



Master of Arts Research Paper Requirements
(POSC 6999 — 9 credit hours)
Department of Political Science

Requirements:

The Research Paper is intended to be of a more limited scope than an M.A. thesis. Comparable to an article in an academic journal, the Research Paper should focus on a clearly defined research problem, and should demonstrate both familiarity with the most important relevant scholarly work and an ability to carry out research and organize the results.

- *Note: The Research Paper must clearly apply a theoretical approach in political science to an approved topic.*

The Paper should be presented in an appropriate literary style and use a recognized citation system. It should also include:

- A title page
- An abstract -- a brief (1 page) statement of the problem examined and the major findings or results of the paper.
- A preface page. A preface should include the writer's reasons for undertaking the study, its background, scope, and purpose. Some supervisors may prefer that this material be included in the body of the paper. In this event, the preface may be left out.
- An acknowledgements page. This is the place to acknowledge direct and substantial assistance by people who have helped with the study.

The paper should be between 50 and 70 pages exclusive of appendices, endnotes, bibliography, and other supplementary material (normally resulting in a total word length of between 12,000 and 15,000 words).

Procedures:

1. **Securing a supervisor:** The student must obtain approval for the Research Paper (POSC 6999) from a faculty member who has agreed to serve as their supervisor. This must be completed by the end of the Fall semester. Normally students will have been assigned a supervisor during the admissions process; however, this arrangement should be formalized by the student and faculty member.

- *Note: Students do have the option of changing supervisors.*

2. **Proposal:** Students will be required to complete a Research Paper Proposal which will be submitted to both the student's supervisor and a second faculty member designated to be the project's second reader. This should be completed by the end of the winter semester.

- *Note: The final Research Paper cannot be submitted unless the Research Paper Proposal has been approved with sufficient time to allow the student to incorporate the suggestions provided by the supervisor and second reader.*

3. **Ethics:** All M.A. Research Project Proposals directly involving human subjects must receive a departmental ethics approval. A proposal must be submitted and have received approval in advance of conducting the research. A Research Paper Proposal that includes such research cannot be approved unless accompanied by a statement of ethics approval. As such, this should be completed early in the Winter semester.
4. **Evaluation:** After the Research Paper has been written and revised under the guidance of the supervisor, taking into account the feedback received on the Research Paper Proposal, two copies of the final Research Paper should be submitted to the Graduate Coordinator. This should be done by the end of the third month of the semester in which the student is hoping to complete the program - normally July). The Paper will then be evaluated by the supervisor and the second reader.
 - Grading: Using a form provided by the department, each faculty member evaluating the Paper will submit a written evaluation and a grade to the Graduate Coordinator. The grades received from each faculty member will be recorded individually; however, as the University requires a single grade to be reported, the average of the two grades will be submitted to the Faculty as the final grade for POSC 6999 Master’s Research Paper. If it is felt by either grader that a passing grade is not warranted (the minimum passing grade is a B), the evaluators must specify in writing those revisions necessary for a passing grade.
 - *Note: In the event of a single failing grade, the student may either: resubmit the revised essay to the original evaluators within one month (the revised essay must receive a passing grade from both evaluators); or the student may pursue the relevant university course grade appeals process.*
5. **Final Submission:** Once a passing grade has been received, the student must submit one electronic copy and one hard copy of the final Research Paper, bound in a folder, to the department.
 - *Note: This final, “polished” version of the paper should be free from all spelling or grammatical errors and incorporate any required revisions from the readers. A copy will be kept in the department.*
6. **Public Presentation:** Students resident in St. John’s may be required by their supervisor to present their paper in a department seminar.

Research Paper Stream - suggested program of study for full time students

	<u>Fall Semester</u> (Sept – Dec)	<u>Winter Semester</u> (Jan – Apr)	<u>Spring Semester</u> (May – Aug)
Required Courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6000 • 6010 		
Elective courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One elective (6xxx) course 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two elective (6xxx) courses 	
Research work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Securing a supervisor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GRIP • Research Paper Proposal • Ethics approval (if necessary) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6999 Research Paper - Final version due by end of July
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional courses as required by supervisor 	