

Guidelines

The dissertation proposal is submitted after the successful completion of the comprehensive exam requirement. The dissertation proposal may be submitted at any time of the year after the student has met with their supervisory committee. The proposal **MUST** include a completed TD1 form cover page (including all required supporting documentation relevant to human participant related research — *see guidelines and links below*). Once the supervisory committee has met with the student and submitted their written approval to the program office, the GPD - in consultation with another SPTH faculty member in the relevant field - will conduct a program level review of the proposal.

Please note: The SPTH Reviewer will need at least 3 weeks to review the proposal, so please factor this into your timeline to meet any scholarship or ethics related deadlines.

There are three (3) possible outcomes for the program level review:

1. Approved
2. Minor Revisions (revisions completed within one to four weeks and re-reviewed by the GPD)
3. Major Revisions (revisions to be completed within one to three months and re-reviewed by both the GPD and a SPTH faculty member in the relevant field)
Any required revisions will be outlined to both the student and supervisor

Once the proposal has been approved, the program office will submit it to FGS.

The Format of the Proposal

Usually no less than 15 and no more than 20 double-spaced 12-point Times New Roman Font pages, 1 inch margins (excluding references and appendices) the proposal **MUST** have the following components:

1. **Format:**
 - Title of the dissertation (on a completed [TD 1](#) form);
 - Abstract + Keywords
 - Proposal
 - References
 - Abstract
2. **Content:**
 - The title needs to reflect the main argument of the dissertation
 - The abstract summarizes the project (350 words) + a set of up to 5 keywords identifying the topic for the Graduate Faculty dissertation database.
 - The proposal: Introduction, argument, theoretical framework, methods (if applicable) and possible conclusions.
 - The proposal should also outline the topic area of the proposed research: specifically identify one or more of the three SPTH fields, as well as generally identify the relevant area/s of academic study (eg. Political economy, Post-colonial thought, Critical theory, Transnational Feminist theory, etc.)

- The interdisciplinary nature of the research and the traditions of social and political thought out of which it arises
A clear chapter outline indicating the themes and substantive issues to be studied
- Generally each chapter should have at least a paragraph of description.
Key terms and concepts should be clearly defined in the proposal

References: A basic bibliography set out formally in one of the three following styles: APA, Chicago, MLA. (*Please note: the bibliography is not part of the page limit*)

3. **Appendix:**

If not addressed in the proposal itself the appendix should include:

- The languages other than English, if any, which are needed to complete the dissertation satisfactorily as well as an outline of how the student plans to develop competence in these languages
- The travel, if any, needed to pursue the research (and the timeline for when the travel will occur)
- A clear and achievable time-line for completion;

****The proposal must be submitted in a final (not draft) version.***

Complete Submission

All proposals submitted to the Program office must include the following forms as well as the proposal itself:

1. The Thesis and Dissertation Proposal Form ([TD1](#)) with all appropriate committee signatures.
2. The Dissertation Proposals Appraisal Form with signed approval by committee members.
3. If appropriate, the FGS Human Participants Research Protocol form ([TD2](#) form) — found on the FGS website — or any other appropriate Research Ethics documentation. Students should contact FGS for information. **All students using research ethics need to complete the on-line TCPS Tutorial form dated within the last 2 years.**
4. The program office will need one complete hard copy of the proposal as well as one complete electronic copy as the Advisory committee will receive the electronic copy for review, and the hard copy is for submission to FGS.

Please note

The proposal will not be reviewed without all supervisory committee approvals and all relevant related paperwork must be handed in by the submission deadline. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that all relevant paperwork has been submitted.

Review of the Dissertation Proposal

The dissertation proposal will be reviewed with particular attention to the following matters:

- Completeness of the proposal (see above)
- Significance, quality, and timeliness as a theoretical and/or empirical work that is relevant to at least one of the three fields in Social and Political Thought

- Clear outline of the interdisciplinary nature of the research
- Assessment of whether or not the necessary resources are available to the student to carry out the research. Also assessment of whether or not the student has the ability to complete the research.
- Composition of the proposed supervisory committee in light of the topic and relevant faculty appointments to SPTH:
 - **Please note:** supervisors MUST already have a full appointment to the Graduate Program in Social and Political Thought (**Important:** faculty members will NOT be considered for appointment in order to only supervise one student). As well, a minimum of 2 out of 3 committee members (including supervisor) MUST have an appointment to the Graduate Program in Social and Political Thought.
- Satisfaction of any and all applicable research ethics protocols and formal attestation to this effect
- Clarity and comprehensiveness of the proposal, including bibliography and relevant appendices

Important:

The dissertation proposal must be submitted and approved by both the program and FGS at least six months prior to the PhD oral defence.

Students must be registered in the term in which the dissertation proposal is received and processed for approval.

Students are required to keep a complete copy of their dissertation proposal in their own personal records.

If a committee member changes after the dissertation proposal has been submitted, the member of record must agree (in writing or email) to step off, and the new member must agree (again, in writing or email) to join the committee. This paperwork needs approval at the program level as well as the FGS level so any required changes must be done as soon as possible in order not to create a delay before defence.