

**LBST-D 601 Proposal Seminar
Spring 2016**

Graduate Project Proposal Guidelines

Before beginning work on the actual project, students must first complete a proposal in consultation and with the approval of their faculty director and readers. A proposal approval form must be submitted to the MLS office along with a copy of the proposal and accompanying documents.

The proposal should be between three and five double-spaced pages (Times New Roman, 12 pt), not including the bibliography, and contain the following information:

A. Project Goal (1-2 paragraphs)

What is the goal of this project? What question, issue, problem, or creative effort does it seek to explore, answer, or resolve? (Your question, issue, or problem should be analytical and open-ended. The goal is not simply to argue what you already believe, but to explore an issue further and thoughtfully consider new data and diverse theories and interpretations.)

The statement of the project goal should include a clear description of the final written text. Although most final projects take the form of an extended academic essay, the MLS project is broadly defined. You could, for example, choose a project in community development, a project in fine arts, or a project that involves applied knowledge. If you choose to undertake a project other than an extended academic essay, it must include an academic essay that provides a context for your work.

Note: the purpose of this section is to describe the project to your committee, not to argue the case. It may be necessary to explain your current sense of the argument or to tell the committee about the topic, but that explanation should be brief.

B. Context (2-3 paragraphs)

Situate your proposed project in the pre-existing contexts in which it will have meaning or usefulness. What are the important contexts and literatures for understanding this question, problem, issue, or creative work? What work has already been done in this area by previous scholars or artists? What in your view makes this project significant? (In other words, how will your thesis add something interesting, new, or necessary to what has already been written?)

C. Preparation (1-2 paragraphs)

How have you prepared yourself, through MLS courses, personal or professional background, or other means, for this project?

D. Method (1-2 paragraphs)

How will you go about exploring your central question or achieving your goal? What research or creative materials will you use in your project and why are they important?

E. Timetable

What are the various tasks you will have to complete as part of your project, i.e., review of literature, collection of data, completion of first draft, revisions, defense? What is your schedule for completion of these tasks?

F. Budget

What, if any, expenses beyond the ordinary costs of copying, paper, and printing, do you anticipate will be required to complete your project? If you will incur such expenses, how will you cover them?

G. Preliminary Bibliography (1-2 pages)

This bibliography should include some of the key sources for your project and thus demonstrate your awareness of primary and scholarly sources that will be important as you undertake your research. Use an accepted bibliographic format.

Attach the following documents to your proposal:

Proposal Approval Form

Student Checklist

Faculty Agreement to Supervise

If your project involved research using human subjects, attach the document of approval or waiver from the Institutional Review Board, Office of Research.