

MA REES Portfolio: A Guide to Assessment

(1) Rubric for Assessing Scholarly Writing Samples and MA Capstone Research Paper

	Excellent - 4	Good – 3	Marginal - 2	Unacceptable - 1	N/A
1. Choice and Statement of the Topic/ Research Question	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addresses an important and exciting topic within a sub-field or a discipline • Defines it clearly and describes it comprehensively and compellingly • Makes a persuasive case for the topic/issue importance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addresses an important topic • Narrowly conceived but accurate; lacks context • Presents a somewhat persuasive case for its importance and relevance to REES. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addresses a topic, which has already been sufficiently explored • Lacks clarity in the description and positioning of the topic within broader contexts • Fails to make a persuasive case for its importance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The topic falls outside the purview of REES subjects • Describes the topic incomprehensibly • Fails to present a hypothesis • Does not make a persuasive case for the topic 	
2. Knowledge of the country (countries)/ region (regions)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates extensive and well-rounded knowledge • Engages with the primary and secondary sources • Includes all relevant information • Avoids factual or other errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates knowledge of the country/region • Lacks depth and breadth in its engagement with the primary and secondary sources • Omits some relevant information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not fully engage with the primary and secondary sources • Omits relevant information or • Includes irrelevant and erroneous information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate the lack of knowledge of the REES area Makes factual and other errors and • Omits important information necessary for full understanding of the topic 	
3. Quality of Primary Sources and Data	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies and uses sources/data relevant to the topic/question • Masters primary materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies and uses sources/ data relevant to the topic • Short of the mastery of the primary materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses minimal number of primary sources/data, which are insufficient for exploring the topic/research questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lacks primary sources 	
4. Knowledge of Secondary Sources/ Existing Research	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Masters secondary sources • Thinks critically about the state of research on the topic • Offers a comprehensive analysis of theoretical, empirical, and practical knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attempts to intellectually engage with the work of the best scholars in the field • Shows weaknesses in providing a comprehensive review and analysis of relevant theoretical, empirical, and practical knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates limited knowledge of the scholarship on the topic • Omits important scholarly works • Includes irrelevant studies • Analysis of literature lacks comprehensiveness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fails to engage with the relevant secondary sources • Includes irrelevance secondary studies • Literature reviews lacks comprehensiveness and structure 	

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5. Use of REES Language(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates advanced language proficiency • Synthesizes numerous sources in the target language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates moderate language proficiency • Synthesizes some sources in the target language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates low language proficiency by using few sources in the target language • Makes errors in translation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows no evidence of language competency 	
6. Knowledge of disciplinary perspective(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presents and assesses issues from a well-articulated disciplinary perspective • Uses appropriate theoretical approaches • Acknowledges their limitations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presents and assesses issues from an articulated disciplinary perspective, for the most part • Shows some inconsistencies between approaches/ perspectives/questions, but they are not detrimental to the paper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presents the topic from a disciplinary perspective • Shows inconsistencies between the topic/questions, selected theoretical approaches, and the disciplinary perspective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not demonstrate any disciplinary perspective • Devoid of conceptual/ theoretical foundation 	
7. Awareness of Contexts/ Cultural Awareness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considers audiences, purposes, and circumstances surrounding the writing task. • Shows awareness of individual assumptions, their limitations • Acknowledges the impact of contexts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates consideration of audiences, purposes, and the circumstances surrounding the writing task • Shows some awareness of the author's own and others' assumptions and their limitations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gives some consideration to audiences, purposes, and the circumstances surrounding the writing task • Shows lack of awareness of the author's own and others' assumptions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows the author's own unrecognized biases • Does not give consideration to audience/ purpose • Reveals inconsistency between contexts and paper's content 	
8. Exposition: Analysis and Presentation of Evidence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locates, organizes, and analyzes supportive evidence using appropriate methodology • Questions its accuracy • Clearly presents and defends methodological structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locates and organizes supportive evidence using appropriate methodology • Evidence may be incomplete or lack assessment of its accuracy • Lacks explanation of the selected methodological structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses evidence, which quality and quantity is insufficient for the writing task • Claims to accomplish more than delivers • Does not use proper methods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contains insufficient and/or inappropriate evidence for the writing task • Misinterpret results • Lacks appropriate methodological structure 	
9. Writing skills and Mechanics Course papers=3000 words; Capstone=7500	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executes conventions pertinent to the writing task (organization, formatting, bibliography, etc.) • Skillful, clear, fluent writing free of grammatical errors • Appropriate paper length 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complies, most of the time, with conventions particular to the writing task (organization, formatting, bibliography) • Has occasional errors and interruptions in the flow and clarity of writing. • Appropriate paper length 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not fully and systematically comply with conventions particular to the writing task (organization, formatting, bibliography, etc.) • Too short 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poorly written and organized and this inhibits the comprehension of the main argument and makes it difficult to follow the author's reasoning 	
TOTAL/ AVERAGE	Total points: Average (total points divided by the number of criteria used in evaluation):				

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2. Scale for Evaluating the Synthetic Essay

Intended learning outcome assessed with this instrument: student's critical reflection on "what he or she has learned [through the penultimate semester of area studies coursework], drawing conclusions about the ways that various disciplinary ways of thinking intersect and inform each other."

Evaluate the synthetic essay on a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 = unacceptable and 4 = excellent, using criteria provided below.	Rating (1-4)
<p>1. The essay shows a student's ability to describe and analyze in a comprehensive fashion major regional themes and problems within her/his chosen region of specialization</p> <p>The answer should identify topics/issues/themes common to several disciplines included into the REES interdisciplinary curriculum. Student does not need to give equal emphasis to each of the five major disciplinary perspectives, but his/her response should not be limited only to the student's major subject discipline.</p>	
<p>2. The essay engages in a reflective analysis of the ways, in which disciplinary approaches have affect a student's views of the selected issue-areas</p>	
<p>3. The essay demonstrates a student's ability to reflect on interdisciplinary nature of the REES MA program</p> <p>The answer should discuss how interdisciplinary program has affected his/her ways of thinking, using examples of the two or three main concepts in addition to the description of the student's own understanding of REES interdisciplinary experience</p>	
<p>4. The essay demonstrates a student's mastery of the Sources Included into the Reading List Created with the MA Committee</p> <p>In addition to the relying on readings from the student's coursework, the essay incorporates outside readings from the MA reading list in the area of specialization and primacy sources, including sources in the target language. The MA reading is composed by the student in consultation with the faculty members on the student's MA committee and should include no less that 25 sources, including primary sources.</p>	
<p>5. Mechanics</p> <p>The essay is approximately 3500 words in addition to a complete bibliography.</p>	
<p>TOTAL POINTS AVERAGE FOR THE ESSAY (total points divided by 5)</p>	

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3. Scale for Evaluating the Professional Essay

Intended learning outcome assessed with this instrument: “an extended first draft of a future job application letter in the student’s field.”

Evaluate the synthetic essay on a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 = unacceptable and 4 = excellent, using criteria provided below.	Rating (1-4)
1. The essay states clearly a student’s career objectives	
2. The essay presents a critical deliberation over the ways, in which KU REES MA program prepared the student to move into a REES-related career The essay, addresses the ways, in which the REES curriculum, faculty, programming, and resources, among other things, have prepared the student for his/her future career. If the plans include continuation of graduate study, the essay should discuss how the area studies degree has prepared the student or helped to shape his/her interests for further study at the PhD level.	
3. The essay discusses the ways, in which the area studies approaches impacted the student’s future life and career goals	
4. The essay articulates the student’s self-assessment of his/her progress in developing research skills, understanding and practice of responsible scholarship, and development of cultural competence.	
5. Mechanics The essay is approximately 1500 words in addition to a complete bibliography.	
TOTAL POINTS AVERAGE FOR THE ESSAY (total points divided by 5)	

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4. Evaluation Form for the Final Exam of Record

1. Presentation

Excellent	Good	Marginal	Unacceptable
4	3	2	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of the components of portfolio is concise and engaging; it synthesizes all elements of portfolio into a coherent presentation • Students summarizes findings, presents strengths and weaknesses of his/her research/work, and effectively communicates findings and personal reflection on his/her own academic experiences • Presentation is clear, articulate, well-organized and easy to follow • Media or other format of presentation is appropriate for the content • Presentation appropriately represents the components of the portfolio 			
Comments:			

2. Discussion with the Committee of the Research Papers

Excellent	Good	Marginal	Unacceptable
4	3	2	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions are answered well and with reference to student's works • Students responses show knowledge of the fields and depth of understanding of methods, results, significance of findings, and disciplinary conventions • Explains/defends his/her scholarship • Comfortably engages committee • Demonstrates understanding of and facility with the disciplinary context and implications of the work 			
Comments:			

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3. Discussion with the Committee of the Capstone Paper

Excellent	Good	Marginal	Unacceptable
4	3	2	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Questions are answered well and with reference to student's works Demonstrate knowledge of the subject Explains/defends his/her scholarship Comfortably engages committee Demonstrates understanding of and facility with the disciplinary context and implications of the work 			
<p>Comments:</p>			

4. Discussion with the Committee of the Synthetic and Professional Essays

Excellent	Good	Marginal	Unacceptable
4	3	2	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Questions are answered well and with reference to student's works Demonstrate knowledge of the subject Explains/defends his/her scholarship Comfortably engages committee Demonstrates understanding of and facility with the disciplinary context and implications of the work 			
<p>Comments:</p>			

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5. Evaluation scales for an overall assessment of a student's research skills, responsible scholarship, and cultural competency

Research Skills	Excellent	Good	Marginal	Unacceptable	N/A
Student identifies important, relevant, new, or under-researched issues and recognize their nuances, including, embedded or implicit issues	4	3	2	1	N/A
Student constructs, states and discusses cogent arguments, including both strengths and weaknesses of the student's own position	4	3	2	1	N/A
Student identifies objections to his/her arguments, acknowledges rival positions, and provides convincing replies to such	4	3	2	1	N/A
Student identifies and rigorously evaluates all important evidence, generates new information for consideration, and examines evidence by questioning its accuracy, precision, relevance, and completeness	4	3	2	1	N/A
Student selects and implements the most effective research methods for the writing tasks at hand, and correctly interprets the data and findings	4	3	2	1	N/A
Student identifies and discusses implications, conclusions, and consequences following from his/her research	4	3	2	1	N/A
Total points / Average					

Responsible Scholarship	Excellent	Good	Marginal	Unacceptable	N/A
Student satisfied the requirements of working with human subjects and has he/she applied this knowledge in carrying out the research task	4	3	2	1	N/A
Student gives proper credits to other intellectual property, through the attribution of sources, proper citations, and avoidance of plagiarism and self-plagiarism	4	3	2	1	N/A
Student maintains a dispassionate position conveyed in language that is not emotionally charged	4	3	2	1	N/A
Student does not let personal biases and predisposition affect the execution of the writing task	4	3	2	1	N/A
Student's develops, sustains, and benefits from the mentor/student or professor/student collaboration on his/her research projects	4	3	2	1	N/A
Total points / Average					

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Cultural Competence	Excellent	Good	Marginal	Unaccept- able	N/A
Student demonstrates awareness and understanding of his/her own cultural values, and is able to see and assess the impact of his/her own assumptions, judgments, and/or biases on the processes and outcomes of the student's scholarly work and experiences	4	3	2	1	
Student demonstrates awareness and understanding of other cultural contexts, and is able to understand, appreciate, and evaluate the complexity of elements important to other cultures/cultural context in relation to their history, values, politics, communication styles, economy, or systems of beliefs and practices	4	3	2	1	
Student consistently incorporates diverse and multiple perspectives into his/her writing and uses those perspectives for facilitating a more informed understanding of the subject	4	3	2	1	
Student's understands cultural and linguistic nuances, especially in his/her work with foreign language sources, as well as cultural connotations	4	3	2	1	
Total points / Average					