

# **Master of Journalism**

School of Journalism and Communication



## **MASTER'S RESEARCH PROJECT**

### **Format and Guidelines**

**Carleton University  
Ottawa, Ontario**

**2018-19 Academic Year**

## CONTENTS

**The Master’s Research Project – Introduction – p. 3**

**The Master’s Research Project – Types – p. 4**

**The Master’s Research Project – Standards and Process**

**I. Essential components of Public Affairs Journalism MRPs – pp. 4-6**

1. Reporting and Research
2. Critical Analysis
3. Presentation
4. Connection to the Audience

**II. Grading criteria for all styles of MRPs – p. 6-7**

1. Oral Examination
2. Measures of Assessment
3. Length and Format for Submission

**III. Common required elements of all styles of MRPs – p. 7**

**IV. Deadlines and submission details for all styles of MRPs – pp. 7-9**

**V. The process for the MRP proposal and submission of examination copy – pp. 10-11**

**VI. The process for the MRP examination and final MRP submission – pp. 12-14**

### **Appendices**

*Appendix A: Additional details about Text-based MRPs (Public Affairs Journalism) – p. 15*

*Appendix B: Additional details about Video MRPs (Public Affairs Journalism) – p. 16*

*Appendix C: Additional details about Audio MRPs (Public Affairs Journalism) – p. 17*

*Appendix D: Additional details about Multimedia MRPs (Public Affairs Journalism) – p. 18*

*Appendix E: Length and format of all other MRPs – p. 19-20*

*Appendix F: MRP Title Page Template – p. 21*

*Appendix G: Student and Adviser responsibilities – pp. 22-23*

*Appendix H: Financial support for MRP research and travel – p. 24*

## **The Master's Research Project – Introduction**

The Master's Research Project (MRP) is described in the graduate calendar as follows:

The student will complete a substantial piece of public affairs journalism or a research project on the media or a document that makes a major contribution to journalism education.

The MRP – JOUR 5908 – is the final test of your abilities as a journalist and/or scholar. The subject matter, the focus and the effort involved in an MRP should represent a challenge – one that you approach with energy and enthusiasm.

This is the single most sustained piece of research and reporting you will undertake in the program, and you will set your own pace of work. It means you should choose a project you are genuinely interested in and passionate about.

Your MRP is worth one full credit and should therefore account for one-fifth of your workload in the second year of the MJ program. Although it is not course-based, deadlines for MRP examination must be met without exception.

Everyone preparing for an MRP will complete JOUR 5706 Professional Practices in the first year. The course helps you identify a topic, prepare the first draft of your proposal, and decide the format of your MRP (text-based, video documentary, audio/radio documentary or multimedia website).

While we encourage passion for your MRP subject matter, we also counsel pragmatism. It may be tempting to combine MRP work with international travel opportunities, but such projects can be difficult, logistically and financially.

You don't need to wander far from home to find a great idea. Some of the strongest MRPs are rooted in events and issues that emerge out of Canadian communities.

## **The Master's Research Project – Types**

There are four types of MRPs: a sustained work of public affairs journalism; a research project on the media and its practices; a major contribution to journalism education; and, a major contribution to journalism technology.

**Public Affairs Journalism:** The subject should be one of current public interest and importance. In general, the work will be assessed according to professional standards for thoughtful, thorough and analytical journalism. An elaboration of these standards is provided below.

**Research Project on the Media:** The subject should be a critical examination of an aspect of media practice. In general, the work will be assessed according to professional and academic standards for thoughtful, thorough and analytical work suitable for wide audience.

**Major Contribution to Journalism Education:** The subject should be a critical and prescriptive examination of the practice of journalism that will serve as a tool for teaching. In general, the work will be assessed according to professional and academic standards for thoughtful, thorough and analytical/prescriptive work suitable for a select audience.

**Major Contribution to Journalism Technology:** The technology that is developed should be the result of a critical examination of some aspect of news gathering, reporting, editing, producing, publishing and/or distribution. In general, the work will be assessed according to professional standards for thoughtful, thorough and analytical/prescriptive work suitable for a select audience.

## **The Master's Research Project – Standards and Process**

### **I. Essential components of Public Affairs Journalism MRPs**

#### **1. Reporting and Research**

Great reporting is the foundation of effective journalism. We want to encourage and reward it.

How you find sources, marshal evidence and develop your main focus through facts, figures, and interviews ensures the work is credible and authoritative. But the reporting must go beyond getting the facts and identifying the relevant arguments. It must equip you to convey your information and analysis clearly and compellingly. Where appropriate to your subject and narrative style, an important part of your reporting may be finding rich characters and vivid scenes – getting out into the field in order to immerse yourself in the world you want your readers, listeners or viewers to explore with you.

## **2. Critical Analysis**

Your MRP should go beyond documenting what is happening in order to examine what it means and why it matters. We are interested not only in the who, what, when and where, but also in the how and the why.

A successful MRP must demonstrate a deep knowledge and understanding of the subject matter. It must show a desire to probe beneath the surface and an ability to raise and address thoughtful questions. It should leave the audience able to grasp clearly what is important in the situation, where it is likely to go next, and what those involved in it can – and perhaps should – now do.

Your MRP should address questions that would naturally arise in the mind of an interested general reader, listener or viewer. But in doing so, it must not distort technical information or misrepresent debates among experts.

## **3. Presentation**

The way you convey your information is crucial to engage your audience, sustain its interest, touch emotions and enrich understanding. Even great reporting combined with thoughtful analysis is not always enough to result in an effective piece of journalism, especially when it is a major project such as an MRP.

Most often this means bringing readers into the world you are exploring through the art of storytelling – allowing your audience to see it themselves rather than just informing them about it. Even a highly technical subject may be enlivened with interesting characters and scenes. Indeed, the more demanding the underlying intellectual material, the more important it is to convey that material compellingly. And these principles hold whether the story is being conveyed in a primarily textual form or via video, audio or the combination of components as required for a multimedia MRP.

The quality of what you produce – a distinctiveness of style – matters. Writing must rise above the pedestrian, whether presented in an extended textual narrative, recorded script, photo cutlines or other forms. It must be free of cliché and jargon and the language of the bureaucracy. It must have authority, clarity and accessibility. Quotations must be telling and pointed, not simply decorative. The purpose is to break down complexity and to engage the reader, listener, viewer or online audience. The good writing that underlies almost every worthwhile piece of journalism is key to a successful MRP.

## **4. Connection to the audience**

An MRP may deal with a foreign or little-known topic, but the execution of the project must be made with the reader, listener, viewer or online audience in mind. This does not mean making strained relationships to “Canadianize” or “localize” stories. But it does mean considering how the subject can be made interesting, relevant or significant to a Canadian audience.

Your MRP must capture and hold the interest of your audience, shedding light on the specific issue as well as making clear how it may touch their lives, their consciences, their emotions, or their knowledge of the world. At the end of the story, audience members should feel they now understand their world – perhaps some “larger truth” about it – better than before.

## **II. Grading criteria for all styles of MRPs**

### **1. Oral Examination**

This is an opportunity to demonstrate how well you understand the subject beyond what’s contained in what you have produced. Be prepared to discuss your story within its larger context and explain how you went about pursuing it. This lets you discuss strategies you used and decisions you made that shaped your final product, as well as experiences and difficulties you encountered along the way. The oral examination itself is not graded, but examiners will consider what they learn during the oral examination as they determine the final grade.

### **2. Measures of Assessment**

For any MRP undertaken as a piece of public affairs journalism, the preceding elaboration of expectations regarding reporting and research, critical analysis, presentation and connection to audience will guide the assessment of the project as laid out below. All other styles of MRPs will be assessed as laid out below.

**An MRP will be awarded a grade in the “A” range** if it successfully utilizes the strengths of the chosen medium to produce a compelling, coherent and penetrating examination of a subject of significant public interest and relevance. Insightful analysis and illuminating observations will be carefully framed and consistently supported by solid research and rich detailing – in other words, the marshaling of evidence from a robust range of reliable sources. A high degree of originality and enterprise will be evident in the conception and/or execution of the project, and the work will be characterized by clarity of thought, an authoritative voice and evident command of the subject. The MRP will adhere to stylistic and structural conventions appropriate to the mode of expression. Bedrock standards of accuracy and fairness will be met; opportunities for creativity in expression and elegance in presentation will be seized upon.

**A grade in the “B” range** would be awarded for work that meets many of the standards set out above but falls short or even significantly short in some areas.

The minimum passing grade is a B-.

### **3. Length and format for submission – all MRPs**

All MRPs must be free of errors of spelling and grammar, and conform to standards and rules of format as laid out in *Appendices A - E*. There is no grade for these elements; they are a requirement.

*Only MRPs that meet these standards will be deemed ready for final examination.*

### **III. Common required elements of all styles of MRPs**

Standard title page—please see *Appendix F*

Source/interview list (include name, title, contact information, date of interview, format of interview)

Bibliography of material consulted during research

- A student who produces any MRP that requires technical help must also include credits listing technical support people such as camera operators, audio/video technologists and editors, web experts and others.

### **IV. Deadlines and submission details for all styles of MRPs**

*For MRPs completed in the winter term for spring graduation*

**Editorial deadline:** one full week before the MRP examination period begins. The text may not be changed after that point. See below for details.

**Production deadline:** no later than five days before the candidate's scheduled examination in order to accommodate the technical requirements posed by assembling the MRP elements. The MRP elements may not be changed after that point. See below for details.

All material must be sent electronically to the Graduate Administrator by required deadlines.

#### **Text-based MRPs**

- Editorial: adviser-approved text, which must include complete descriptions of all additional digital elements (photos, graphs etc.) and their placement in the text.
- Production deadline: the final WordPress (or other adviser-approved platform) link
- See *Appendix A* for more

### **Video MRPs**

- Editorial: adviser-approved script, which must include complete transcriptions of all clips and SUs
- Production deadline: The link to the finished video labeled with your MRP title and name. We recommend posting on YouTube and password-protecting prior to examination.
- See *Appendix B* for more

### **Audio MRPs**

- Editorial: adviser-approved script, which must include complete transcriptions of all audio elements
- Production deadline:
  - The link to the finished audio labeled with your MRP title and name, posted online in a format (such as Soundcloud) that would make it accessible to listeners. We recommend password-protecting it prior to examination.
  - An mp3 file of the finished audio labeled with your MRP title and name
- See *Appendix C* for more

### **Multimedia MRPs**

- Editorial:
  - Adviser-approved text, which must include notes indicating where the multimedia elements go in relation to the text, what the elements are, and what information they contain (complete descriptions and/or transcripts of all video, audio, photographic and graphic elements)
  - Basic site map (or layout, or storyboard). What will your pages look like? This can be hand drawn or you can include a screen cap of your template.
- Production deadline: the final WordPress link to finished MRP labeled with your MRP title and name
- See *Appendix D* for more

### **All other styles of MRPs**

- Editorial: adviser-approved text or script. Follow format-specific guidelines for Public Affairs Journalism MRPs.
- Production deadline: the link to the final MRP
- See *Appendix E* for more

<p>Submission of MRP for examination for <b>FALL 2018</b> (November graduation)</p> <p>OR</p> <p><b>WINTER 2019</b> (February graduation)</p>	<p>The final MRP must be submitted <b>one full week</b> before the MRP examination period begins. This includes relevant links. There will be no exceptions to the deadlines.</p> <p>For FALL graduation in November 2018:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• MRP submission—August 30, 2018</li><li>• MRP examination period—September 10-14, 2018</li></ul> <p>For WINTER graduation in February 2019:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• MRP submission—November 19, 2018</li><li>• MRP examination period—November 26-30, 2018</li></ul>
<p>Submission of MRP for examination for <b>SPRING 2019</b> (June graduation)</p>	<p><b>Editorial deadline:</b> All examination copies of MRPs must be submitted <u>one full week</u> before the MRP examination period begins.</p> <p><b>Production deadline:</b> All completed MRPs must be submitted <u>no later than five days</u> before the candidate’s scheduled examination. There will be no exceptions to the deadlines.</p> <p>For SPRING graduation in June 2019:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• MRP submission—April 8, 2019</li><li>• MRP examination period—April 15-26, 2019</li></ul>

**V. The process for the MRP proposal and submission of examination copy**

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Action</b>
Development of draft proposal	Students will begin developing their MRP ideas in the mandatory course JOUR 5706 in the winter term of their first year.
Assignment of adviser	<p>The Journalism Program Head finalizes all adviser assignments. This ensures the workload is distributed equitably among faculty members.</p> <p>A student may approach an individual faculty member but the Program Head must finalize any tentative agreement.</p>
Development of final proposal	<p>Students must have a final approved proposal before heading into the field.</p> <p>The ideas generated in JOUR 5706 are just the first step. Students will develop the final MRP proposal in consultation with their assigned faculty adviser.</p> <p>The adviser must approve the proposal. More than one draft is often required.</p>
Adviser submission of final approved proposal	<p>The adviser will send the final approved proposal to the Program Head and the Graduate Administrator.</p> <p>The Program Head will assign a second reader, who will review the proposal.</p>
Second reader feedback of final approved proposal	<p>The second reader will send written feedback on the proposal to the adviser in a timely manner.</p> <p>Two weeks is considered timely.</p>
Adviser submission of second reader feedback	<p>The adviser will send the second reader's comments to the student AND to the Graduate Administrator, who will place it in the student's file.</p> <p>*The second reader will ultimately grade the finished MRP, and is not expected to review MRP drafts. That is the responsibility of the student's adviser.</p>
MRP fieldwork	The student will proceed with the work according to her/his agreed upon work plan, consulting with the adviser as scheduled or as necessary.

<p>MRP initial drafts, revisions and final approved version</p>	<p>Individual schedules and deadlines will vary, depending on the topic and medium of the MRP.</p> <p>In general, students should aim to have a first draft submitted to their adviser in February.</p> <p>Students should leave time for adviser review as well as subsequent revisions.</p>
<p>Student submission of examination copy of MRP</p>	<p>The student must submit all final MRP material electronically to the Graduate Administrator by the official deadlines.</p> <p>See <b>Deadlines and submission details for all styles of MRPs</b> on pages 7-9.</p> <p>*The student should NOT under any circumstances discuss the submitted MRP with the examiners prior to the examination. This may be viewed as trying to influence the final MRP grade.</p>
<p>Distribution of examination copy of MRP to examiners</p>	<p>The Graduate Administrator will distribute the MRP to the examiners on the direction of the Program Head.</p> <p>One of the examiners will be the second reader – the faculty member who commented on the original proposal.</p> <p>The second examiner will be selected by the Program Head, and may be from the faculty or outside the School or the University depending on the subject of the MRP.</p>
<p>MRP examination boards</p>	<p>The student will defend the MRP before an examination board consisting of the adviser, second reader, and assigned examiner.</p> <p>See below for details.</p>

## VI. The process for the MRP examination and final MRP submission

Just as the university has standard procedures in place to “ensure fairness and transparency” with thesis examinations, the School has developed standard procedures for MRP examination boards.

Preparation for MRP examination	The Graduate Administrator will distribute the MRP to the examiners on the direction of the Program Head.
Turning back an MRP	<p>If an examiner believes the MRP cannot earn the minimum passing grade (B-) she/he must inform the Program Head<sup>1</sup> at least <b>three days before the scheduled examination.</b></p> <p>The Program Head will consult with the examiners and adviser to determine whether the MRP should be “turned back” and the examination deferred.</p>
Rescheduling an MRP examination	<p>If the MRP is turned back, the examiners must immediately provide detailed feedback notes with suggestions/advice for the candidate.</p> <p>If the candidate can incorporate that advice and rework the MRP in a timely way to the adviser’s satisfaction, the examination may be rescheduled for the end of the examination period.</p> <p>In rare cases, the candidate will have to register for the following term in order to complete the MRP.</p> <p>The candidate has the right to proceed to examination.<sup>2</sup></p>
Attendance at examination board	<p>MJ candidates are expected to attend their examination board.</p> <p>The examination schedule will be published as early as possible so that work/travel plans can be adjusted accordingly.</p>

<sup>1</sup> In cases when the Program Head is the candidate’s adviser, the Graduate Supervisor will take on this responsibility

<sup>2</sup> Procedural details are adapted from the FGPA Master’s Thesis Examination Pre-Examination Process Section 1.3(d)

<sup>2</sup> Procedural details are adapted from the FGPA Master’s Thesis Examination Pre-Examination Process Section 1.3(d)

<https://gradstudents.carleton.ca/wp-content/uploads/Thesis-Examination-Policy-Revised-February-2016.pdf>

<p>Composition of board</p>	<p>The candidate's MRP adviser will serve as chair of the examination board. Responsibilities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Keeping the procedure running on time</li> <li>○ Taking note of any shortcomings in the MRP flagged by the examiners</li> <li>○ Ensuring that "the examination is conducted according to the highest standards of academic integrity, collegiality and professionalism"</li> <li>○ In exceptional circumstances, adjourning the examination and consulting with the Program Head<sup>3</sup> if it is felt the spirit of the guidelines for the MRP examination has not been met.</li> </ul> <p>The second reader and additional assigned faculty member will serve as MRP examiners.</p>
<p>Examination procedure</p>	<p>The examination will normally last one hour.</p> <p>The candidate will have five minutes for opening remarks, and may address such things as why the topic was chosen, and what challenges were encountered and overcome.</p> <p>Beginning with the second reader, the examiners will normally have 40 minutes to ask questions pertaining to the MRP, such as the candidate's research choices, focus, framework, analysis and conclusions.</p> <p>Short closing remarks by the candidate are optional.</p>
<p>Assessment procedure</p>	<p>After the question period, the candidate will be asked to leave the room.</p> <p>The examiners will normally take 15 minutes to discuss the MRP according to the essential components and grading outlined above.</p> <p>They must agree on a grade for the MRP. The minimum passing grade is B-</p> <p>The adviser (chair) will be present during discussions and can clarify points if necessary but is not part of the final grading decision.</p>
<p>Examiners' MRP assessment and feedback</p>	<p>When examiners have agreed on a grade, the candidate will be brought back in and informed.</p> <p>As well as providing verbal feedback, each examiner may provide the candidate with a copy of her/his written feedback and/or notes added during the board.</p>

<sup>3</sup> Procedural details are adapted from the FGPA Thesis Examination Policy, Section 1.6(b) <https://gradstudents.carleton.ca/wp-content/uploads/Thesis-Examination-Policy-Revised-February-2016.pdf>

Second reader submission of the MRP final grade	At the conclusion of each examination, the second reader will return the completed MRP grade sheet to the Graduate Administrator.
Candidate corrections and deposit of the final MRP	<p>In consultation with the adviser if necessary, the candidate must correct all spelling/grammar errors.</p> <p>Shortcomings beyond such minor corrections will be reflected in the MRP grade and noted in the examiners' feedback.</p> <p>The candidate will submit a clean electronic version of the MRP to the Graduate Administrator for deposit in the Resource Centre.</p> <p><b><i>***Please note: the candidate's final grade cannot be registered with the university until this is done.</i></b></p>

## **Appendix A: Additional details about Text-based MRPs (Public Affairs Journalism)**

Minimum 10,000 words (approximately 40 pages). Students should consider this MRP format to be the equivalent of a comprehensive magazine article or newspaper series that could be published in full or in part.

The text portion should include:

- i Standard title page with word count and URL in the bottom left corner
- ii A standard (not fanciful) 12-point type, with pages numbered in lower right corner.
- iii Double-spaced text

The production portion should include

- i Extra elements as appropriate to the nature of the project:
  - a. Sub-headings and/or pull-quotes that enhance your narrative structure
  - b. Original images that enable you to tell your story more effectively
  - c. Charts, graphs etc. that you have designed and produced
- ii Extra elements should be embedded in your MRP, magazine-style, in a way that complements your textual storytelling
- iii Students are encouraged to use a platform such as WordPress or AdobeSpark, as appropriate to the project

## **Appendix B: Additional details about Video MRPs (Public Affairs Journalism)**

Minimum 20 minutes.

The text portion should include:

- i Standard title page
- ii Anchor intro in a two-column single-row table:
  - a. Left column – include script “IN”, “OUT”, final running time, and list of interview sources in the order in which they appear (name/title)
  - b. Right column – include intro script
- iii Documentary script in a two-column multi-row table:
  - a. Left column – include the production information (short description of visuals, graphics, interview source name & title etc.) that goes with each section of VO and clip. In other words, everything we will see.
  - b. Right column – include the voice-over, fully transcribed clips, and all SU actuality. Make a new row for each section of VO, clip and SU. This column should contain everything we hear.
- iv A standard (not fanciful) 12-point type, with pages numbered in lower right corner.

The production portion should include:

- i An opening segment that includes the documentary title
- ii Closing credits

Editorial essentials:

- i Powerful broadcast writing:
  - a. Concise, declarative sentences
  - b. Clear and conversational style
  - c. Language that contextualizes, explains, and enriches visuals rather than describing what viewers can see for themselves
- ii Interview clips that add colour, analysis and/or emotion, addressing the “why” rather than simply the “what”
- iii Interesting scenes and effective sequences that exploit the power of the medium both visually and through sound
- iv Compelling use of natural sound to enhance visuals and narration
- v A command of basic production values such as framing, lighting, and audio levels

## **Appendix C: Additional details about Audio MRPs (Public Affairs Journalism)**

Minimum 20 minutes.

The text portion submitted for examination should include:

- i Standard title page
- ii Intro and script, double-spaced, that includes a full transcript of all clips and notes identifying the various sound beds used
- iii A standard (not fanciful) 12-point type, with pages numbered according to the radio script formats used in radio classes

The production portion should include:

- i A recorded studio intro

Editorial essentials:

- i Powerful writing:
  - a. Concise, declarative sentences
  - b. Clear and conversational style
  - c. A script that paints pictures with words
- ii Interview clips that add colour, analysis and/or emotion, addressing the “why” rather than simply the “what”
- iii Compelling use of natural sound to enhance narration and allow the journalist to engage the listener’s imagination and “show” instead of “tell”
- iv Basic production values such as sound and clips that are well recorded, edited, and woven together smoothly

## **Appendix D: Additional details about Multimedia MRPs (Public Affairs Journalism)**

A multimedia MRP must be a substantial piece of journalism presented digitally using some combination of text, photos, video, audio, slideshows, graphics, data visualization and/or interactive storytelling tools. It is more than simply a textual story embellished with visual and audio elements and pasted onto a website.

The text portion should include:

- i Standard title page with word count in the bottom left corner
- ii Double-spaced text using a standard (not fanciful) 12-point type
- iii Page numbers in lower right corner

The production portion should include:

- i A wide range of different media and presentation formats, each of which add significant value to the story.
  - a. There is no set number of digital elements that must be included, nor is there a set menu of formats (beyond the required textual “anchor” – see below). The student should determine the best media format to tell each part of the overall story.

Editorial essentials:

- i A textual anchor for the project of between 3,000 and 5,000 words
- ii A “nut graf” that gives a good sense of the scope of the project, the issues and theme to be explored, the analysis to be conducted and some hint of the conclusions that will be reached
- iii Powerful, clear, compelling writing
- iv A variety of multimedia elements that exploit the unique potential of each medium, while allowing the reporter to “show” instead of “tell” different aspects of the story
- v A consciousness of the relationship between the elements, how they reinforce, contextualize and sustain one another
- vi Basic production values such as online organization, navigation, visual appeal, accessibility of elements and technical functionality

Additional notes:

- i Students should have basic digital photography, audio and/or video recording and editing skills; ability to build and maintain a basic WordPress site; familiarity with photo editing software, blogging software, slideshow/video software, graphics production and data visualization tools.
- ii The School will provide a basic WordPress template that can be modified for individual projects.
- iii The student will be primarily responsible for designing the project, though he or she may get some help modifying the template, if necessary, from a web designer selected by the student.

## **Appendix E: Length and format of all other MRPs**

### **Research Project on the Media**

Normally a written work of 10,000 words (approximately 40 pages)

The text portion should include:

- i Standard title page with word count and URL in the bottom left corner
- ii A standard (not fanciful) 12-point type, with pages numbered in lower right corner.
- iii Double-spaced text

The production portion should include

- i Extra elements as appropriate to the nature of the project:
  - a. Sub-headings and/or pull-quotes that enhance your narrative structure
  - b. Original images that enable you to tell your story more effectively
  - c. Charts, graphs etc. that you have designed and produced
- ii Extra elements should be embedded in your MRP, magazine-style, in a way that complements your text
- iii Students are encouraged to use a platform such as WordPress or AdobeSpark, as appropriate to the project

### **Major Contribution to Journalism Education**

This is likely to take the form of a minimum 10,000-word (approximately 40 pages) web-based handbook and could include audio and/or video elements.

The text portion should include:

- i Standard title page with word count and URL in the bottom left corner
- ii A standard (not fanciful) 12-point type, with pages numbered in lower right corner.
- iii Double-spaced text

The production portion should include

- i Extra elements as appropriate to the nature of the project:
  - a. Sub-headings and/or pull-quotes that enhance your narrative structure
  - b. Original images that enable you to tell your story more effectively
  - c. Charts, graphs etc. that you have designed and produced
- ii Extra elements should be embedded in your MRP in a way that complements your text
- iii Students are encouraged to use a platform such as WordPress or AdobeSpark, as appropriate to the project

## **Major Contribution to Journalism Technology**

This is likely to take the form of an app that can assist journalists in automating or improving the quality and oversight of some aspect of news gathering, reporting editing, producing, publishing and/or distribution of their work.

The finished product should be an application that can be run – preferably on either iOS or Windows/Android devices – whether it is on a desktop, laptop, tablet or smartphone.

The application should be submitted in a form that allows the examiners to test its applicability and ease of use, as well as verify that it will produce the outcome desired by the designer.

### Elements for grading

The text portion should include:

- i Standard title page with word count and URL (if appropriate) in the bottom left corner
- ii A standard (not fanciful) 12-point type, with pages numbered in lower right corner
- iii Double-spaced text

Editorial essentials:

- i Analytical section that includes:
  - a. Identification of an existing problem connected to the practice of journalism
  - b. A description of the app and how it will solve the problem
  - c. Who the potential users are
- ii The methodology and coding practices employed in developing the app;
- iii A chronology of the app development, including a detailed description of the testing process used to confirm its viability;
- iv Details of technical support (services provided and by whom) in the development and production of the app;
- v App development costs;
- vi Other elements as appropriate, such as the plugin admin interface and/or keyword database;
- vii A bibliography of sources used in the problem identification and analysis and app development process, including content embedded in the app.

## **Appendix F: MRP Title Page Template**

MRP TITLE (double spaced)

Master's Research Project

Submitted by (Student Name, Previous Degree(s))

in partial fulfilment of the requirements for

the degree of Master of Journalism

MRP Adviser: (Name of Faculty Member)

School of Journalism and Communication

Carleton University

Ottawa, Ontario

(Date of Submission/Date of Final Revisions)

copyright (Year & Name of Student)

## **Appendix G: Student and Adviser responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of both MJ students and Journalism faculty to do the following:

- Be aware of and respect the School's formal requirements with regard to MRP editorial requirements, deadlines and formatting
- Abide by the School's Ethics Policy, Publishing Policy, and Electronic Media Usage Policy <https://carleton.ca/sjc/journalism/graduate-studies/resources-current-students/>

The School has built upon the FGPA regulations and standards to add specific responsibilities and expectations that both students and advisers must meet during the MRP process.

### **I. Students**

To make the most of the MRP experience, students are expected to do the following:

- Choose a project that she/he is genuinely interested in and passionate about, while keeping timelines and financial/logistical resources in mind;
- Set a schedule of regular meetings and communication in consultation with the assigned adviser, and honour the schedule;
- Be prepared at those meetings and in the communication to outline MRP activities, and identify issues, challenges and questions that arise from the research and production of the project;
- Set realistic deadlines for MRP drafts in consultation with the adviser, and meet those deadlines;
- Understand that if deadlines are not adhered to, advisers cannot be expected to provide advice or feedback on short notice;
- Be prepared to revise the initial MRP draft as requested by the adviser, discussing and adapting suggestions and advice;
- Understand that if deadlines are not adhered to, the MRP cannot be submitted and put forward for examination;
- Contact the Program Head if any difficulties or conflicts arise in the student-adviser relationship.

## II. Advisers

To fulfill the crucial advisory role designed to assist and encourage students in developing the highest quality MRP possible, advisers are expected to do the following:

- In consultation with the student, set a schedule of regular meetings and communication, and honour the schedule;
- Respond to the all communications from student, whether scheduled or not, in a timely manner, at the very least in order to schedule a meeting and/or further communication;
- Provide constructive and thoughtful feedback and advice during each stage of the MRP – from the polishing of the proposal to the assessment of the final draft – while meeting agreed-upon deadlines for doing so;
- Assist the student whenever possible in seeking financial support. Usually this requires reference letters that are well-written, informative and on School letterhead;
- Provide final approval when the MRP is deemed ready to be sent forward for examination;
- Provide clear and detailed written reasons if it is felt the MRP will not be ready for examination in time to meet the student's preferred schedule for graduation;
- Provide assistance as necessary post-examination to facilitate the student's deposit of the final MRP, in order that the final grade may be recorded with the university;
- Contact the Program Head if any difficulties or conflicts arise in the student-adviser relationship.

## **Appendix H: Financial support for MRP research and travel**

There are a few sources of financial support to conduct research for MRPs. In each case the student must submit a budget with details about how much is being sought and for what reason.

- 1) Students should normally first apply for financial support for MRP research and travel to the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs (FGPA). You can find information about this **Graduate Student/Travel Research Bursary** and the required form on the FGPA website <https://gradstudents.carleton.ca/awards-and-funding/internal-awards/>
- 2) After applying to FGPA via Carleton Central's GAMS, students may also apply to the **Journalism Program MRP/thesis assistance fund** to support MRP/thesis research and travel. The School's Graduate Committee meets twice a year – in fall and spring – to consider applications for funding. Students may receive money from this fund only once. For details see our School website at <https://carleton.ca/sjc/journalism/graduate-studies/help-for-current-graduate-students/>
- 3) **The Graduate Students Association** also supports graduate research to a maximum of \$200. You must seek funds from the above sources first. For details <http://gsacarleton.ca/travel-grant/>