

Master of Arts in Liberal Studies Program

Proposal for Thesis or Project

The proposal for a thesis or project must follow the outline below. There are no minimum or maximum requirements for the length of any section, but every heading must be addressed. In consultation with your advisor and the second reader, you should tell the MALS Faculty Advisory Committee what it needs to know in order to understand not only the topic of your proposed project, but also the methodologies and research sources you propose to use. Bear in mind that the thesis or project must entail some original contribution on your part; it cannot consist solely of a summary of information that is already in print. Both the advisor and the second reader must approve the proposal before it is submitted to the MALS Faculty Advisory Committee.

It is understood that as the work moves forward, changes may have to be made if new ideas or information become available or if some aspect of the research does not turn out as expected. The purpose of the proposal is to demonstrate that your proposed thesis or project is well-conceived, well-planned, and feasible. Students are not bound to every detail of the proposal from that point onward.

Required sections:

- Title
- Student's name
- Advisor's name and department
- Second reader's name and department
- Summary of the topic
- Explanation of the significance of the topic
- Explanation of the ways in which the topic is interdisciplinary
- Proposed procedures
 - Note: If the proposed procedures involve interviews, surveys, or other methodologies that entail interpersonal interactions, it is necessary to include a statement that the student plans to submit the plan to a review by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) to insure compliance with regulations regarding human subjects in research. Information about these reviews is available at <http://www.udel.edu/research/preparing/humansub.html>. Although the Institutional Review Board may determine that its approval is not necessary for the work the student plans to do, that is the Board's decision and not that of the researcher. **The IRB review itself should be done after the proposal is approved.**
- Proposed timeline
- Additional information (optional)
- Preliminary bibliography

No later than two weeks after receiving the proposal, the MALS director will notify the advisor and the student of any concerns expressed by the Faculty Advisory Committee. The Faculty Advisory Committee may give their approval, request an agreement that particular changes will be made, or require a fully revised proposal.