

## Guidelines for Students – Fall/Winter 2026-2027

Undergraduate Supervisor:

Dr. Mira Sucharov

Email: [MiraSucharov@CUNET.CARLETON.CA](mailto:MiraSucharov@CUNET.CARLETON.CA)

Undergraduate Advisor: Sarah Landry

Office: B640 Loeb

Telephone: 613-520-2600 x 2776

Email: [psci.advising@carleton.ca](mailto:psci.advising@carleton.ca)

### OVERVIEW

The Honour's Research Essay is based on an individual research project that is completed under the supervision of a faculty member in the Department. Prerequisites for enrolling in the HRE are: fourth-year Honours standing in Political Science with a Political Science CGPA of 9.00 (B+) or better, or permission of the Supervisor of Undergraduate Studies. As part of the agreement with their HRE supervisor, students have obligations to maintain regular communication with their supervisor concerning a schedule of work and meet agreed-upon deadlines. In the absence of regular communication, the supervisor may conclude that the student is not upholding their part of the agreement and terminate their supervision.

Students must adhere to and complete each of the following requirements by the listed dates in order to receive a final grade. Failure to meet the deadlines below and other commitments (i.e., scheduled meetings between the student and supervisor) may be regarded as voiding the student/supervisor agreement for the Honours Essay.

| Date               | Element                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| September 21, 2026 | A supervision consent form signed by the HRE supervisor must be submitted to the Undergraduate Administrator in B640 Loeb or to <a href="mailto:psci.advising@carleton.ca">psci.advising@carleton.ca</a>                              |
| November 6, 2026   | A detailed proposal and work plan, along with a proposal approval form signed by both student and supervisor and must be uploaded on Brightspace.                                                                                     |
| January 11, 2027   | A progress report, signed by both student and supervisor, must be uploaded on Brightspace. This progress report is normally based on the draft chapters that have been completed to date and have been discussed with the supervisor. |
| April 9, 2027      | The final essay must be uploaded on Brightspace AND submitted to both the supervisor and second reader. The HRE supervisor must submit a final grade report, co-signed by the second reader, to the Undergraduate Administrator.      |

### SELECTION OF HRE SUPERVISOR

Students are responsible for finding an HRE supervisor. Supervisors should be full-time faculty members in the department of Political Science. In some cases, faculty from other departments or adjunct research professors within Political Science may be appropriate supervisors. Students should discuss these arrangements with the Undergraduate Supervisor in advance. The HRE supervisor or the Undergraduate Supervisor will approve a second faculty member (from either Political Science or another discipline) as a second reader for the essay. In exceptional cases, the Undergraduate Supervisor may approve qualified faculty from other departments as essay supervisors. In such cases, the second reader must be a faculty member of the Department of Political Science. Contract instructors or graduate students cannot be essay supervisors.

Faculty members accept a small number of students for supervision, so students are strongly advised to approach potential supervisors well in advance (2-3 months) of registering for PSCI 4908. Potential supervisors are more likely to respond favourably to a supervision request if students can demonstrate initiative and the ability to work independently. An effective way to do this is for students to prepare a 2- to 3-page preliminary proposal for the HRE based on initial research. The proposal should identify a concrete topic or idea for the HRE and be clear, concise, and well-drafted (see more on this below, in Selection of an Essay Topic). Essay topics that connect with the academic interests and expertise of potential supervisors will also increase the likelihood of a favourable response.

Once a faculty member agrees to supervise a student, the student must submit a signed Supervision Consent Form to the Undergraduate Advisor ([psci.advising@carleton.ca](mailto:psci.advising@carleton.ca)), **no later than September 21, 2026**.

## SELECTION OF AN ESSAY TOPIC

Preparations for undertaking the HRE should be made throughout a student's first three years of undergraduate coursework, such as in essay assignments, readings, conversations with instructors, and related experiences, becoming more focused towards the end of the third year. By this time, students should have identified a topic for the HRE. Each year the Department hosts an HRE information session for Third Year Honours students to discuss expectations for completing the credit and address students' questions. Research help and resources to get you started are available through [MacOdrum Library](#).

A preliminary proposal prepared for approaching potential supervisors may also serve as the first version of a more detailed proposal and work plan. A preliminary proposal should include:

1. A clear statement of the topic and 2-3 key question(s) or issues to be addressed in the essay.
2. Two to three paragraphs explaining the relevance of the topic to the student's studies, its broader significance or importance, the theoretical approach that will be used to study it, and an overview of the methodology that will be used for the research.
3. A short bibliography of three to five key sources.
4. A title and tentative table of contents indicating chapter titles/major headings for the essay.

## REGISTRATION AND RE-REGISTRATION

Prior to Carleton Central registration in PSCI 4908A, students must complete the Supervisor Consent Form and have it signed by the faculty member who will supervise the HRE. The completed form must be returned to the Undergraduate Advisor ([PSCI.Advising@carleton.ca](mailto:PSCI.Advising@carleton.ca)), **no later than September 21, 2026**. Registration in PSCI 4908A is subject to the approval of the Undergraduate Supervisor, and students cannot register until the Supervisor Consent Form is submitted and this approval process has been completed. PSCI 4908A is a full-credit (1.0) course so students must register in both the fall and winter terms. **The last day to register for a full year course is September 22, 2026.**

Unlike other undergraduate courses, students may re-register in the HRE for an additional term if they require extra time to complete the essay (as per the [University's Registration Information](#)). If the HRE is incomplete by April 8, 2026, students may re-register for either Summer 2026 or Fall 2026 term, with the agreement and written approval of their HRE Supervisor. If the HRE is not completed by the end of the extension term, a grade of F will be assigned.

Note that students who are not registered are not eligible for supervision or library privileges, may not submit an Honours essay for grading, and may not graduate. Registration and re-registration must be completed no later than the last day for registration in the session.

A full-credit fee is charged for the first registration, and an additional half-credit fee is charged for re-registration. Students may withdraw from the Honours Essay up to the last date for **academic withdrawal from full year fall/winter courses, which is January 31, 2027**.

## PROPOSAL AND WORKPLAN

Students must submit a formal research proposal (5-10 pages, double-spaced, in length) to the HRE Supervisor, who must sign off on the proposal using the Proposal Approval Form. Both the proposal and the signed Approval Form must

be uploaded in Brightspace no later than **November 6, 2026**. The proposal should reflect meaningful work on the research question, including a literature review and methodology to be used in collecting information for the HRE. It should also include a realistic work plan, with mutually agreed-upon targets for various stages of work, and a schedule of planned meetings between the student and supervisor. Finally, the proposal should be detailed as this document will serve as a contract between you and your supervisor.

The elements to include in the proposal are:

1. Introduction

Describes the topic area and explains 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. 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 study.

4. Sources of Evidence

Indicates the types of evidence to be consulted in defending the thesis (e.g., analysis of existing scholarship, historical or current case studies, polls, interviews, speeches).

5. Literature Review

Reviews 3 to 5 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.

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. Proposed Work Schedule (final version to be drafted in consultation with the supervisor)

Confirms the agreed-upon frequency of future meetings, and the dates by which various stages of the work are to be completed (e.g., finish literature survey, collect data, conduct interviews, write and submit preliminary portions of the essay, etc.).

## FINAL ESSAY

### Deadlines

The final HRE is due on the last day of winter term classes, **April 9, 2027**. If the Honours Essay is not submitted by this deadline, a grade notation of IP (In Progress) will be assigned for those students eligible to re-register. A grade of F will be assigned for those students who are not eligible to re-register.

### Content and Format

Style and clarity of writing is essential for high-quality work. A poorly written essay, irrespective of its substance, is not acceptable. Errors in grammar, spelling, format, and/or facts will detract from the final grade. Students are encouraged to consult writing style guides and resources available at [MacOdrum Library](#) and [Writing Services](#) at the Centre for Student Academic Support. Students should confer with their HRE supervisor before finalizing the essay structure and preferred citation format. Citations and sources must follow a standard citation format (such as APA or Chicago) and

must include a complete bibliography. As a rough guide, an Honours Essay should be between 12,000 and 15,000 words. The final HRE essay must be formatted using standard 12-point font and double spaced.

The title page of the HRE should include the following information:

|                                                                                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Essay Title<br>by Author                                                                                                                              |
| A research essay submitted<br>in fulfillment of the<br>requirements for PSCI 4908<br>as credit towards the degree of<br>Bachelor of Arts with Honours |
| Essay Supervisor's Name, Department                                                                                                                   |
| Second Reader's Name, Department                                                                                                                      |
| Department of Political Science<br>Carleton University<br>Ottawa, Canada                                                                              |
| DATE                                                                                                                                                  |

#### Submission of Work

Students must submit their HRE in Word or PDF format by e-mail directly to the HRE supervisor and second reader, *and* also upload a copy to Brightspace, both no later than **April 9, 2027**.

#### Evaluation

The final grade for the HRE will be awarded after a process of joint evaluation of the manuscript by the HRE supervisor and second reader. *The minimum grade necessary to satisfy the PSCI 4908 requirement is B minus*. The HRE supervisor must submit a Final Grade Report, co-signed by the second reader, to the Undergraduate Advisor **no later than April 19, 2027**.

#### GRADUATION

To be considered for graduation, students must apply ON-LINE via the Registrar's Office webpage by the following deadlines:

|                               |             |
|-------------------------------|-------------|
| Fall Graduation (November):   | September 1 |
| Winter Graduation (February): | December 1  |
| Spring Graduation (June):     | April 1     |

Convocation for ALL graduation dates is held in June



**Carleton**  
University

Department of  
Political Science

**PSCI 4908A HONOURS RESEARCH ESSAY  
CONSENT TO SUPERVISE**

Student Name

Student Number

Student C-Mail

Proposed HRE Topic:

Supervisor's Name

Academic Position & Academic Unit

Carleton Email

Carleton Telephone & Extension

Supervisor's Signature

Student's Signature

Date

*Please return this form to the Undergraduate Administrator in Loeb B640 or to [psci.advising@carleton.ca](mailto:psci.advising@carleton.ca) no later than one week before the last day of registration for the term. Consult the [academic calendar](#) for specific dates for each term.*

(For office use) Banner registration created by:

Date: