

# Guidelines for Research Project Proposal

**Due:** Two months before the term in which you intend to write and research the project (i.e. March 1, July 1, or November 1). Late proposals will not be considered until the next deadline.

**Length:** The proposal should be 400-500 words. It should also include a 1-page preliminary bibliography.

**Purpose:** To describe your proposed research project, the context of your research, and the methodology that you will be employing.

**Audience:** The Graduate Studies Committee (all professors involved in graduate teaching) reviews all proposals. Keep in mind that not all members of the committee will necessarily be familiar with the topic of your project.

**Keys to a successful proposal:** It should be clearly written and well organized; be specific, both in reference to the texts you'll be discussing and in citing critics and theorists; proofread the proposal.

**Structure:** Your research project proposal should include the following:

1. **Problem:** What is the problem that your project is intended to address? Clearly outline your intended argument and include a thesis statement.
2. **Background:** What gap in the existing scholarship does your project fill? Provide a brief survey of the existing scholarship that is directly relevant to your topic (i.e. scholarship on the author/text being discussed).
3. **Methods:** What theoretical approaches will you be utilizing? How exactly will you be utilizing these approaches? Describe your methodology.

**NOTE:** You should have arranged for a supervisor before beginning work on this proposal, and should consult extensively with your supervisor in developing your proposal. You may not submit a proposal without the agreement of a potential supervisor.

Students are required to submit to the Graduate Coordinator a hard copy of the proposal accompanied by the Research Project Proposal Form, and an electronic copy of the proposal.