

July, 2025

**Length of MA Thesis Proposal:** 6-8 pp., double-spaced; plus, a bibliography of 3-4 pp.

**Length of MA Thesis:** approx. 80 pp. (maximum 100), double-spaced; including works cited

**Submission:** MA proposal should be submitted between May of the student's first year in the program and September of their second year, to the student's advisor with a copy to the GPD. The advisor may request revision and resubmission of the proposal and this is considered as important part of the process of configuring your project.

### **General Guidelines:**

The proposal should identify the topic and outline the general approach or methodology, explaining why this approach has been chosen: why is it appropriate for the topic? what does it illuminate? The proposal should position the topic in relation to current scholarship in the area and include a brief outline of the organization of sections or chapters which suggests how they work to present a connected, unfolding argument. The significance of your argument should be demonstrated: how does it relate to prior scholarly work in this area? how does it contribute to the ongoing critical conversation?

The bibliography should be selective, indicating that preliminary research in the field is already underway. It can be helpful (though not essential) to subdivide the bibliography into sections for primary sources, selected scholarship on these primary sources, and one or two lists of studies related to larger background questions (scholarship on a general problem, cultural-historical writings, etc.). If your work is interdisciplinary, you can demonstrate this more clearly by grouping your sources according to the different fields relevant to your study. For example, a project on 1950s Chinese translation of Cuban poetry may be divided into: 1) primary works (poems and translations) by Cuban and/or Chinese poets, 2) relevant critical studies of these works, 3) general studies of translation theory and 4) intellectual and social histories of the 1950s.

### **Content and Form of Thesis Proposal:**

The thesis proposal should cover the following sections in the order given below. Each section should be separately titled:

- Title: indicate the title, or working title, of the thesis.
- Topic: define and delimit the topic of the research, the fields and the objectives. In this section, you should explain the title and give a brief outline of the idea for the project.
- Literature Review: pose the research question of the thesis according to a brief literature review, demonstrating that what you are doing is new and original. An example of the

structure could be: 1950s Chinese translations of poetry have only recently received scholarly attention (reference, reference, reference). Within these recent studies we can identify several approaches: A (reference, reference, reference), B (reference, reference, reference) and C (reference, reference, reference). Yet, thus far, approach E has not been examined. This project sets forth to rectify this lacuna.

- **Methodology:** Indicate the methodology and/or theoretical approach to be used. This is an essential part of the proposal and should be given ample space. If the proposed research will follow a well-known method, it is sufficient to identify it, along with its proponents. If you intend to develop an original methodology or framework, explain its theoretical bases and justify its application.
- **Bibliography:** compile a preliminary bibliography. This should include titles you have consulted as well as those you will consult during your research. It should consist of at least 10 titles of books and articles.
- **Outline:** provide a preliminary chapter outline with as much precision as possible at this stage of the research.