

THE BIS ANALYTIC PAPER REQUIREMENT

In addition to completing their coursework successfully, BIS degree candidates must also write at least one substantial analytic paper **in one of their CLA areas of concentration**. This paper should demonstrate the student's ability to analyze a significant topic and to present ideas about that topic in a logical, coherent, and clear manner.

PAPER REQUIREMENTS

- 1) The paper must reflect a level of critical analytic skills and writing skills appropriate for a senior in the College of Liberal Arts.
- 2) The paper must be analytic in nature, not solely descriptive or narrative. Source materials (e.g., journal articles) will illustrate what constitutes analytic writing in the field in which the student is writing. The following are examples of different kinds of analysis:
 - systematic reviews of the research literature on a topic
 - comparisons/contrasts of theoretical positions
 - historical explanations of social events
 - position papers on policy implementation
 - critical interpretations of art (films, music, dance, painting exhibits, etc.)
 - analysis of characters in a work of literature
 - commentary on statistical analysis of research data
- 3) The paper must be well-organized and cohesive. It must present ideas in a logical sequence, explaining these ideas clearly, supporting them with evidence, and linking them with appropriate signals of transition.
- 4) Papers must include appropriate documentation. While certain types of papers, such as textual analyses, may not require reference to secondary sources, most papers will. Guidelines for citations must be followed closely to avoid plagiarism. Any quotations must be clearly identified and smoothly integrated into the paper. (See **For Assistance** at the end of this handout.)
- 5) The paper must be done independently, reflecting the student's own ideas and work. Group projects are not acceptable.
- 6) The paper must be at least 2500 words long (typically 10 pages), typed, and double-spaced with one-inch margins.
- 7) The paper must be free of errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar, and usage.

THREE OPTIONS FOR THE PAPER

- 1) You may use a paper that is assigned for a course, provided it meets all BIS guidelines.*
- 2) With prior permission from the instructor in the course, you may adapt a paper assignment that does not meet BIS guidelines so that it will meet the guidelines. For example, you might expand an assigned paper to meet the BIS minimum length requirement.
- 3) You may arrange with a professor to complete a directed study project in which the product will be a paper that meets the BIS Analytic Paper Requirement.

*If you have already written an analytic paper in a CLA course that you believe meets the BIS requirement, consult your BIS adviser. (over)

PROCEDURE FOR MEETING THE BIS ANALYTIC PAPER REQUIREMENT

- 1) When you submit your BIS program proposal, start to think about the CLA course in which you would like to fulfill the analytic paper requirement. Select a course that seems central to your interests and that is likely to require an analytic paper.
- 2) Early in the semester in which you take the course in which you plan to write your paper, consult with the primary instructor of the course. Explain the BIS analytic paper requirement to the instructor and ask whether you may use this course as a basis for fulfilling the requirement.
- 3) If the instructor agrees to work with you, we highly recommend that you and the instructor complete a BIS Analytic Paper Requirement Contract, which is available from your BIS adviser. Although it is not required, the contract will specify the precise features of the paper you will write in order to meet the requirement and assures that you and the instructor understand the expectations. If you and your instructor do complete a BIS Analytic Paper Requirement Contract, return it to the BIS Office in 345 Fraser Hall for review by your BIS adviser. The contract should be filed no later than the tenth week of the semester in which you are registered for the course.
- 4) When you submit the completed paper to the instructor, you must attach a BIS Analytic Paper Evaluation Form, which is available in the BIS Office. When the instructor returns the paper and the signed form, bring both to 345 Fraser Hall. *If you plan to graduate that semester, the Evaluation Form must be in the BIS office about two weeks after finals (check with the office for the exact date for that semester).*

Special Guidelines for Honors Students

The BIS Analytic Paper Requirement may be met through the completion of an honors thesis. If you are using your honors thesis to fulfill the BIS Analytic Paper Requirement, you *must* use the contract procedure described above, and the faculty sponsor must evaluate the paper using the BIS Analytic Paper Evaluation Form as well as the Honors Division graduation form.

Keep in mind ...

- **Only the primary instructor in a course may make the contract and evaluate the final paper. Teaching assistants are not authorized to do either.**
- **The BIS Analytic Paper Requirement may *not* be met with a paper written for a composition course, but papers written for Writing Intensive courses are appropriate.**

For Assistance

Assistance with organizing a paper and with writing mechanics is available on a walk-in basis in the Student Writing Center in 306B Lind Hall (call 612/625-1893 or check the SWC website for hours: <http://swc.umn.edu/>). For guidance on citing your sources of information and on how to format these references, consult a style manual such as the following:

The Chicago Manual of Style. 14th edition. University of Chicago Press, 1993.

Gibaldi, Joseph. MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. 5th edition. Modern Language Association of America, 1999.

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association Style. 4th edition. American Psychological Association, 1994.

Turabian, Kate L. A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations. 6th revised edition. University of Chicago Press, 1996.