SSHRC MA PROGRAM OF STUDY

This is *the single most important component* of your application, insofar as it is this that allows your adjudicators to see who you are, and more importantly, who you *will* be as a *scholar.*

Your Program of Study includes two component parts, in a two-page document:
- Your Research Proposal
- A description of your Degree Program

Be sure to follow all instructions from SSHRC for formatting your document.

If your Masters Degree Program involves the writing of a thesis, a major research essay or a major research project, you will need to provide a well-structured outline of your Research Proposal
   You will need to specify:
- The research *question* that is motivating your proposal, along with some *context* explaining how the question arose as an issue for you
- Your proposed *response* to this question – i.e., your *thesis*
- The *methodology* that your research will be undertaken in accordance with
- The expected *outcomes* of your research, and how your research will contribute to the advancement of knowledge in your field

If your Masters Degree Program is a 'course only program', and as such, does not involve the writing of a thesis, a major research essay or a major research project, you will still need to provide a Research Proposal, with focus on the *research training component* of the degree program.
Provide a comprehensive accounting of the courses you intend to take, and indicate clearly how these courses will serve to make you a better scholar. If it is your intent to go on, after your Masters degree, to pursue a further graduate degree or a degree from a professional program, indicate how the Masters level courses you will take will better prepare you for this

In your description of your Degree Program, you will identify the University you are or will be attending and the Degree Program which you are or will be pursuing. In addition, you ought to include a clear statement of why you want to pursue Masters level studies in your particular field, and why your Degree Program is especially well-suited to meet your needs. You will also need to provide a clear description of the research requirements of the Degree Program you will be pursuing – e.g., does your program require a course on research methodology? You ought also include here an accounting of other courses, relevant to your research interests, that you will be taking in your department or a cognate department, and explain how these courses are relevant to your research proposal

In addition to your Program of Study, you will also need to attach to your application a Bibliography which can be no more than *five pages* in length. SSHRC formatting rules apply to the Bibliography as well.
   Your Bibliography must include:
- The bibliographic details for all *citations* included in your Research Proposal
- A bibliography for your Research Proposal

- There are no specific style guidelines for your Bibliography (e.g. APA, MLA, Chicago), but you must be *consistent* in your choice of style

Lastly, if applicable, you must attach to your application the details of your Research Contributions, which can be no more than *one page* in length
- Identify *refereed* contributions, and list these first, followed by *non-refereed* contributions, and end on any *forthcoming* publications
- Provide complete bibliographic details of all publications
- If you are listing a co-authored publication, specify your role
- If your contribution appeared in a language other than French or English, provide a translation of the title and name of publication
- If your research output includes creative or artistic works, list these in a separate category, entitled 'Literary and Artistic Works'
- Do *not* panic! SSHRC makes it *possible* for those Masters applicants who have published or presented their work to make that fact known, but there is *no expectation* that Masters applicants have made research contributions.

TIP: Write to your audience!
SSHRC adjudication committees are interdisciplinary. Write for an intelligent, non-specialist audience.
- Avoid, *at all costs*, discipline-specific *jargon*, and if absolutely necessary, explain all concepts clearly and concisely in plain speech.
- You are judged by how you express yourself.
- Speeling mistakes, typographical errors. mistakes of grammar, etc., stand out to an adjudicator and *will* count against you, regardless of how attractive your overall application is.
- SSHRC adjudicators are bright, hardworking and sympathetic volunteers, but they *will* become impatient with mistakes, excessive editorializing, or obscure jargon-laden language.
- Catch the attention of your adjudicators.
- The opening of your Research Proposal ought to serve as your 'hook', while your closing ought to leave your adjudicators with the decided impression that the world of academe would be a significantly impoverished place if they refuse you funding.
- Present your Research Proposal in a clear and concise manner, with special attention to the logic of your presentation.
- Success in winning a SSHRC is a product of a number of variables, some of which you can control and others which you cannot.One determinate of success that *is* in your grasp is your willingness to subject your proposal to repeated (and sometimes *brutal*) editing and re-editing.
- *Set realistically achievable goals:*
    - Adjudicators are looking to identify projects that can realistically be fulfilled in the time allotted for your Degree Program. If you set out to write a *magnum opus*, you will not gain favour with an adjudicator, and moreover, it will be the last thing you *never* write
- *Show your passion for your project:*
    - Adjudicators are themselves researchers, and they know that passion for a research topic is requisite for its completion. Make it known that you too are passionate about your project.