

MASTER'S PROJECT PROPOSAL

GOVT 798 – three credits

Course Description: As the final requirement in the master's degree in political science, students complete a substantial research project to demonstrate the ability to conduct original, independent research. This goal can be achieved in by completing a project paper in GOVT 798 or a thesis in GOVT 799. In almost all cases, we recommend that students take GOVT 798 to fulfill this requirement. The length of the final product will normally be 25-40 pages. The research project paper should build on a research paper completed for a course in the student's area of concentration and should be completed over the course of one semester.

Submitting a Project Proposal: Before the student can submit a proposal and register for GOVT 798, a sponsoring faculty member from the Schar School must be identified. The student must present a proposal to his or her sponsoring faculty member that outlines how the student plans to execute the project, including theory, method, selected sources, and data. Guidelines for this submission are below. Students will not be permitted to enroll in GOVT 798 until their proposal is signed by the faculty member.

Once the proposal is approved by the faculty member, the student submits the proposal and signature to the MA Political Science academic advisor, who will work with the Registrar to add the course to the student's schedule. We suggest that the approval process take place the semester before the student begins the project work, but in any case, it must be completed before the deadline for the last day to add courses for that term.

Recommended Project Timeline: You will set the timeline for your own project, but the following basic timeline is suggested to help you set intermediate deadlines. Some projects will require longer timeframes and periods of preparation, particularly projects involving surveys, field work, and/or needing human subjects review. Please plan accordingly.

- *No later than Third Week of Classes:* Confer with Faculty advisor and submit Abstract and Outline of Project Paper.
- *Third to 10th Week of Classes:* Meet as needed (usually every 2 weeks) with faculty Advisor to confer on progress of research project and research issues that arise.
- *End of 10th Week of Classes:* A first draft of research project submitted to faculty advisor for review.
- *Last week of classes:* Submission of final project to Faculty Advisor for grading; a second copy should also be submitted to the MA Political Science academic advisor for retention.

Checklist for Project Approval and Registration:

- Meet with the academic advisor for MA Political Science to ensure that you are prepared to graduate at the end of the subsequent semester.
- Choose a topic and identify a faculty member who may be able to support that topic within the Schar School of Policy and Government.
- Develop a 2-3 page project proposal for faculty sponsor approval. The proposal should include:
 - Description of the topic to be covered.

