

Media Studies H194 Initial Research Proposal Application Form

The Media Studies Program evaluates candidates for Media Studies H194: Honor Thesis Preparation to make sure the course will help students achieve their educational goals. Students must have a GPA of 3.45 in the major and overall at the beginning of fall 2020 to enroll in this course. This is a temporary adjusted GPA specific to fall 2020 due to the COVID-19 Honors Policy.

Eligible and interested students must:

1. Attend the first class on **Monday, August 31st**. Must attend to seek advice on developing research proposal and any other queries. GPA eligibility to be calculated after this meeting.
2. Media Studies H194 Application Form Deadline: **Send before Tuesday, September 8th**. Complete and send an application Dr. Meeta Rani Jha at meetarani65@berkeley.edu. Include your name, email address and SID# at the top of your completed proposal.
3. Eligible students, whose applications are approved, **will receive a permission code for the course by September 11th**.
4. Attend second class on Monday, September 14th.

Please answer these three questions related to your Honors Project. Remember, this is a first draft of your research proposal. I will be helping you develop this draft.

The aim is to assess your readiness for MS H194 and to get you started in thinking about your research project. You begin designing a research project by writing a research proposal. There are three things to consider when writing a research proposal: to evaluate the problem/question that drives your research project; to figure out its relevance/significance: to develop what you plan to do. Detail your rough proposal using the following questions and **email me your response as a word document by Tuesday, September 8th**. Your proposal should be single-spaced and not more than 1-2 pages in length.

1.What is your research question?

I want to study and research the topic of _____

Research Question - What is the goal of your research? Because I am interested in finding out..._____

2.What are your research methods?

Using the method/s of _____

What research methods may be suitable in answering your research question? What research methods will be suitable for you to gather evidence to address your research question?

3.What is the Significance of your research? Why is it important to do this research?

My research will help my community better understand the social issues and problems in the _____.For example, my research may help my reader understand the debates on gender representations and inequality. Here, you need to show that you understand the importance of research in addressing societal problems, for example, by influencing policy change. Research can also fill in gaps in knowledge in an academic discipline and or a subdiscipline. What difference can your research make? Will you contribute to knowledge about an entrenched social problem?

Brief Overview of the Honors Course

Over two semesters, MS H194 (Fall 2020) and MS H195 (Spring 2020), you will formulate a research problem, design a research strategy, collect evidence, and write up your findings and analysis.

- MS 194 (Fall Term): 15-page literature review detailing an original research question and a 5-page research methodology, to make decisions on selection of research method/s and theoretical frame.
- MS 195 (Spring Term): Conduct primary research, analyze research findings, and write a 45-page thesis answering an original research question
- To receive the honors distinction, students need to maintain an overall and major GPA of 3.5 or higher after enrolling in MS 194 AND receive an A- or better in both MS H194 and MS H195. Maintaining this GPA for both is required through graduation. See Honors policies on the Media Studies website under Enrichment. The COVID-19 temporary policy applies to fall 2020. The standard policy applies to spring 2021 and forward.

Background Information on writing a Research Proposal

Your proposal should aim to convey excitement about your chosen research topic. Remember that your proposal aims to convince others that the research is worth undertaking and enables researcher to demonstrate expertise and competency in an academic field. It also serves as a planning tool. By the end of Spring 2021 semester, your thesis will have five key sections/chapters:

- 1. Introduction** - devising a research proposal, selecting a research question and research method/s.
- 2. Literature review** - researching scholarship on your topic, including theories and empirical studies.
- 3. Research methodology** - research approach, theoretical frame, selection of research method/s, procedures and techniques, ethical consideration.
- 4. Conducting primary research**- data analysis, discussion and implications of research findings.
- 5. Conclusion** – Did you answer your research question? What contribution has your research made?

Examples of Research Topics

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Here are some suggestions that may spark your interest and allow you to come up with a research question. Focus on themes in Media and Cultural studies that highlight the importance of media (texts, industry, audiences, representations, institutions, and consumers) in shaping and transforming society, politics and culture.

1. Social Media and Social justice movements: Contemporary covid-19 and racial justice protests in the US and across the globe. #MeToo and BLM social movements.
2. Texts and media representation research: Hollywood and the male gaze, scopophilia, advertising and gender socialization and so on.
3. Audience Reception, Fandom and Cultural Identity research: Decoding media texts based on gender, race, sexual orientation, non-binary gender identity, disability, fat stigma and colorism, etc.
4. Cultural Industry research: Production practices of news, television, music and film industry. The political economy of media institutions. Social Media, celebrity culture and advertising industry.
5. Media and Democracy: State and Propaganda thesis. Social media and the crisis of Journalism. Blogging and citizen journalism. The history of journalism and its importance for democratic participation.