

APPENDIX 4: MASTER OF ARTS THESIS REQUIREMENTS (POLI 697 and 698)

The Thesis Proposal must be approved in writing, first by the Thesis Supervisor *before submission* and then by the Thesis Committee. The Thesis Supervisor must be a full-time faculty member of the Department.

All M.A. thesis research involving human subjects must receive ethics certification from McGill's REB-1. While certification is not required for submission of the proposal, *certification must be received before any research may be conducted.* For application details please see

<http://www.mcgill.ca/research/researchers/compliance/human>.

The Thesis itself must be passed by both an Internal Examiner (typically the supervisor) and an External Examiner. The External Examiner is appointed by the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

1. DEADLINES FOR M.A. THESIS PROPOSAL AND THESIS SUBMISSION, 2019-2020

It is suggested that the thesis proposal is submitted for review 5 months prior to the initial thesis submission.

Thesis Proposal Submission	Initial Thesis Submission	Final Thesis Submission	Additional Session	Thesis Evaluation	Graduation
5 months prior to initial thesis submission	Apr 16 – Aug 15	Aug 16 – Dec 15	Summer	Fall	February
5 months prior to initial thesis submission	Aug 16 – Dec 15	Dec 16 – Apr 15	Fall	Winter	June
5 months prior to initial thesis submission	Dec 16 – Apr 15	Apr 16 – Aug 15	Winter	Summer	October

For example: October Graduation: Student submits thesis proposal on January 15 and later submits initial thesis on May 15. Final electronic thesis must be submitted and approved by supervisor before August 15. February Graduation: Student submits thesis proposal on June 15 and later submits initial thesis on October 15. Final electronic thesis submission must be submitted and approved by supervisor before December 15.

Initial and Final Thesis Submission in the same term					
Thesis Proposal Submission	Initial Thesis Submission	Final Thesis Submission	Additional Session	Thesis Evaluation	Graduation
5 months prior to initial thesis submission	Apr 16 – Aug 15	Apr 16 – Aug 15	Summer	None	October
5 months prior to initial thesis submission	Aug 16 – Dec 15	Aug 16 – Dec 15	Fall	None	February
5 months prior to initial thesis submission	Dec 16 – Apr 15	Dec 16 – Apr 15	Winter	None	June

NOTE: Should the deadline date fall on a weekend or a holiday, the effective deadline date will be the previous working day.

If you plan to submit your initial and final thesis during the same term, you must submit your initial thesis at the beginning of the suggested time period to guarantee you graduate during the following session.

*Please submit the initial thesis well in advance to the final electronic thesis deadlines (December 15, April 15 and August 15). The external examiner of the initial thesis will be given 4 weeks to grade the initial thesis and there are no guarantees that comments will be returned on time to submit the final thesis before the deadlines. Additionally, students should always register for the following term in case of a failure or missed final thesis deadline.

2. M.A. THESIS PROPOSAL GUIDELINES (POLI 697)

Proposal Submission and Evaluation Procedures:

1) Before submission, the research supervisor must approve the proposal in writing. The student should give the supervisor a complete draft of the proposal far enough in advance of the proposal submission deadline for the supervisor to provide comments and for the student to revise the proposal based on those comments. Once the supervisor finds the proposal acceptable, s/he signs the Thesis Proposal Submission Form. The form is attached below and is also available under Graduate Forms at:

<http://www.mcgill.ca/politicalscience/grad/gradformsdocs/>).

2) The student submits both the signed Thesis Proposal Submission Form and **four copies** of the proposal to the Department's Graduate Coordinator on or before the appropriate proposal submission deadline above.

3) The Graduate Program Director appoints a three-member Thesis Committee to read the proposal. This Thesis Committee normally consists of the supervisor, plus one person from the subfield and one person from outside the subfield. With the agreement of the GPD, one member may be from outside the Department.

4) The Graduate Coordinator distributes the proposal to the Committee for comments and the GPD relays to the student and supervisor any suggestions the Committee may have concerning the proposed research. On the Committee's recommendation, the GPD may ask the student to revise the proposal before approval.

Proposal Format:

The thesis proposal must outline the problem to be studied and the mode of investigation. The proposal should not be more than 15 double-spaced typed pages, excluding the bibliography. To facilitate evaluation of thesis proposals, students are normally expected to follow the format given below:

I. Introduction

- a. The problem or topic to be investigated;
The precise focus of the study;
The relationships or generalizations to be tested or explored.
- b. The status of earlier and current scholarship on the subject;
The proposed contribution of the thesis to knowledge.

II. Methodology

- a. Concepts, approaches, and conceptual frameworks.
- b. Methods – e.g., case selection, surveys, interviewing, statistical methods, etc.

III. Plan of work; accessibility of resources; probable time; travel.

IV. Tentative outline of the proposed thesis

V. Brief bibliography

3. M.A. THESIS GUIDELINES (POLI 698)

The purpose of an M.A. thesis is to demonstrate that the student can design and execute with competence a major piece of research with some originality to it. The scope of an M.A. thesis should be comparable to a full-length article in a scholarly journal. It should deal with a well-defined problem with sufficient review of previous work. It should attempt to build on existing literature either theoretically or empirically, either by original analysis of existing data sources or by introducing some primary source material.

The length might vary with the nature of the topic. A thesis that contains quantitative data analysis might be well developed in 8,000-12,000 words (~30-50 pages), while an institutional or historical study might be longer, up to 15,000 words. Requests to exceed 60 double-spaced pages (excluding bibliography) must be approved by the Graduate Program Director.

The Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies Office maintains Thesis Guidelines on their website. All students in the M.A. thesis program should familiarize themselves with the procedures for preparing and submitting the thesis. The latest Thesis Guidelines are here: <https://www.mcgill.ca/gps/thesis/thesis-guidelines> .



McGill University

Department of Political Science

Thesis Proposal Submission Approval (POLI 697)

Date: _____

Last name: _____

First name: _____

Student #: _____

POLI 697 - CRN #: _____

Year taken: _____

Term taken: Fall Winter Summer (check one)

I hereby approve submission of the enclosed thesis proposal:

TITLE: _____

-

SIGNATURE: _____
(Supervisor)

Suggested readers (filled out by your Supervisor)

1) _____

2) _____