

CARLETON UNIVERSITY  
ARTHUR KROEGER COLLEGE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS  
PAPM 4908 HONOURS RESEARCH ESSAY

**GUIDELINES FOR SUPERVISORS**

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Thank you for agreeing to supervise a fourth-year BPAPM student! Our students cannot complete their Honours Research Essays (HREs) without your time and dedication. We are grateful for your service.

The HRE has the course code PAPM 4908 Honours Research Essay.

There are two parts to the assessment of the HRE:

**The proposal (graded by the supervisor)**

Worth 10% of the final grade

The date for student to submit the proposal to the supervisor can be found [here](#). The date for grade to be submitted to [BPAPM@carleton.ca](mailto:BPAPM@carleton.ca) can be found [here](#).

**The HRE (graded by the supervisor and a second reader, who is chosen and contacted by the supervisor)**

Worth 90% of the final grade

The date for student to submit the final HRE to the supervisor and date for grade to be submitted to BPAPM can be found [here](#).

If, after your initial discussion with the student, you agree to supervise a project in the area discussed, then please respond to the email that will be sent by the BPAPM regarding your consent to supervise a BPAPM student.

## RESEARCH PROPOSAL

The proposal is to be 5 to 10 double-spaced typed pages and should include the following elements:

1. Introduction
  - Describes the topic area, and explain why research is necessary in this area (e.g. the gaps in existing research, the importance of the policy implications, the groups that could benefit).
2. Research question
  - States the central question to be explored in the HRE.
3. Literature Review
  - Reviews a minimum of 5 to 8 examples of research in the topic area - their theses, theoretical perspectives, arguments, treatment of the issues - indicate the limitations or gaps within this literature, and how the essay will attempt to overcome these.
4. Theoretical Framework
  - Specifies the set of assumptions and concepts to be used in supporting the thesis, and the reasons for adopting them. These assumptions may be ones that have been previously established in the literature or in policy analysis more generally (e.g. class analysis, public choice, incrementalism, corporatism), or they may be ones that have been devised or adapted for this particular study.
5. Methods & Sources of Evidence
  - Specifies the methods used in answering your question. Will the research be primarily drawn from secondary sources (e.g. literature on your topic), or primary sources? If the latter, what methods will be used? Will qualitative or quantitative methods be used? Will the student do a case study, interviews, surveys? How will their sources of evidence, and the methods used, help to answer the research question? Considers issues of access to data. If doing interviews or working with research participants, must go through the Research Ethics Board.
6. Bibliography
  - Cites the primary and secondary sources that have been consulted (including those mentioned under headings 4 and 5 above), as well as those that are expected to be consulted.
7. Work Schedule (to be drafted in consultation with the supervisor)
  - Confirms the agreed-upon frequency of future meetings, and the dates by which various stages of your work are to be completed (e.g. finish literature survey, collect data, conduct interviews, write preliminary

portions of the essay, submit these, have them returned with the supervisor's comments, revise and resubmit).

Please record the mark (out of 10) for the research proposal on the [Proposal Grade Report](#) (brief comments may be attached), and return it to the Program Administrator at [bpapm@carleton.ca](mailto:bpapm@carleton.ca) before the [deadline](#). The completed report form may be scanned and submitted electronically at this email address. Alternatively, a hard copy can be left in person at the College.

### CONTENT AND FORMAT

The students are expected to demonstrate a good grasp of the issues in contention, an appreciation of the policy dimensions, and in building their arguments, competently coordinate and synthesize perspective and information. Ideally the HRE will involve some primary research, in the form of, for example, interviews with policy actors; analysis of government documents; or statistical analysis. In some cases, however, primary research will not be possible and the student will rely on an analysis of the secondary literature.

The general expectation is that the student demonstrates his/her ability to conduct independent policy relevant research and their intervention reflects a degree of maturity or professionalism that demonstrates promise for graduate level work or public service. **The length of the essay will depend upon the chosen topic area, thesis and framework, but it is normally in the range of 35 to 50 double-spaced pages.** the HRE should not exceed 60 pages.

Confirm with the student the format for footnotes and bibliographical structure that you prefer. They understand that the final draft of the essay must be carefully proofread, that the style and clarity of writing will be taken into account in the determination of a grade, and that errors in fact, spelling or grammar may result in the essay not being accepted as written. You might suggest that they consult writing manuals such as: *The Elements of Style* by William Strunk Jr. and E.B. White; *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations* by Kate Turabian; or *The Broadview Guide to Writing* by Doug Babington and Don LePan.

We request submission of an electronic copy of the final version of the HRE (as PDF or MS Word file) to the College. You may request either an electronic or paper copy of your student's final submission. The essay should be typed and double-spaced using 12-character-per-inch font, with margins of not less than 3 cm. at the top, bottom and sides of the page. All pages must be numbered, with the exception of the first page. The final version of the HRE should include a table of contents page and a title page.

### SUBMISSION OF THE ESSAY

One electronic copy of the HRE is submitted to you, and another to the second reader. Once the essay has been graded and any final revisions made, a third copy must be submitted to [BPAPM@carleton.ca](mailto:BPAPM@carleton.ca)

## DEADLINES

Students who have applied to graduate immediately after the term in which they are registered are to submit their essay by the last day for submitting term assignments, as described under The Academic Year in the Undergraduate Calendar.

***All dates and deadlines related to HRE can be found here:***

<https://carleton.ca/bpapm/about-b-papm/honours-research-essay-papm-4908/>

## EVALUATION

Before the student submits the final essay, please contact a second reader, who will also assess the HRE. Once the student has submitted it, you and the second reader will reach agreement on the grade for the essay. The second reader is not expected to provide comments on the HRE; however, he or she may wish to do so.

In the unlikely event that you and the second reader are unable to agree on a grade, please contact the Program Director, Lisa Mills.

The signature of the supervisor and the final grade are to be recorded on the “[Honours Research Essay Grade Report](#).” A scanned version of the report can be submitted electronically by email [BPAPM@carleton.ca](mailto:BPAPM@carleton.ca), (or delivered in hard copy to D199 Loeb Building) indicating ‘in confidence HRE Grade’ along with the student’s name and student number on the subject line.