

## Final paper guidelines

### CMS.951 Workshop II (Condry & Taylor, spring 2015)

#### *Topic and scope*

Your final paper should provide your methodological plan for your thesis. You are not required to utilize qualitative social science methods but in all cases you should present a clear plan about how you will be proceeding. Even if you aren't doing qualitative methods please related your method to ideas and readings from the class.

- You should begin with a brief (no more than 1 or 2 page) introduction of your project in terms of its aims/questions/areas of interest.
- You should then move onto discussing, concretely, how you will be addressing these.

For example, if you are engaging in content analysis you should be detailing out your plan - selection of material, why this and not that, how you will be analyzing, etc. You should also provide some anchors to the literature that you will be leaning on for method explicitly.

If you will be doing social science research with human subjects you should be detailing out your process - how you will find/select people/fieldsite, what your plan is once you find them/it, etc. You should be engaged with ethics issues present in this kind of work. A copy of your IRB application should be included as an appendix.

- Make sure in your discussion you give us a clear sense on the choices you are making and why you are making them. Push beyond the superficial to wrangle with any critical issues about how the data you will be seeking is in dialogue with your field of inquiry. Reference to readings in this class and other classes should be included (i.e. be engaged with the literature relevant to your approach).

The goal of this final paper is to get you to reflect on – in a very concrete way – your next methodological steps for your thesis. It should include a schedule.

In all large projects things occur to shift plans and intentions but Ian and I would like to come away from this paper having a clear sense of what you will be actually undertaking to carry out your thesis work and the rationale for your plan.

#### *Format*

Your paper must be at least 10 pages (12pt double-spaced). You should pick a standard citation format (Chicago, APA, etc.) to use throughout and include a bibliography.

MIT OpenCourseWare  
<http://ocw.mit.edu>

CMS.951 Workshop II: Qualitative Social Science Methods for Media Studies  
Spring 2015

For information about citing these materials or our Terms of Use, visit: <http://ocw.mit.edu/terms>.