
**MASTER OF ARTS IN LIBERAL STUDIES
SPECIAL PROJECT CONTRACT
UNIV 7996**

Student's Name: _____

Date: _____

Special Project Title: _____

Program Title: _____

Semester and Year for UNIV 7996 enrollment: _____

APPROVALS

Student: _____ Date: _____

Major Advisor: _____ Date: _____

M.A.L.S. Office: _____ Date: _____

January 2003

Important Information about Your Special Project Contract

General Information

1. The “working draft” of your Program Contract must be approved by the MALS office before the Special Project Contract can be submitted.
2. Your Special Project Contract must be typed, single-spaced, size 12 font only.
3. Be certain you answer all requests thoroughly and thoughtfully.
4. The Special Project Contract must be approved by you, your Faculty Advisor, and the MALS office before you will be issued a permit to register for Special Project.
5. When the Special Project Contract has been approved by the MALS office, it becomes an agreement between you and The University of Memphis for the fulfillment of the Special Project requirement for the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies Degree from University College and may be amended only with the approval of the MALS office.

Purpose of the Special Project

The Special Project is the last requirement for the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies Degree, serving as the integrative culmination of your program of study. It should be a substantial piece of independent research or a significant artistic performance that is logically consistent with the theme and content of your program of study. Your work should demonstrate familiarity with and understanding of a body of professional literature related to a specific topic. The Special Project should grow out of your Coordinated Study and should demonstrate your ability to use the knowledge you gained from the Coordinated Study. You should consult frequently with your Faculty Advisor as you prepare the contract.

Academic Misconduct

In preparing your Special Project, avoid academic misconduct. Any student engaged in cheating, plagiarism, or other forms of academic dishonesty is subject to discipline as stipulated in the University of Memphis Student Handbook. The Student Handbook states: “The term ‘plagiarism’ includes, but is not limited to, the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full or clear acknowledgment. It also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.” Cheating includes “the misrepresentation of papers, reports, assignments or other materials as the product of a student's sole independent effort.”

Directions for Completing the Special Project Contract

Use your computer to respond to each of the requests on the next page. Type each item; then type your response under it. Complete the title page. Have your Faculty Advisor review the final draft and sign and date the approval line on the title page. Submit the Special Project Contract to the MALS office for review at least two weeks prior to the time you plan to enroll.

Class Registration

If the MALS Director approves the Special Project Contract, a section of UNIV 7996 will be created in the registration system in the name of your Faculty Advisor. You will be issued a permit to register for the course. It is your responsibility to call the MALS office about the availability of the registration permit.

Oral Project Presentation

The oral presentation of the Special Project is held in conjunction with the oral comprehensive exam. (See Special Project, Oral Presentation, Oral Examination document.) Please call the MALS office (678-2716) and schedule your oral presentation at least one month before you plan to present your project. The student's Faculty Advisor for the Special Project and the director of the MALS program (or another University College faculty member designated by the MALS program director) serve as the Project Presentation Committee. The student must provide copies of the final draft of the written documentation to both Project Presentation Committee members at least two weeks before the presentation. In order to graduate in a given semester, your oral presentation must be scheduled at a time prior to the deadline for submitting the comprehensive exam results to the Graduate School.

Human Subjects Research Review

All University of Memphis students who propose to engage in any research activity involving the use of human subjects must have prior approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB is responsible for safeguarding rights and welfare of all persons participating in research projects. If you plan to do research with human subjects, please check your faculty adviser. You should submit your IRB request through your faculty adviser. For information and forms for committee review, please check the U of Memphis web site at: <http://www.people.memphis.edu/~irb/>.

For additional information regarding human subjects research review, contact Susie Hayes, IRB Coordinator, Office of Research Support Services, Administration 315, Memphis, TN 38152, 901-678-5071.

Answer These Items in Your Special Project Contract

1. Identify the topic of your Special Project, explain the purpose of the project, and explain the reasoning process by which you selected the topic.
2. Explain how the topic of your Special Project is related to your Coordinated Study, including an explanation of how the project makes use of the knowledge you gained from your Coordinated Study.
3. Each Special Project must follow a plan of structured inquiry or research strategy, “a carefully prepared plan involving a sequence of steps designed to achieve a given goal.”¹ Explain in detail the strategy you will follow in conducting and completing your Special Project.
4. Your Faculty Advisor is your expert consultant for your project. Explain the plan you and your Faculty Advisor have developed for working together. Include in your explanation approximate dates when you will meet and when drafts will be submitted and reviewed, including the date on which the final draft will be submitted to your advisor. The oral presentation of your Special Project must be completed in time to meet the Graduate School’s deadline for submitting the results of the Oral Comprehensive Examination. Check the Graduate School website for that date and plan the date of your oral presentation accordingly.
5. Explain the evaluation criteria you and your Faculty Advisor have agreed to and give the rationale for the criteria selected. Your Faculty Advisor and the MALS Program Director evaluate your work on the Special Project. The Faculty Advisor assigns a grade reflecting the quality of the Special Project.
6. Explain how your Special Project brings completion to the academic goals you sought when you entered the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies Program.
7. All Special Projects must have a formally written, research component. State what the written research component of your project will be (e.g., research paper, a social history of a piece of music or a composer, etc.).
8. The citations and bibliography of the Special Project must follow a standard style sheet, such as the Modern Language Association Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. Please identify the style sheet you will use. Consult carefully with your Faculty Advisor before making your selection.
9. Provide a sample bibliography that is indicative of the resources you will use in your research.
10. Provide a provisional outline of the final research component of your Special Project.

¹William W. Wilen, ed. Questions, Questioning Techniques, and Effective Teaching. Washington: National Education Associates, 1987, p. 139.