

**Joint Graduate Program in Communication & Culture**  
A Partnership of Toronto Metropolitan University & York University

**THE MA MAJOR RESEARCH PAPER**  
**Regulations**

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 & Culture, a partnership of Toronto Metropolitan 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 Toronto Metropolitan 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.

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 30<sup>th</sup> 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)

<b>Due Dates for Submission of Proposals (after consultation, revision and approval by Supervisor)</b>	
<b>MA Full-time students:</b> Approved MRP proposal submission	<b>September 30th</b>
<b>MA Part-time students:</b> Approved MRP proposal submission	<b>April</b> 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 Toronto Metropolitan University, 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"> <li>• This cover sheet (1 copy)</li> <li>• Proposal (1 copy)</li> </ul>	Not applicable
Human participants, minimum risk, with written consent  Human participants, minimum risk, with verbal consent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This cover sheet (1 copy)</li> <li>• Proposal (1 copy)</li> <li>• TD2 (1 copy)</li> <li>• Informed Consent document (written or verbal script) (1 copy)</li> <li>• TCPS Tutorial Certificate</li> </ul>	Reviewed by the Graduate Program's Ethics Review Committee.
Human participants, funded by faculty research grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This cover sheet (1 copy)</li> <li>• TD4 form (1 copy)</li> <li>• HPRC Approval Certificate for Faculty's Research Project</li> <li>• TCPS Tutorial Certificate Proposal (1 copy)</li> </ul>	Not applicable
Aboriginal/Indigenous Peoples: or High risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This cover sheet (1 copy)</li> <li>• Proposal (1 copy)</li> <li>• Human Participant Research Committee (HPRC) form</li> <li>• Informed consent</li> <li>• TCPS Tutorial Certificate</li> <li>• A completed appropriate form as instructed by the Office of Research Services (1 copy)</li> </ul>	Contact the Office of Research Services and follow the procedures outlined by that office.

**HPRC Protocol Form = York University Human Participants Review Committee Protocol Form;**

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

**FORMS**

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-Toronto Metropolitan 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	