Kent State University  
College of Arts and Sciences  

MASTER OF LIBERAL STUDIES DEGREE PROGRAM  

Essay Approval Form  

Name _______________________________________________________ Date ________________

Address _____________________________________ ________________________________

Banner ID number _______________________________

E-mail address that you check on a daily basis _____________________________________

Proposed Title of Essay: ________________________________________________________


Here, from the Program website, is an explanation of the roles of the Adviser and Reader in the development of the Liberal Studies Essay. The Adviser and Reader must both be members of the Graduate faculty and in different departments. The student must leave copies of this form, including the detailed outline of the Essay, with the Adviser and Reader so that they can refer to it if they have questions about how the Essay is developed.

Approvals – How the Essay is Developed

Students start by coming up with an interdisciplinary topic for their Essay and writing a detailed, chapter-by-chapter outline showing how they will develop it (around 300 words). This is an important document and should not be dashed off hastily. The Adviser and Reader are both giving of their time and expertise out of the generosity of their hearts; they receive no compensation. It is therefore unlikely that you will find Graduate Faculty members willing to undertake these roles for you if you do not produce something that makes it clear to them that you are a serious student qualified and ready to create something they will find of interest and worth their time.

Students then fill out an Essay Approval Form, which they can find on the Useful Forms for Current Students page of the program website (www.kent.edu/cas/liberalstudies). They attach their outline to the Form and make four copies of the packet. The first one they keep for themselves. They present the second and third ones to the Graduate Faculty members whom they would like as their Adviser and Reader. Both these individuals must be members of the KSU Graduate Faculty and in different departments. If, after having read the packet, these two members of the Graduate Faculty decide that they are willing to undertake the roles of Adviser and Reader explained below, they will sign the Form in the fourth packet, which the student will then convey to the Program Director so that he can sign it and put it in the student’s file. The Director will then put in authorization for the student to enroll in AS 61098, Liberal Studies Essay.
Students then work on their Essay first and primarily with their Adviser, developing and refining it in consultation with her or him until the Adviser is satisfied with it. The Adviser may well start by working out a timetable and procedure for this with the student. (A student can choose to have an Adviser and a Co-Adviser, rather than an Adviser and a Reader. In this case he or she should work out with the two Advisers how they will proceed.)

In working with the Adviser (and subsequently the Reader), students should be careful not to abuse their generosity by turning in work that has not been polished to the very best of the student’s ability in terms of form as well as content. Remember that the Adviser or Reader, if they find that the student is not doing graduate-level work, may at any time inform the Director of that and withdraw from directing the Essay, in which case the student will have to find a graduate faculty member to replace him or her. It goes without saying that students pursuing an advanced degree do not turn in work with mistakes in the English, typos, etc. They should proof-read every draft carefully before submitting it. Graduate Faculty are not copy-editors. If they see mistakes in the English, they may well want to point them out and try to help you improve your written English, but expecting them to do so is abuse of their kindness. Remember, however, that if the English is substandard when your Essay reaches the Director, it will have to be redone. It is your responsibility, therefore, to make sure you are writing like a college graduate pursuing an advanced degree. Nor should students expect the faculty with whom they work to print out versions of their Essay; they should supply these versions in paper form.

When the Essay is complete and the Adviser satisfied with it, but not before, he/she will send the Director an e-mail to that effect (at richard@berrong.fr). It is the student’s responsibility to ask the Adviser to send this e-mail. The Director will then send an “all clear” to the student and the Reader, and the student will present the Essay (in paper format) in the form approved by the Adviser to the Reader for the latter’s observations.

When the student has incorporated the Reader’s observations into the Essay to the Reader’s satisfaction, but not before, the Reader will communicate her/his satisfaction with the Essay to the Director (again at richard@berrong.fr). Again, it is the student’s responsibility to ask to Reader to send this e-mail.

When the Director has received this e-mail from the Reader, he will accept the Essay from the student on paper in the form approved by the Reader and check to see if it follows the formatting stipulated below. If it does, he will then read it himself and, if he too is satisfied with it, will schedule the Essay Defense. If, however, he finds that the Essay is not correctly formatted, he will have to return it to the candidate unread for formatting.

Candidates should, therefore, be sure to familiarize themselves with the formatting outlined below early on and make every effort to adhere to it from the start, so as not to have to reformat everything at this point and risk missing graduation deadlines.

After the Director receives a properly-formatted Essay from the student, he will schedule the Essay Defense, at which the whole Essay Review Committee (the Adviser, the Reader, and the Program Director) and the student must be physically present. At the Defense the Essay Review Committee may
recommend some last modifications. Ordinarily, these recommendations are not major changes in organization or substance. Students must include these recommendations in the definitive version of their Essay, which they are then to submit to the Director of Liberal Studies on paper and as a pdf file along with the copy of their Essay that he corrected before the Defense. The Director cannot check to see if the final version of the Essay is in good order without his marked up copy, so students must remember to return it to the Director along with the definitive version on paper and as a pdf by the date specified.

When he has received and approved this final version, the Director will sign off on the student’s Graduation Clearance form. If the definitive version does not incorporate all the corrections required, however, it will have to go back to the student for further corrections, again at the risk of causing the student to miss graduation that semester.

We all understand that tuition is expensive and that students do not want to pay any more of it than necessary by going extra semesters. Faculty have many demands on their time, however, and cannot be expected to read an Essay at the drop of a hat. Students should therefore be sure to allow sufficient time for the Adviser, Reader, and Director to read their work, so as not to risk a delay in the final approval of their Essay and therefore their graduation. See the Deadlines for those planning to finish up their degree by the end of the semester on the Useful Forms for Current Students page of the Program website for the posted deadlines. Some students try to undertake too much in one semester, make themselves miserable, and end up doing a shoddy job. This is pointless. Remember: the Essay does not have to be completed in the semester the student first enrolls in AS 61098; the student can take an IP (In Progress) grade and complete it in a subsequent semester. If the student takes no courses during the subsequent semester, she/he will be charged no tuition.
We the undersigned acknowledge that we are members of the Graduate faculty at KSU, that we have received a copy of this form, which explains the roles of the Adviser and Reader of the Liberal Studies Essay, for our own keeping, that we have received a copy of _____________________________’s outline of his/her Essay, and that we find this project worth directing and agree to do so, subject to the student developing her/his Essay in a manner that we find to be appropriate for graduate-level work.

Signatures:

Adviser: 
__________________________________________

Please print name: 
__________________________________________

department and date: 
__________________________________________
e-mail address: 
__________________________________________

Reader or Co-Adviser: 
__________________________________________

Please print name: 
__________________________________________

department and date: 
__________________________________________
e-mail address: 
__________________________________________

Director, MLS Program: 
__________________________________________

19.11.2011 MLS Program/KSU