

**Non-Thesis Track M.A. Comprehensive Exam
Fall Semester 2022**

Instructions

You must address one of the following three questions in your policy paper. Generally, each topic requires you to review, analyze, and synthesize the literature as it pertains to a particular policy area and draw conclusions or make recommendations based on your findings. Please be sure you read the entire question and address all parts of it.

The Fall 2022 exam is being distributed on Monday, August 29, 2022 at 9:00am by Dr. Metcalfe through a password-protected electronic copy. You will confirm receipt of the exam through email between 9:00am and 12:00pm, and upon confirmation, receive a password to open the exam. An electronic copy (pdf format) of your completed examination must be submitted to Dr. Metcalfe between 9:00am and 12:00pm on Friday, October 28, 2022. Late examinations will not be accepted and will result in a failing score. Please note that once you receive the password to open the comprehensive examination document, you are required to submit an examination paper by the deadline; otherwise your exam will receive a failing score. If you experience extenuating circumstances that interfere with your ability to complete your comprehensive exam, you should notify the graduate program director immediately. Please make sure your exam complies with the following **submission requirements**:

- ✓ You have written a response to one of the three questions on the exam.
- ✓ Your submission contains FOUR parts: (1) an Executive Summary (2-3 pages briefly outlining the contents of your paper); (2) a Policy Paper (20-25 pages in length, not including the cover); (3) a separate List of References **formatted using APA** (which does not count against the page limit); and (4) a signed Honor Pledge. Please note that students receiving assistance from the University's writing center is considered a violation of the Honor Pledge.
- ✓ **You have not identified yourself anywhere within the document other than on the cover page.** You will be assigned an **identification code** for each question so your answers can be linked to your name after grading is complete.
- ✓ Your **identification code (XXXX)** is typed on both the cover page and the top right-hand corner (i.e., header) of each page of your answer. (*see attached example page*)
- ✓ You followed the APA format, with **12-point Times New Roman** font, double-spacing, and 1-inch margins throughout your answer.
- ✓ You have checked your document to ensure that you have not plagiarized. Any finding of plagiarism will result in a failing score on the exam. If you are unsure what constitutes plagiarism, please see https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/using_research/avoiding_plagiarism/is_it_plagiarism.html or <http://plagiarism.org/>.
- ✓ You provided a signed honor pledge indicating that you neither gave nor received assistance with the comprehensive examination. Please email the signed honor pledge as a separate attachment.

- ✓ You used a well-developed list of academic sources (i.e., no Wikipedia and no popular media sources except in a very limited way if needed).

When possible (i.e., when there are two or more test takers), your comprehensive examination will be graded in a double-blind manner – neither you nor the faculty graders will know each other’s identities. A three-member committee of graduate faculty will grade all examination questions. To pass the exam, at least 2 of the 3 grading faculty members must give your exam a passing score (a grade of “pass” or “high pass”). To earn a “high pass”, all grading faculty members must assign a grade of “high pass.” Students who fail this examination are permitted to retake it one additional time.

Exam Questions (Please Answer One):

1. Recent high-profile fatal encounters between black citizens and police officers (e.g., George Floyd) led to widespread social unrest and anti-police protests with some calling for defunding law enforcement agencies. In response, there has been an increase in de-escalation training for officers to reduce police use of force. Write a policy paper in which you review the empirical research on de-escalation training and assess the evidence on whether such training leads to reductions in police use of force. Based on what you find, make recommendations as to whether de-escalation training should be more widely adopted by law enforcement and which training methods hold the most promise for reducing violence between the police and citizens.
2. The Governor of South Carolina has appointed you to a task force on prisoner reentry. Offender reentry is often a difficult process to navigate, and it is critical that correctional stakeholders understand the types of programs and services that work to encourage cessation of criminal behavior and aid offenders’ successful reintegration into their communities. Prepare a report that (1) discusses the empirical research on the needs of reentering prisoners, (2) reviews contemporary offender reentry initiatives designed to aid offenders’ successful reentry, and (3) concludes with recommendations for South Carolina.
3. Approximately two-thirds of all intimate partner homicides in the United States each year are committed with a firearm. Write a policy paper in which you (1) examine the empirical literature on the effectiveness of various resources, laws, and policies aimed at reducing intimate partner homicide, (2) summarize and evaluate recent federal legislation aimed at this issue, and (3) make suggestions for future policy recommendations to reduce intimate partner homicide.

XXXX



Your 4-digit ID
always goes
here, as
shown

[Example of Cover Sheet]

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Fall 2021

“Topic”

Student Name

Executive Summary