

School of Religion, Queen's University

Master's Essay Requirements

The Master's Essay must demonstrate appropriate competence in the application of theoretical and methodological approaches to a suitable research topic in the study of religion. The Master's Essay may be developed from a term paper from one of the student's courses. It may be based on primary research, or it may be an interpretive essay based on secondary sources. In either case, good quality research and writing are expected. The Master's Essay will not be subject to an oral defence but will normally be read by one member of the department in addition to the essay supervisor.

Length:

The Master's Essay is a research paper of between 40-60 pages.

Finding a Supervisor:

Supervisors are assigned by the Graduate Co-ordinator after consultation with the student and the potential Supervisor.

Process:

The student will meet with the Supervisor to determine an appropriate topic. The student will craft a proposal. The student will produce drafts of the essay for the Supervisor's comment. It is the Supervisor's job to monitor the student's progress in the Master's Essay.

Proposal:

A proposal for the Master's Essay (approved and signed by the Supervisor) must be received by the Graduate Co-ordinator no later than May 1 of the year in which the student expects to graduate.

Proposals should be approximately 2 pages in length plus a bibliography and should consist of : a proposed title, a summary of the area of investigation to be undertaken, a statement of the methods and theories that the student will employ in the completion of the Master's Essay, and a few paragraphs about what the student expects to discover and conclude. The student must apply for and receive ethics approval if human subjects are part of the research

<http://www.queensu.ca/ors/researchethics/GeneralREB.html>

Evaluation:

No mark is given for the Master's Essay. The essay is evaluated by the Supervisor and by a Second Reader. The essay is not given to the Second Reader until the Supervisor is satisfied that

it is complete and ready for final evaluation. The Second Reader's task is not to ask for rewrites, but to judge whether or not the Master's Essay is of sufficient quality to be passed. Second Readers are welcome to make comments on the essay for the student to read. Second Readers are chosen by the Graduate Co-ordinator in consultation with the Supervisor. Both the Supervisor and the Second Reader are required to provide signed approval of a completed Master's Essay.

Format:

Master's essays should be typed, doubled spaced, single-sided and with margins of at least one inch; include footnotes, endnotes, or in-text referencing; and a bibliography formatted to a recognized style in the discipline. It should have a title page that clearly identifies the student's name, student number, title, supervisor, year of submission, and the phrase "Master's Essay submitted in partial fulfillment of the degree Master of Arts in the School of Religion at Queen's University." It should include a 100 word abstract at the beginning of the essay.

Final Due Date:

The Master's Essay must be in the hands of the Second Reader by August 8 if the student hopes to graduate in the fall. The approval of the Supervisor and the Second Reader are due to the Graduate Co-ordinator by August 20 (or the closest business day), to ensure completion of the paperwork required for graduation.

Dissemination:

Students will be invited to provide a pdf copy of their Master's Essays to be posted to the School of Religion website.