

Thesis Proposal Guidelines

PhD in Anthropology and Sociology

Your application should be accompanied by a research proposal (maximum five pages or 1,500 words) that presents the topic of your research and its relevance, a brief outline of the theoretical debate in which you situate your work, as well as the questions you will address and the methodology to be used. It should also include a short bibliography of up to two additional pages, demonstrating your knowledge of the current discussions in the field.

We encourage you to study carefully the profiles of our faculty members prior to submitting your application, in order to ensure that your proposed topic and regional area of research resonate with the intellectual orientations of the department.

PhD in International Economics or Development Economics

Your thesis proposal should identify the specific topic you intend to pursue and demonstrate familiarity with recent developments in the discipline. The proposal should include: 1) A brief description and motivation of the issue and why we should care about it; 2) A summary of the academic literature, which demonstrates how the proposed research would add to existing knowledge; 3) An outline of the specific steps of the research project. The outline should include a sketch of the underlying theoretical arguments, the specifics of the proposed identification strategy, as well as the data sources to be used.

The proposal should not exceed three pages.

PhD in International History

The proposal should set out your research question/topic; why it matters intellectually and, if applicable, as it often is, also for policy; the historical context; what has been written on it; what you hope to add to the literature, using what sources, and what methods. If you are ready to write a detailed proposal, perhaps of 1,000-2,000 words including an initial bibliography, so much the better; however, the Department appreciates that some very promising students are at an earlier stage in defining their research ideas. You should therefore feel free to submit a much shorter, more exploratory proposal; and to discuss your ideas in advance with a prospective supervisor.

PhD in International Law

15-20 pages with the identification of the research questions and an outline of the main building blocks of the research plan; a literary review (existing literature on the subject and an evaluation of the added value of your proposed research); relevant case law (if applicable); a section on methodology (how you intend to carry out the research, according to what criteria); and, finally, a bibliography that demonstrates your knowledge of the field.

PhD in International Relations/Political Science

The thesis proposal should cover the following areas in three pages (maximum):

- Your research interests;
- The specific question or topic you would like to pursue;
- A brief explanation of how this research topic pertains to a specific field in political science and its literature, as well as the expected contribution it will make;
- Why the Graduate Institute and the PhD programme in International Relations/Political Science are a good fit for pursuing your research.