



# HARVARD EXTENSION SCHOOL

## Office of ALB Advising and Program Administration

51 Brattle Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138-3722 • (617) 495-9413 • [www.extension.harvard.edu](http://www.extension.harvard.edu) • [alb@extension.harvard.edu](mailto:alb@extension.harvard.edu)

## Reading and Research Proposal

The Reading and Research (R&R) course option is designed for Bachelor of Liberal Arts (ALB) degree candidates with strong academic records who want to pursue a research project of their own design, similar to a thesis, carried out under the supervision of a Harvard instructor (i.e., instructors with a teaching appointment at Harvard Extension School, Harvard College, GSAS or the other Harvard graduate schools).

To be eligible, you need to have completed 64 credits toward the degree with 32 credits taken at Harvard (with at least 12 of the Harvard credits being in the research area), and you must have a 3.50 or higher cumulative GPA.

You are an ideal candidate for this option if, after completing a number of courses in a particular area, you have developed an original idea, question, or problem worth researching. Research requires original thought on your part, rather than paraphrasing or summarizing source material similar to a “book report” style of work. The proposed topic must be an academic research question; it cannot be a creative writing piece or a purely artistic work, such as a novel or collection of original photographs.

The project is worth 4 credits, and you can only complete one project, ordinarily in your final year. The tuition is the same as a 4-credit undergraduate course. (Please see the [Paying for School](#) page for current tuition rates.)

The deadlines for submitting this R&R Proposal form (completed through Step 4, below) to the Office of ALB Advising and Program Administration are July 1 for fall term projects, November 1 for spring term projects, and April 1 for summer term projects.

### Sequence of Steps:

#### Step 1

Meet with your academic advisor to discuss your interest in pursuing a Reading and Research project.

#### Step 2

Meet with Associate Director Mark Ouchida at least one month prior to the proposal deadline and before contacting faculty members. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss your ideas for the research project and to narrow the focus into a workable research question. Have in mind a couple of possible Harvard instructors you wish to supervise the project and have a draft of the proposal ready.

#### Step 3

After meeting with Mark, meet with potential faculty member (using the draft of this form as a guide) to negotiate the proposal topic, scope, and reading list. Once an agreement is reached, produce a final draft of the Reading and Research form to submit to the Office of ALB Advising and Program Administration that has the faculty supervisor’s signature, which is confirmation of his or her agreement to work with you on the project.

#### Step 4

Submit this completed form to the Office of ALB Advising and Program Administration ([alb@extension.harvard.edu](mailto:alb@extension.harvard.edu)) for approval. Once approved, letters are sent to you and the faculty member. The letter will indicate the registration procedures. You cannot begin work or register for the Reading and Research course until you receive the approval letter from the ALB office.

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## Reading and Research Proposal Form

### Student Information

FULL LEGAL NAME (exactly as printed on your government-issued ID)												
Last/Family/Sur name(s)	First/Given name(s)	Middle name(s)										
HARVARD ID NUMBER												
<table border="1"> <tr> <td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td> </tr> </table> <p>(appears on your ID card)</p>												
CURRENT ADDRESS												
Street												
City	State/Province	Zip/Postal code										
DAYTIME PHONE NUMBER												
E-MAIL ADDRESS												
GPA	FIELD OF STUDY											

must be 3.50 or higher

### A. Coursework

List the courses that you already have completed that are relevant to your proposed topic. You must have a minimum of 12 credits of Harvard courses in the research area.

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### B. Sample Research Paper

Describe the most significant research paper or project that you have completed to date (you may attach a word document).

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**C. Timeline for your Reading and Research Paper or Project**

Be specific about the number of meetings you plan to have with your faculty supervisor, the days and times, how those meetings will proceed, start and end dates, and the research methods you will employ. Make sure you are setting a realistic timeline that will ensure completion by the end of the term. (Please see the Academic Calendar page for reference.)

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**D. Initial Bibliography**

Include an initial bibliography of references you have consulted as well as references you plan to use.

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**E. Tentative Reading and Research Title** \_\_\_\_\_

Subject code: \_\_\_\_\_ (for example: HIST, PSYC, GOVT)

**F. Research Question, Background, and Design**

Attach a three-to-five page, double-spaced WORD document that addresses each of the following:

- State the research question (problem or dilemma).
- Explain how you developed the question.
- Put the research question into historical, cultural, or artistic context for the reader.
- Make a case for its importance to the field.
- Describe how you intend to answer the question.

Student's signature _____	Date _____
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**Faculty Member’s Approval**

By signing this form, you agree to work with the above mentioned Harvard Extension School undergraduate degree candidate, have regularly scheduled meetings, and provide guidance in order for the student to complete a substantial academic research paper of approximately 35–40 pages in length. A stipend of \$1,175 is paid to you upon receipt of the student’s grade. If you have any questions or concerns about this process, please email Mark Ouchida, Associate Director of the Office of ALB Advising and Program Administration, at *alb@extension.harvard.edu*. We appreciate your participation. Reading and Research projects are an important opportunity for self-directed undergraduate students and a critical component of the ALB Degree Program.

Name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Title and department \_\_\_\_\_

Harvard ID number \_\_\_\_\_

University address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty member’s signature _____	Date _____
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