

## Letter of Intent

### History Department Guide to Preparation

The letter of intent is an important factor in the admission process. Its main goal is to provide the graduate admission committee with information on your intended MA or Ph.D. project and to ensure that we can provide adequate supervision.

#### Non-thesis MA

The major research outcome is a paper of 40-45 pages which usually grows out of course work. The statement of intent should:

1. be 2-4 paragraphs;
2. explain your intended area of study at a general level (examples: American gender history in the 20<sup>th</sup> century; Genoese elites in 15<sup>th</sup> Century; Canadian prairie aboriginal people in the 19<sup>th</sup> century; Ukrainian environmental policy after Chernobyl);
3. explain your background in this area and how you have become interested in it;
4. If you have identified a supervisor you would like to work with, please indicate this here. If you have been in touch with that person previously please let us know.

#### Thesis MA

Students will create a 70-100 page thesis which requires access to appropriate resources and supervision. The statement of intent should:

1. be about 1 page;
2. explain your intended general area of study and then more particularly the specific topic you are contemplating for your thesis. Be as specific as you can. If you would like some guidance on refining a topic feel free to contact the graduate advisor who will refer you to an area specialist who may end up as your supervisor.

Examples of thesis topics might be: a) American women members of Congress between 1960-1980, with an emphasis on understanding what was necessary in that period to transcend gender stereotypes; or b) the extent to which "pass laws" were effective at keeping First Nations confined to reserves in southern Alberta between WWI and WWII, with the intent of determining how the Indian Act could have had coercive effects outside its stated policy."

3. refer to the primary sources you plan to use, if known;
4. indicate the particular academic approach, theory or scholar(s) that inspire your work, if any;
5. explain your background in this area and how you have become interested in it;
6. If you have identified a supervisor you would like to work with, please indicate this here. If you have been in touch with that person previously please let us know.

It is possible to change your topic once you are in the program but when we accept your application it is because we can guarantee supervision. A change in topic is only possible if there is a supervisor available for the new topic.

### **Ph.D.**

Students will create a 200-300 page thesis which requires access to appropriate resources and supervision. The statement of intent should:

1. be about 2 pages;
2. explain your intended general area of study and then more particularly the specific topic you are contemplating for your dissertation. Be as specific as you can. If you would like some guidance on refining a topic feel free to contact the graduate advisor who will refer you to an area specialist who may end up as your supervisor;
3. refer to the primary sources you plan to use if known;
4. describe the academic approach, theory or scholar(s) that have influenced your approach;
5. explain your background in this area and how you have become interested in it;
6. If you have identified a supervisor you would like to work with, please indicate this here. If you have been in touch with that person previously please let us know.

It is possible to change your topic once you are in the program but when we accept your application it is because we can guarantee supervision. A change in topic is only possible if there is a supervisor available for the new topic.