

## LITERATURE REVIEW - MA PROGRAM

### A. *PURPOSE*

To demonstrate the student's knowledge of, and ability to synthesize, major aspects of the scholarly literature of the field in which the student's master's thesis or research paper is situated.

### B. *DESCRIPTION*

To complete this element of the MA program, students register in the directed study SRS7988 (3 cr.). The directed study is normally supervised by the professor who will direct the student's thesis or research paper. The professor who directs the literature review will, in discussion with the student, determine and approve the scope, method, and reading list for the literature review, and guide the development of the literature review. If the professor directing the literature review is not also the director of the student's thesis or research paper, the latter must approve the reading list.

The scope of the literature review should be broader than the topic of the student's thesis or research paper. It should cover the major scholarly contributions to the field of study in which the student's thesis or research paper is situated.

The method of the literature review should be appropriate to the field of study under review. However, the literature review should not be a serial description of the contents of the reading list. It should demonstrate an ability to synthesize and discuss trends, emphases, influences, changes, and differences in scholarly approaches to the field of study.

The reading list should normally comprise between 25 and 40 items (articles, chapters in books, books). It should include major scholarly contributions, whether recent or over time, to the field of study.

The literature review should be presented in a paper approximately twenty-five pages in length, typed double-spaced, excluding bibliography. It must conform to standards for academic papers: written in correct English or French, with a title page, table of contents, references and bibliography correctly formatted. The paper should be completed by the end of the session in which the student registers for SRS7988. The paper will be evaluated satisfactory/not satisfactory by the professor directing the study and by one other professor in the department.

### C. *FURTHER RESOURCES*

The Academic Writing Help Centre offers a guide entitled "Writing a Literature Review" at <http://www.sass.uottawa.ca/writing/kit/grad-literature-review.pdf>. It provides useful advice on how to write a strong literature review.