

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
REPORT OPTION GUIDELINES

Dear Report Option Candidates:

The following guidelines represent a simplified and brief summary of minimal requirements that papers submitted to the Graduate Committee for its review must meet as part of the Report Option's fulfillment for the MA degree. Candidates for the Report Options are strongly encouraged to check with your faculty sponsors to verify that your submissions meet these guidelines.

1 Research Topic

Research papers should address significant issues; re-hashing old or well-established topics without substantially new empirical findings and significant revisions will not do. They are expected to use primary and secondary sources. They should be of sufficient quality to make for a credible and competitive submission to a professional history journal.

2 Contents and Organization

2.1 Length

The **body** of the paper should contain between 6,250 and 8,750 words, the equivalent of 25 to 35 double-spaced pages, using 10 to 11-point Times Roman typeface, and one-inch margins all around. Normally, the **references** section, in the form of end notes should take up 7 to 10 pages using the same conditions as indicated for the body section.

2.2 Organization

2.2.1 Introduction

The Introduction, which is often left for last, but in any event, edited and re-drafted after the completion of the rest of the paper, should take up about two paragraphs. The length of the paragraphs is contingent on the individual case. The Introduction always contains the author's theoretical contribution to an understanding of the paper's topic — sometimes known as the "thesis statement."

2.2.2 Historiographical Context

This section of the paper is the opportunity for the writer to portray mastery of the literature and theories that have informed the subject matter in the recent past, along with the classics that continue to hold sway on the field of study. It is recommended that 3 to 5 paragraphs (of no prescribed lengths) should be dedicated to this section. This is the region of the paper in which the author's approach and contribution to the literature would come into view.

2.2.3 Findings

Most of the rest of the paper's **body** is taken up by the empirical evidence. These findings should consistently be supporting the salient points made in the Introduction and, as appropriate, in the historiographical review section. The length of this section (which is not expected to take the title of "Findings") is contingent, but should take up the bulk of the body section.

2.2.4 Conclusions

This is the section of the **body** that contains a brief summary of the findings, contextualizes the findings, as appropriate, within the larger body of literature, including theories, and reaches conclusions that cohere around the findings. Normally, the Conclusions section would take 2 to 3 pages.

3 Style

Format rules for every element of the paper are expected to follow the requirements of the *Chicago Manual of Style* (15th ed.) or its derivative, *The Turabian Manual*. Accuracy in bibliographic data in both the Notes section and the Bibliography is essential. Figures, Maps, Graphs, and Tables should appear as part of the "Back matter" section, that is, after the body section and before the Notes section. The Bibliography section, which follows the Notes section, is the last section of the paper.

Graphic materials (Figures, Maps, Graphs, and Tables) should contain all the data and information viewers need by looking at them. Viewers should not need to refer to the text in the body of the paper to understand the content embedded in graphic materials. Instead, the text in the body is expected to discuss and interpret the data. Thus, captions should be clear, titles of Figures, Graphs and Tables should be accurate, and their data points simple and explicit.

The Graduate Committee
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