

HANDOUT

FINAL THESIS PROJECT:

CREATIVE COMPONENT

HAST students have two options: They can either choose to write a thesis of 10.000-12.000 words, or they can choose to write a written thesis of 7000-8000 words and add a Creative Component (CC) to their thesis project. The CC counts 30% of their overall final grade.

For APS students the CC is mandatory. It counts 50% of their final grade. The written thesis for APS students has a word count of 5000-6000 words.

In addition, both HAST and APS students have to write a short written reflection on their CC (1000-2000 words).

I. What is a Creative Component?

1. One subject - two ways of researching

The Creative Component is an integral part of the general final thesis project. It is concerned with *the same subject and research question as the written component*. Students who pursue a CC are asked to address the same research question by means of both academic and artistic/creative research. The outcomes of the latter will be submitted as part of the Creative Component exhibition which will take place ca. two weeks after the written thesis submission.

2. Creative research

The CC is a research project in its own rights that includes creative/artistic means. It should NOT be a single piece of art to be added by the end as an illustration of the Written Component, but it should include a **clearly defined artistic concept and a process of artistic research** during which students create various art works in their chosen medium, try things out, reflect on their artistic creations, receive feedback, and eventually build a final (body of) work. During this artistic research process **students should keep a journal** in which they reflect on their process, research, interim findings and further decisions.

3. Relation between Creative Component and general thesis project

The chosen art form or creative approach should be linked to the general thesis project. The art medium should not be chosen arbitrarily but should have a direct formal and/or methodological and/or conceptual relation to the general subject matter and research question.

4. Short written reflection on the creative component

At the end of the artistic research process students write a short reflection of ca. 1000-2000 words to be submitted no longer than two days after the Creative Component exhibition. The final reflection should address the following aspects:

- general idea of the CC: artistic concept, relation to the general thesis topic, chosen art form, research steps
- reflection on the artistic process
- reflection on the final work (including the final presentation if important)
- reflection on findings in relation to the overall argument of the general thesis project

Please send your written reflection to your advisors, to the registrar and the dean.

II. Guidelines for students

Before starting the creative research, students should be able to answer the following questions:

What is your general subject and research question?

- You should be clear about your general subject matter: your Creative Component should be based on your research question in terms of content, form and conceptual approach.

Benefits of a Creative Component

- Why do you need a Creative Component? (interest in creative/artistic research: exploring a subject by means of artistic approaches, interest in pursuing a career in the arts sector, MA in practicing arts, portfolio, etc.)
- What do you think will your CC **add** to your general senior thesis project and research question?
- What insights and knowledge do you wish to gain from your CC that you cannot get from your written thesis?

Relation between your general final thesis project and your Creative Component

- How does your CC relate to your general thesis topic in terms of content and chosen art form?
- How does your artistic form reflect your topic? Why would you like to use, for instance, performance art, painting, sound-walk, video, a piece of (non-)fictional creative writing in order to artistically examine your general thesis topic?

Creative research method, concept and process

- How do you plan to pursue your creative research?
Examples:
 - regular outputs with feedback sessions and interim reflections (notes, drawings, sound recordings, data collections, etc.).
 - setting up various artistic experiments
 - auto-ethnographical fieldwork in your chosen artistic medium
 - series of artistic workshops
 - weekly drawings or daily practices, documented and followed by a regular peer-to-peer feedback session

III. Requirements for pursuing a Creative Component

- Students should have taken a **minimum of 3 classes** which include creative and/or artistic research methods. This can be practicing arts classes or classes from other fields of the BCB curriculum which include creative approaches. There are exceptions for students who have received a previous degree in practicing art or other related fields.
- ***Please give evidence of your CC qualification in your short research paragraph***

IV. Advising and Assessment

Advising

- Students should choose their CC advisor, although the university reserves the right to assign advisors according to capacity.
- Depending on expertise, the first advisor (Written Component) is able to supervise both components, written and creative.
- CC advisors and student should meet 4-8 times (depending on need) throughout the year for interim showings, feedback session, general advising etc.
- The CC advisor is free to give out assignments and deadlines.
- The CC advisor should be present at their student's colloquium draft presentation (end of first semester) and at the final CC exhibition (end of second semester).

Advisor Combinations for CC students

- Depending on the advisor's expertise, there are three options:

	Written Component advisor (first advisor)	Creative Component advisor	Second reader
1	Person A	Person A	Person B
2	Person A	Person B	Person B (if person B has academic expertise and can assess an academic paper)
3	Person A	Person B	Person C (if person B doesn't have an academic expertise)

Journal

- CC students should keep a regular artistic research journal to be discussed and reviewed by the CC advisor.

Creative Component colloquium

- CC students will join the Creative Component section of the senior thesis colloquium where they will present a first draft (texts, paintings, short performance, audio-pieces, etc.) and discuss their artistic concept. CC advisors are invited to join for the draft presentation.

Assessment

- CC advisors should give two grades at the end of the process:
 - a) Supervision Grade based on all assignments and participation throughout the year.
 - b) Project Grade based on the final body of work.
- Both advisors – Written Component and Creative Components – should agree on a general final thesis project grade.
Grade breakdown for HAST students: 70% Written Component, 30% Creative Component.
Grade breakdown for APS students: 50% Written Component, 50% Creative Component.
- CC advisors should write a final comment on their student's Creative Component and submit it to the registrar.
- CC advisors are not expected to assess the written part of the overall thesis project according to academic criteria (unless they also serve as the second reader). However, it will be important to read the written thesis in order to be able to assess the Creative Component in relation to the overall thesis project.
- The overall grade of the Creative Component is less concerned with the artistic virtuosity of the final outcome but more with the overall concept and its execution. In other words: a work of art that is less convincing in terms of technical skills and precision may receive a good grade if the concept and creative research of the project ties in meaningfully with the general thesis project and if the student's artistic choices are made consciously and convincingly.

V. Practicalities

Budget

- CC students can use their 150 Euro budget for purchasing books for their written component as well as material for their Creative Component (art supplies, props, etc.). Purchases need the advisor's approval. Leftovers and usable remnants will stay on campus after graduation. For reimbursement, please **keep all your receipts** and hand them over to Izabela Westphalen. Please inform Bisera Djundeva about your purchase. Bisera keeps track of all graduating students' 150 Euro budgets.

Studio space

- Some students might need a steady work space to pursue their creative component. The factory building can provide shared studio spaces for CC students.