**MA Major Research Guidelines for NPSIA Students**

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**A Major Research Essay (MRE) is a 1.0 credit option for MA students at NPSIA**

**Proposal Process:**

Students wishing to pursue an MRE must identify a Supervisor and complete a proposal in Winter of their first year of study. Information about the proposal process is provided to first year MA students in the fall semester.

Proposals are approved jointly by the Proposed Supervisor and MA Associate Director.

Once approved, students must register in the MRE course continuously until it is completed, per Article 8.2 of FGPA regulations.

**Supervision:**

MREs are supervised by a Supervisory Team consisting of a Supervisor and an Advisor.

**Supervisors must be NPSIA faculty members.** Students are responsible for identifying a Supervisor and seeking their approval to supervise.

**Advisors** should be identified in consultation with the Supervisor. They are individuals who are recognized experts in the subject area and can be any of the following:

* Faculty members at NPSIA, other relevant departments at Carleton, or another university;
* NPSIA fellows or senior fellows or adjunct professors;
* Government officials such as analysts, diplomats in any department or agency relevant to the work;
* Staff at non-governmental organizations or think tanks.
* A retired person or expert outside of the above list who is identified in consultation with the Supervisor.

Students are strongly encouraged to finalize their choice of Advisor early in the process to maximize the benefits of their input and advice.

**MRE Length:**

The maximum MRE word limit is 15,000 words, which is approximately 60 pages. This word limit applies to the entire text, and includes bibliography and any appendices. Students wishing to submit longer papers must receive permission from their Supervisory team.

**Deadlines:**

There are three MRE deadlines each year:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Submission Date  | April 1 | August 1 | December 1 |

**Formatting:**

Formatting requirements should be discussed with your Supervisor. These are typically less strict than for theses. However, if helpful, information about MA theses requirements can be found here: [**https://gradstudents.carleton.ca/thesis-requirements/formatting-guidelines/**](https://gradstudents.carleton.ca/thesis-requirements/formatting-guidelines/)

**Evaluation:**

MREs are evaluated jointly by the Supervisor and Advisor.

When a research essay is completed to the satisfaction of the Supervisor and Advisor, it is then submitted to both for evaluation.\* There are three submission deadlines each year:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Submission Date  | April 1 | August 1 | December 1 |

**Grading:**

Supervisor and Advisor each review and evaluate the essay. Together, they will arrive at a jointly approved grade as per the normal NPSIA grading system. A minimum grade of B- is needed to pass.

**After grading:**

The Supervisor and Advisor convey to the student the agreed grade, specifying any revisions required.

The Supervisor must certify that all revisions/corrections have been completed satisfactorily and the final grade submitted to the MA Associate Director prior to regular FGPA grading deadlines.

\* A student may insist on submitting a research essay which the Supervisor and Advisor have deemed is not ready for evaluation. In that case, the Supervisor and Advisor will evaluate the paper according to standard procedures.