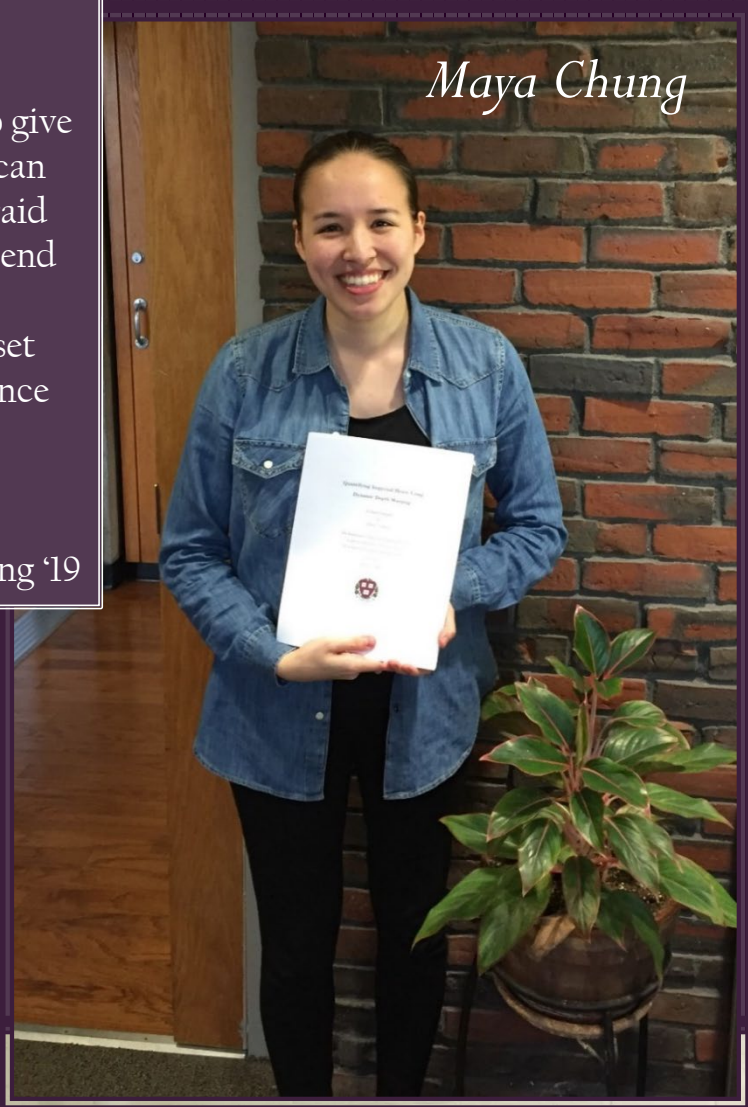




Make sure you're pursuing a topic that you are genuinely interested in, because that will motivate you when the going gets tough. Choose an advisor who has enough time to give you the support you need. The earlier you can start your research, the better. Don't be afraid to search for papers on your own; you will end up being the expert on your topic, and understanding the existing literature will set you up for success. Also, make sure to balance your thesis with spending time with your friends during senior year and just being a college student!

Maya Chung '19



Maya Chung

The biggest piece of advice I have is to set expectations and deadlines with your advisor early. Make sure you know how best to communicate with them (email? Skype? in-person?), and how to get regular feedback from them. Also, allow time for rabbit holes - sometimes you'll spend two weeks trying to figure something out, and then you'll realize there's nothing interesting there (or, conversely, that the rabbit hole is way more interesting than what you were doing before), and that's okay. Find people who you can bounce ideas off of, whether they be other thesis writers, grad students, or friends. If there's a speaker coming to Harvard that works in your field, reach out to them to set up a meeting to share your work and hear about theirs! It's helpful to get new perspectives on your work (although also remember that the most important opinion is that of your advisor). Plus, it's so nice to meet other people who are excited about what you're doing (especially if you're feeling worn down by the thesis-writing process)! Writing a thesis is emotionally/intellectually challenging, but I am so glad that I did one; it's such a great way to determine whether research is something you're interested in, to learn how to build professional academic relationships, and to become closer with people in the EPS community. Good luck!

Rebecca Cleveland Stout '19



Rebecca Cleveland Stout

Find balance purposefully— the process will eat up your time and attention and while dedication and investment are very important during researching and writing, so too is staying in touch with your normal life, especially if research is something rather new for you. Be clear and communicative with your advisor, expect the same in return, and advocate for yourself— you are the one doing the bulk of the work and you know the most about your specific project. Set both small and big goals and celebrate finishing all of them, because they all matter

Molly Wieringa '19

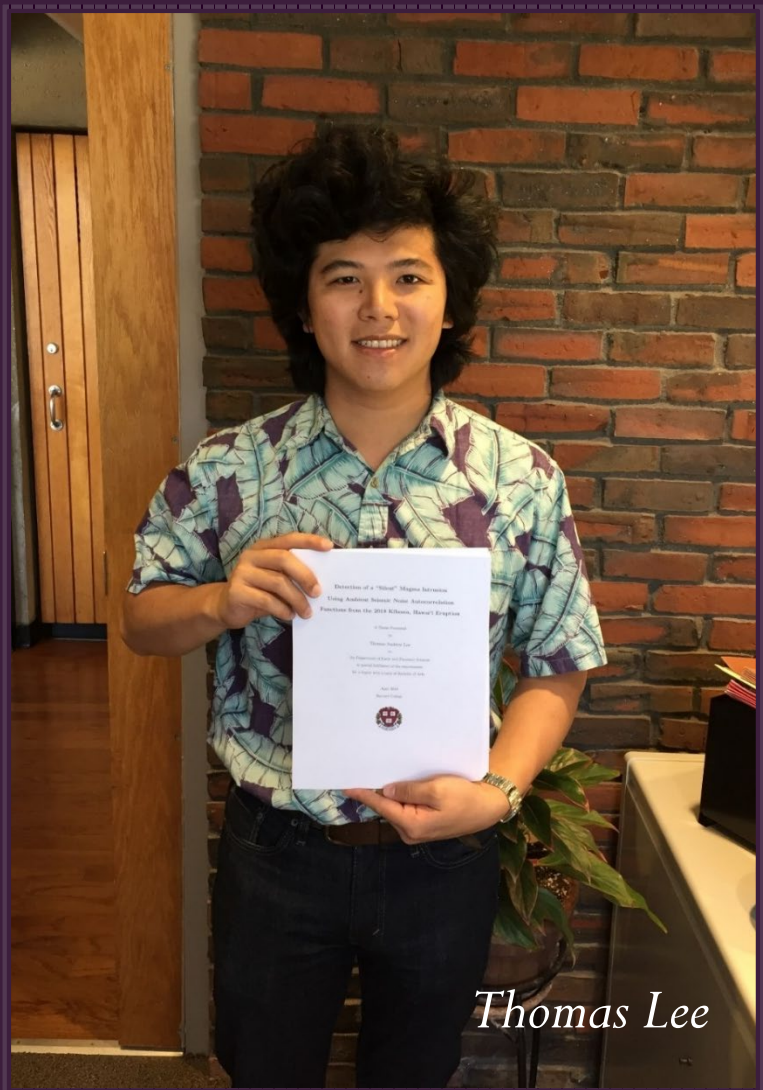
Molly Wieringa



Margaret Powell



SENIOR THESIS CLASS OF 2019



Thomas Lee

Stay organized--it will save you time in the long run. Backup all of your files (in the cloud, on a drive, or both). Check in with your advisor at least once per week, including the first semester. Even if all you have to say is, "here's what I am working on" or "I don't have as much time to do thesis work this week," it will help you stay on track and you'll get better feedback. Tasks will likely take much longer than you first expect them to. Remember to take breaks and find time to blow off steam with your fellow thesis writers. Good luck and have fun!

Margaret Powell '19

Congratulations! If you're reading this you're probably writing a thesis in what is unquestionably the best department at Harvard. Wherever you may be in the thesis writing process, remember there is a light at the end of the tunnel! You'll be immensely relieved and happy when you finish, and eventually, you will finish. To that end, if I had to give some actual tidbit of actual advice, it would be simply to speak often and speak clearly with you advisor, it goes a long way! Also, if you can set your own personal deadlines with your advisor, the earlier the better! I'm not saying deadlines are inevitably missed and delayed, just that it's nice to have the leeway when they are... In any case, hang in there, it'll be done sooner than you think!

Thomas Lee '19

