

CRITERIA AND GUIDELINES FOR THE MLA CAPSTONE PROJECT

TRADITIONAL RESEARCH THESIS PROJECT

The traditional research thesis is in the range of 50 pages of text. It is grounded in the scholarly literature that is connected to the topic, and for the MLA should bring together work in at least two disciplines. Project evaluators will be looking for evidence of at least the following:

- That the student has demonstrated the ability to plan and conduct research appropriate to the project.
- That the student has reviewed, understood and synthesized the current and/or relevant literature appropriate to the project.
- That the student has adopted a critical, perceptive and constructive approach to her/his work and the work of others.
- That the student has honed her/his skills in academic writing and has produced a work that is at least potentially publishable in some appropriate format.
- That the work is driven by a clearly formulated thesis and supported by relevant data, evidence and/or analysis.
- That the work expresses clear conclusions and that these follow clearly from the thesis and support offered in the work.
- That the work is professionally prepared in accordance with the established conventions accepted by the program (the Turabian or Chicago style manual), and is free of errors.

NON-TRADITIONAL AND/OR CREATIVE PROJECT

The non-traditional master's project should be designed with the student's strengths in mind as well as their interests. Examples of projects successfully completed in the past include video documentary, sculpture installation, and creative writing. Students who choose this option will need to provide a written statement of intention which clearly lays out the research question/s of the project and shows how the methods used successfully respond to those questions (usually 10-20 pages of text). Students must have the appropriate academic and/or other background to ensure that they are capable of producing quality work: those who do not have appropriate skill levels will either need to take the time to procure the skills, or re-design their project. Project evaluators will be looking for evidence of at least the following:

- That the student demonstrates a professional level of familiarity with and understanding of contemporary work in the field.
- That the student demonstrates a sufficiently comprehensive investigation of the creative form and content.
- That the methods and techniques used in the work are appropriate to the subject matter and are aesthetically effective.
- That the student demonstrates a sufficiently high standard of quality in her/his chosen methods and techniques.
- That the student has clearly identified a research question/program in the work, and has articulated that clearly in the accompanying statement.
- That there is an appropriate and substantiated interface between the work and the accompanying statement
- That the work is presented in a sufficiently professional and appropriate manner.