

Information for Potential Clients

Master's Projects School of Public Administration University of Victoria

Thank you for considering becoming a client for a student in the Master of Public Administration (MPA) program in the School of Public Administration. We are proud of the many achievements of our students and the exceptional quality of the Master's Projects that they complete. This work could not be undertaken without the close involvement of clients who provide invaluable time, support, guidance, and expertise throughout the process.

To provide you with some information about the role of the client in Master's Projects, we have developed this overview of the process and specifically, what the expectations are of the client.

Overview of Master's Project:

The Master's Project is a culmination of all the work that an MPA student has done through his or her program. A student completes a Master's Project in consultation with their client and an academic supervisor.

This project is an opportunity for the student to conduct substantial analysis of a management, policy or program issue for a client in the non-profit or public sector. This analysis is then used to provide evidence-based recommendations for the client's organization. While students should be focused on producing a professional project report at the conclusion of their project, they should also use their academic research and writing skills to support their recommendations.

The final project report tends to include the following sections (format may vary depending on topic):

- Executive Summary
- Introduction
- Literature review
- Methodology
- Best/better/smart practices
- Methodology – e.g., interviews, focus groups, surveys, secondary analysis
- Findings and Analysis
- Recommendations (or options to consider)
- Appendices

The Master's Project report is to be no longer than 75 pages total (includes body, references, and appendices).

The Process:

The following list outlines the general process for the Master's Project:

- Student works with client to identify an issue or challenge in the management or policy area in the client's organization and then establishes the objectives and scope of the project
- Student prepares a project proposal and secures the approval of the client and academic supervisor (proposal needs to be approved by client and academic supervisor before student is allowed to begin the Project)
- If required, the student applies for research approval from the University of Victoria Human Research Ethics Board
- Upon ethics approval, the student conducts research, analyzes data and explores possible recommendations
- Supervisor selects members of student's Examination Committee. The Committee is comprised of the academic supervisor, the client, a second reader from the School of Public Administration, and a Chair representing the Faculty of Graduate Studies
- Student submits Project report and defends in an oral examination before the Examination Committee
- Student makes necessary revisions of the project report and provides the final version of report to the client

Master's Projects take approximately 6 to 8 months to complete and represent a considerable investment of time and expertise.

The Client Role:

The client is expected to agree to be in close consultation during all important stages of the drafting of the project including:

- Topic selection
- Review of proposals and drafts
- Participation on the Examination Committee

The Academic Supervisor Role:

The academic supervisor is a key resource for the student. The academic supervisor will facilitate ongoing communication with the student to provide guidance throughout the project.

Selection of the Examination Committee will be conducted by the Academic Supervisor

The Student Role:

The role of the student during the Master's Project process is to:

- Maintain open communication with the client and academic supervisor throughout the Project.
- Secure ethics approval and adhere to ethics guidelines throughout the Project.
- Ensure that confidentiality issues are addressed with the client and supervisor when necessary.
- Conduct scholarly research that reflects the principles taught in their Research Methods' course.
- Write and edit the Master's Project report.
- Defend the report in an oral examination before the Examination Committee.

Your participation in this project is greatly appreciated. You are not only helping out your own organization by providing possible solutions to a challenge you are facing, but you are also assisting our students apply what they have learned in our program to a workplace situation.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration. Should you require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact:

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