Student _____   Faculty Grader_____

Criteria for Analyzing Senior Theses

Minimum Requirements

Is the paper within the required length specifications (30-40 pages of text plus additional pages for references and appendices)?

Yes [____]   No, it is too short by _____ pages.   No, it is too long by _____ pages
(1 point off final score for each page over or under; note excessive use of diagrams, charts, etc. to fill space should not be used to meet the minimum page requirement, but can be used to go over the maximum limit; title page, acknowledgements, bibliography not included.)

Was any portion of the paper plagiarized?

[____] Minor plagiarism error (e.g., an erroneous citation, failure to use " " on a phrase or sentence) – deduction reflected in technical score or footnote/reference score.

[____] Plagiarism that should result in at least a one letter grade reduction (please document)

[____] Plagiarism that should result in failing the course (please document)

Which subfields do you feel are addressed by this thesis (check all that apply):

[____] American Politics   [____] Public Administration   [____] Political Theory

[____] Comparative Politics   [____] International Relations   [____] Public Law

Evaluation

Please check the box under the description that best fits the paper you are reviewing. **Do not** enter a number for points awarded. The students will get the points assigned to that value. The grading scale has been adjusted to reflect these scores.

Research Problem Statement (10 points)

The problem statement is exceptionally clear and addresses a critical question in the field **(10)**	The problem statement is clear and on an interesting topic **(8)**	The problem statement is not very clear, although I can tell what the student is trying to do **(5)**	The problem statement is very muddled and I am not sure what the student is trying to do **(3)**	I cannot find anything even resembling a problem statement or topic **(0)**

Research Effort/Literature Review/ Secondary Sources (10 points)

A thorough and creative approach to identifying & using research material is demonstrated. At least 20 relevant sources of research material have been identified, explained and organized effectively **(10)**	The obvious reference materials have been identified and are used appropriately. Approximately 15 relevant sources of research material have been identified, explained and organized effectively **(8)**	Some of the reference materials one would expect to see have not been included, but some have. Approximately 10 relevant sources of research material have been identified, explained and organized effectively **(5)**	The reference materials used are not appropriate and/or do not address the research question. Approximately 8 relevant sources have been identified and used effectively, or most of the research material is not relevant or organized **(3)**	There are few or no indications that the student conducted any research. Five or fewer relevant sources are used and/or they are not used effectively **(0)**

Argumentation (10 points)

Develops argument or thesis clearly, provides concrete examples, and demonstrates sound reasoning **(10)**	Develops argument or thesis clearly, but evidence and/or reasoning are no particularly persuasive **(8)**	Argument or thesis is unclear, although I can tell what the student is trying to do, evidence and reasoning are weak **(5)**	Argument or thesis is unclear, no evidence is provided, reasoning is faulty or nonexistent **(3)**	No argument or thesis can be discerned **(0)**

Collection of Evidence and Analysis (10 points)

Student demonstrates original, accurate & creative use of quantitative or qualitative evidence for critical analysis **(10)**	Student incorporates appropriate quantitative or qualitative evidence for critical analysis, but minimally **(8)**	Student references quantitative and qualitative evidence used by others, but does not use it to develop own critical analysis **(5)**	Student attempts to use quantitative or qualitative evidence but clearly doesn't understand it **(3)**	Student does not use quantitative or qualitative evidence **(0)**

Organization (10 points)

Organization is clear, logical, and leads the reader clearly through the argument **(10)**	Organization is OK, but occasionally gets off track **(8)**	The reader has to work to understand the organizational approach taken **(5)**	The organizational approach taken is inappropriate for the topic **(3)**	The paper has no discernible organization **(0)**

Technical Competence (6 points)

The final paper has very few minor errors of grammar, spelling, typos, etc. **(6)**	The final paper has a number of minor errors, but it is not too distracting **(5)**	The final paper has so many minor errors that it is distracting from the content **(3)**	The final paper has major errors in grammar, spelling, typos, etc. **(1)**	The paper is so technically incompetent that it is unreadable **(0)**

Writing Fluency (8 points)

The paper is written in a style that is clear, easy to follow, and interesting **(8)**	The paper is well written with only a few awkward spots **(6)**	The paper is able to get its point across, but occasional re-reading is necessary **(4)**	The paper is awkwardly written and hard to read; lots of re-reading needed. **(1)**	The paper is unreadable **(0)**

Reference and Citation Use and Format (8 points)

The sources are cited correctly in a consistent format; everything that should be referenced is referenced **(8)**	Citation format is not consistent or in correct format, but an effort to cite material that should be referenced is made **(6)**	Citation format is incorrect and inconsistent; material that should have been referenced is often not **(4)**	Much that should have been referenced is not referenced in notes or Works Cited **(1)**	There are no references **(0)**

Application of Core Concepts (6 points)

Student demonstrates sophisticated understanding of core concepts in this subfield and applies them appropriately to the research **(6)**	Student demonstrates basic understanding of core concepts in this subfield and applies them appropriately to the research **(5)**	Student does not clearly relate basic concepts from the subfield to the research topic, though the research is consistent with them **(3)**	Student misrepresents or misunderstands the core concepts of the subfield **(1)**	It is in no way apparent that the student had ever understood the core concepts in the subfield **(0)**

Fair and Balanced (6 points)

Student reports on opposing views and responds to them fairly and accurately **(6)**	Student reports on opposing views but tends to treat them as not serious threats to their argument **(5)**	Student recognizes opposing viewpoints but doesn't address them directly **(3)**	Student misrepresents opposing viewpoints **(1)**	That there might be an opposing point of view is not acknowledged. **(0)**

Presentation (6 points)

Creative formatting, good use of illustrations, charts, graphs, table of contents, reference list, etc. **(6)**	Good use of illustrations, charts, graphs, table of contents, reference list, etc.. **(5)**	Sloppy presentation, charts, graphs, are poorly presented; poorly constructed table of contents, reference list, etc. **(3)**	Sloppy presentation; no use of charts, graphs; poorly constructed table of contents, reference list, etc. **(1)**	Very poor presentation; no table of contents; no reference list, etc. **(0)**

Overall (10 points)

This paper reflects full achievement of the learning objectives for the Political Science major being measured by the Senior Thesis **(10)**	This paper reflects nearly full achievement of the learning objectives for the Political Science major being measured by the Senior Thesis **(8)**	This paper reflects partial achievement of the learning objectives for the Political Science major being measured by the Senior Thesis **(5)**	This paper reflects limited achievement of the learning objectives for the Political Science major being measured by the Senior Thesis **(3)**	This paper reflects very little achievement of the learning objectives for the Political Science major being measured by the Senior Thesis **(0)**

100 points	76 points	52 points	26 points	0 points

Scoring:

90-100 points A   55-60 points C+
83-89 points A-   45-54 points C
78-82 points B+   40-44 points C-
67-77 points B   20-39 points D
61-66 points B-   below 20 points F