

**Non-Thesis Track M.A. Comprehensive Exam
Fall Semester 2021**

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 2021 exam is being distributed on Monday, August 30th 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 29, 2021. 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 if necessary, 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. The past year has presented several challenges to police agencies. There has been much pressure on reforming policies and practices in the wake of several high-profile excessive use of force cases. These cases sparked much broader discussions about race, police-community relationships, and the institution of policing. In addition, there are indications some violent crimes such as shootings have increased in large cities. How can police agencies address both issues? What are the trade-offs? Please provide a summary and critical analysis of recent research on these topics.
2. One of the important issues in criminology and criminal justice is the impact of training. Pick an area of training in policing, courts or corrections and describe an intervention that you think would improve the field. Once you have explained the theory behind the intervention, and how training is to be implemented, create an evaluation methodology. You will be assessed on the details and completeness of your methods, especially the issues you foresee in the evaluation.
3. Recently, the state legislature of South Carolina voted to allow state residents to open carry firearms, given they are of legal age and can pass a criminal background check and introductory firearm safety course. Based on theoretical and empirical research, write a policy paper that describes, synthesizes, and critically and objectively evaluates:
 - a. Whether and the extent to which firearms play a role in injury causation and harm mitigation;
 - b. The current status of research on firearm policies and gunshot injuries (pay close attention to the quality of the evidence);
 - c. Given this line of empirical research, discuss the plausible effects of South Carolina's open carry law on violent crime. Be sure also to discuss the implications for police organizations in responding to local gun violence.

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