

Political Science 461 – Senior Thesis in Political Science
ASSIGNMENT: Statement of Interest

Due this Friday, September 29 by 5:00PM e-mail: mag@cpp.edu
No late assignments will be accepted, no exceptions.

A statement of interest is where you describe your general research interests for your senior thesis project. The point of this assignment is to get you to **brainstorm**. Give yourself the time to think about your topic selection. Good topics are those that are fascinating and generate good research questions that can be answered in a 30-40 page paper.

Directions:

- One page maximum
- Single-spaced or double-spaced
- 12-point, Times New Roman font
- File must be in .doc or .docx format

PART ONE. Discuss your broad general interest in your topic. Please be sure to address the following in your assignment.

What is the topic you hope to write about in senior thesis? It is okay if you're not 100% certain on your topic, but attempt to describe the topic as concisely as possible.

After describing the topic, please address the following in written prose (not bulletpoint responses):

- What kinds of things do you not understand about your topic?
- How might someone think your topic is unclear? What kind of work do you need to do to clarify that topic?
- Have you encountered any readings from your courses on this subject? If so, cite any relevant readings.
- Besides myself, is there another faculty member (inside or outside the department) that can help you develop your interest in this topic.
 - Visit the department's website (<http://www.cpp.edu/~class/political-science/>) for a list of faculty in the department

PART TWO. For the next step in the process, you'll be asked to generate research questions surrounding your topic. A research question is not simply a further narrowing of the topic. It transforms the topic into an unanswered but answerable query. Another way to think about it may be to think about it as a puzzle.

- **A research question.** With each of your proposed topics, for this assignment, attempt to generate at least ONE research question that you think may lend itself to a good thesis project.
 - Good research questions can be answered and are specific. What is your best version of this research question?
 - Can you envision yourself spending winter quarter answering your question?