should include the motivation and significance of the creative work, and the general methods and processes used to complete the project. The abstract should also summarize any significant conclusions. This should be the section you write last to ensure it accurately reflects the final signature work paper content. Abstracts should be approximately 200–250 words.

II. Background

This section should lay out a clear argument for establishing your perspective on the creative project research question. You should provide a theoretical and historical review of relevant literature and media, including case studies of works in your medium of choice. Focus the discussion on precedents referenced by your creative project.

III. Method, Process, and Materials

This section should describe your creative process, techniques, technologies, and the material used to produce your final creative project.

IV. Critical Reflection on the Creative Product

In this section, write about the final creative product outcome and offer a critical reflection on your writing style and artistic decisions. Reference the precedents and sources in the “Background” and how these influenced the creative choices you made in the final product. This section should also include an interpretation of the final product in the context of the research question. (Do not repeat the discussion points from previous sections or include irrelevant material.) The reflection should be based on what you achieved for the outcome and could also include the next steps and development plans for the creative project.