

Graduate Program in Hispanic Studies

Section 2: Major Research Paper (MRP) Proposal

During the second term, the MA student will be required to draft a proposal for the Major Research Paper (MRP). As a final assignment of *SP 9505 A Information and Research Methods*, the student will hand the MRP pre-proposal, where the potential supervisor is identified (see section 1). As part of SP 9505, the instructor will provide advice about the formal structure of the MRP proposal. Guidance about the content of the MRP (including valid research questions, argument design, and bibliography) will be provided by the student's supervisor. The supervisor must be a member of the core faculty in Hispanic Studies.

The principal aim of the proposal for the MRP is to articulate and refine the research questions so that an argument can emerge from the student's working hypotheses, which can later be confirmed, modified or replaced in light of the evidence collected during the research process.

The MRP proposal should be handed to the Graduate chair with the supervisor's approval by April 1. The proposal for the MRP should contain the following sections, and not exceed 8 pages, double-spaced:

1. Introduction: defining the topic within the field
2. Literature Review: charting previous scholarship on the topic
3. Research Questions: establishing the originality of the MRP project
4. Theoretical framework: analysis of the main theoretical concepts in relation to topic
5. Methodological Approach: outlining the specific ways in which the materials will be chosen and analyzed
6. Argument Overview: structuring the argument across 2-3 sections
7. Bibliography: listing the main primary and secondary sources
8. Tentative Calendar: timeline showing how the student will proceed to the actual necessary research, data collecting, analysis and writing of the MRP. It is expected that most of this will happen over the Summer term.
** The calendar must be formally approved by the supervisor and might need to be adjusted to take into account the supervisor's academic and/ or personal commitment/s during the Summer term. **
9. Status of Ethics Approval: if you plan to work with human subjects (even if this only involves interviews) you must provide a statement regarding the status of your ethics application.

NOTE: The MRP proposal is not an actual excerpt from the MRP. It is an informative document designed to convince the supervisor and members of the Graduate Committee (1) that the MRP project is feasible in the allowed time; (2) that the structure of the argument is logical; and

(3) that the MA candidate is prepared to produce a solid work of scholarship in the chosen field.

Though a high degree of originality is not required for a competently researched and solidly argued MRP at the MA level, the student is expected to produce a coherently reasoned and clearly expressed argument guided by the research questions formulated in the proposal. Editorial care should be taken to ensure that the MRP is written with grammatical precision, orthographic consistency, and correct punctuation either in English or Spanish.

The MRP should follow the guidelines of the latest edition of either the APA or MLA Style for citation, depending on your field. The length of the Major Research Paper is approximately 40-60 pages (double-spaced), including the bibliography and other appendices.