

Joint Graduate Program in Communication and Culture
A Partnership of Ryerson University & York University

THE M.A. MAJOR RESEARCH PAPER
Regulations
[Revised May 2016]

The Major Research Paper should be a sustained exploration of a theoretical or empirical question. Unlike a Master's Thesis, a Major Research Paper need not involve original research. That is, a Major Research Paper may take the form of a critical review of the literature in a field, the exploration or synthesis of various points of view in a subject area, or a pilot study for a larger project. Alternatively, the Major Research Paper may be a research project that is narrower in scope, less sophisticated in methodology, or less complete in data gathering than would be required for a thesis.

Normally, the Major Research Paper should be between 40 and 60 double-spaced pages in length. Students are encouraged to develop further a paper already written for a course. Students may design a Directed Reading or Directed Research Course on the topic of the paper for the purpose of beginning the necessary work. The standard of evaluation is that of an article in a refereed academic journal.

Format

The paper must be printed to a professional standard and must conform to normal scholarly standards with respect to citations, bibliography, etc. The paper must be submitted with a title page that contains the following information: student's name, title of the paper, date submitted, name of supervisor, and must include this sentence: "The Major Research Paper is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the MA degree in the Joint Graduate Program in Communication and Culture, a partnership of Ryerson University and York University." [Refer to the sample at the end of the regulations.]

Supervisor

The student is responsible for approaching potential supervisors, who must be a member of the Program. Normally the second reader should be a member of the Comcult faculty of the other University in the joint program, ie. Committee is formed of one from York and one from Ryerson University. Faculty Advisors and the Program Directors will assist students to identify potential supervisors, after the student has made significant effort to obtain one on their own.

Proposal

Length: 4-6 pages + timeline and bibliography

Format:

1. Title: state briefly and directly the subject of the research
2. Introduction: brief description of the project and its rationale
3. Objectives:
 - 3.1. research problem, question or hypothesis
 - 3.2. theoretical perspective
 - 3.3. expected contribution to the field (the originality of the work must be demonstrated)
4. Relationship to existing literature or professional practice
5. Identify and briefly discuss the methods, sources, literature(s) and material to be employed and research or professional stream to which you wish to contribute.
6. (Optional if supplemented by research component) overview of research methodology and research ethics concerns

Appendices:

- A. Proposed time line for completion of the work
- B. Select Bibliography
 - a. theoretical works relevant to chosen methodology
 - b. works bearing on the substance of the topic.

MA full-time students should submit a formal proposal approved by the MRP faculty supervisor to the appropriate program office **by September 30th in 4th term**. MA part-time students must submit a formal proposal **before the end of the fifth term or 6 months prior to estimated month of completion**. The proposal may be modified with the permission of the supervisor after it has been filed in the program. (see table in page 2)

Due Dates for Submission of Proposals (after consultation, revision and approval by Supervisor)	
MA Full-time students: Approved MRP proposal submission	September 30th
MA Part-time students: Approved MRP proposal submission	April of the second year in the program or no later than six months prior to completion of program.

Students unable to meet these timelines should speak to the program administrator or director.

Second Reader

Major Research Papers will be evaluated by the supervisor and a second reader, normally also a member of the Program. Normally, the second reader will not be from the same university as the supervisor. That is, if the supervisor's primary appointment is at Ryerson, the second reader should be from York. Students may consult the second reader prior to the completion of the draft, but the second reader cannot act in the capacity of co-supervisor and must remain "at arm's length" from the paper. In the event that the second reader finds the paper unsatisfactory, he or she should consult with the supervisor about possible revisions. The second reader may request minor revisions before the final paper is submitted to the program.

Evaluation

Upon completion of the paper the supervisor and a second reader will assign a final grade of Pass or Fail. A written evaluation will be submitted to the program office, signed by both the supervisor and the second reader. A form is available from the program office for this purpose. The supervisor and the second reader may opt to meet with the student to discuss the paper but this is not required. The completed "MA MRP Supervisor and Second Reader Report" will be filed at the program for program use only and not returned to the student.

Paper for Evaluation and Filing

The student is responsible for submitting two hard copies of the paper, one for each reader. After the evaluation - and the oral if required - the student must deposit a final copy (after completing any minor revisions requested by the readers) with the Program Office. Degree requirements are not considered to be completed until both a copy of the paper and a copy of the assessment are deposited with the program. Deadlines for submission of the paper in order to meet the spring and fall convocation dates are published by the program each year.

Master's Research Paper**PROPOSAL**

Student Name:		Student Number	
Research Paper Title:			
Supervisor		Second Reader (if known)	

SEE DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS IN THE MRP REGULATIONS DOCUMENT.

Type of research	Documents to submit	
Please check one:	Submit to the Program Office	Other Action
◆ No human participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ This cover sheet (1 copy) ◆ Proposal (1 copy) 	Not applicable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Human participants, minimum risk, with written consent ◆ Human participants, minimum risk, with verbal consent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ This cover sheet (1 copy) ◆ Proposal (1 copy) ◆ TD2 form (1 copy) ◆ informed consent document (written or verbal script) (1 copy) ◆ TD3 form (1 copy) 	Reviewed by the Graduate Program's Ethics Review Committee.
◆ Human participants, funded by faculty research grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ This cover sheet (1 copy) ◆ TD4 form (1 copy) ◆ Proposal (1 copy) 	Not applicable
◆ High risk or funded	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ This cover sheet (1 copy) ◆ Proposal (1 copy) ◆ A completed appropriate form as instructed by the Office of Research Services (1 copy) 	Contact the Office of Research Services and follow the procedures outlined by that office.

TD2 = York University Graduate Student Human Participants Research Protocol Form;

TD3 = informed consent document checklist;

TD4 = statement of relationship between proposal and an existing HPRC approved project

FORMS are available from: <http://gradstudies.yorku.ca/current-students/thesis-dissertation/research-ethics/>

Student's Signature: _____ Date: _____

I have read and approved the attached proposal and bibliography (and Human Participants Research Forms, if applicable) and agree to serve as supervisor for the Master's Research Paper

Supervisor's Signature Date: _____

Approved by Program Director Date: _____

[FORMAT FOR TITLE PAGE]

MASTER'S RESEARCH PAPER

[TITLE]

[STUDENT NAME]

[Student number]

[Supervisor's Name]

A Major Research Paper submitted
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

Joint Graduate Program in Communication & Culture
York University-Ryerson University
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

[date submitted]

STUDENT: PLEASE ATTACH THIS FORM TO YOUR RESEARCH PAPER

JOINT GRADUATE PROGRAM IN
COMMUNICATION & CULTURE

MASTER'S RESEARCH PAPER
SUPERVISOR AND SECOND READER'S REPORT

NAME:	STUDENT ID:
TITLE OF PAPER:	
GRADE:	FOR TRANSCRIPT: PASSED FAILED
N.B “With Distinction” is not an official University designation – however, if the paper is deemed to be “with Distinction” (A+ only) please check here . This information will be kept on file in the program office.	
Supervisor	Date
Second Reader	Date
Program Director	Date
SUPERVISOR – PLEASE SUBMIT THIS COMPLETED FORM TO THE PROGRAM OFFICE	