

URS Thesis Proposal Example – Arts, Humanities, & Social Sciences

Download a blank URS Application Planning Template to draft your proposal here:

<http://tx.ag/2526URSPlanningTemplate>

Refer to the **Application Instructions & Examples Guide** for content requirements expectations.

Section 1: Contact Information

Student Applicant

Aggie First	Click or tap here to enter text.	Aggie Last	123456789
<i>First Name</i>	<i>Middle Name</i>	<i>Last Name</i>	<i>9-digit UIN</i>

Check Thesis Type

- ☐ Team Thesis (Up to 5 Members)
 ☒ Individual Thesis

Faculty Advisor(s)

PRIMARY ADVISOR:

Advisor First	Advisor Last	DEPT	advisor@tamu.edu
<i>First Name (and Middle Initial)</i>	<i>Last Name</i>	<i>Department</i>	<i>Email Address</i>

SECONDARY ADVISOR (IF APPLICABLE):

Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
<i>First Name (and Middle Initial)</i>	<i>Last Name</i>	<i>Department</i>	<i>Email Address</i>

TERTIARY ADVISOR (IF APPLICABLE):

Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
<i>First Name (and Middle Initial)</i>	<i>Last Name</i>	<i>Department</i>	<i>Email Address</i>

Section 2: Proposal

Section 2.1: Project Summary

PROPOSAL TITLE:

Aggies Missing in Action

PROJECT SUMMARY:

Among the 81,000 American Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines currently missing in action are 165 Aggies, former students of Texas A&M who answered the call to serve and who ultimately gave their lives. While there are official lists of Aggies who have served and were killed in action, there is no comprehensive list of Aggies Missing in Action, nor has there been any recognition of these Aggies by Texas A&M. My research seeks to identify these Aggies and lay the foundation for further analysis into their lives and service, while identifying ways the university can honor their service and sacrifice. This research is important because it will provide the first in-depth look into the lives of these Aggies and will serve as a platform for students and faculty to conduct further research potentially leading to their recovery. The expected outcome of this research is a comprehensive database of Aggies missing in action with accompanying photographs and information cataloged on a story map, providing a breakdown by service branch, conflict, and last known location. It is our duty to honor their sacrifices and bring them home.

Section 2.2: Introduction

The Defense POW (Prisoner of War) MIA (Missing in Action) Accounting Agency was officially established in 2015. Tasked by the Department of Defense to recover service personnel classified as Missing in Action from World War Two through Vietnam, the DPAA is continually enhancing their research and recovery methods to align with the latest technological developments, giving researchers an opportunity to analyze cases from new perspectives (Terril 150). Today, recovering those who have once been deemed unrecoverable is no longer an impossibility.

Currently, the number of service personnel Missing in Action who attended Texas A&M rests at 165 individuals. This number has been reached and confirmed through personal research methods outlined in Section 2.4. Serving in all capacities, these Aggies are composed of the finest few who gave their lives and who have yet to come home. These individuals have also not been recognized in any official capacity by Texas A&M University. Books such as *Texas Aggies Go To War*, and the *Book of Aggie Lists*, which have been written as the foremost resources on Aggies during wartime do not include a list of Aggies Missing in Action. While admitting that “lists might still suffer from omissions and errors,” (Woodall xii), the omission of a complete list of Aggies Missing in Action is a glaring one. As a university built upon the values of selfless service it is necessary to facilitate the remembrance and commemoration of these Aggies and their sacrifices (Dethloff xi). My research will offer the university a way to accurately and fully communicate the sacrifices and service of Aggies Missing in Action, allowing students to engage directly with the past and the university’s core values, as well as provide future students and researchers a platform to track progress towards potential recovery efforts.

Beginning with background historical research, my thesis seeks to provide a confirmed and complete list of every Aggie who was declared Missing in Action from World War II through the Vietnam War. The range of this project between World War Two through the Vietnam War reflects the mandated scope of the DPAA’s mission statement in who they have deemed recoverable, and there are no Aggies Missing in Action after the Vietnam War. This scope is necessary for the thesis because the thesis seeks to provide Texas A&M University with a complete list of every Aggie Missing in Action between World War Two through the Vietnam War. Once the list is complete, further research will be conducted in order to categorize the Aggies by service branch and conflict, mapping their last known locations on a story map that includes their photographs, information on how and why they went missing, as well as a biography containing general facts about their birth, hometown, major, service at A&M, familial data, and cause of death. My research will also act as the foundation for a database which will serve as a living research document that can be updated and edited as future students and faculty continue researching the lives and circumstances of the Aggies Missing in Action.

Through further analysis of past, present, and changing MIA recovery efforts, my research will identify Aggies who have the greatest potential for recovery, giving researchers a base to launch future research and potential recovery programs. My research will also examine military commemoration practices at Texas A&M and will present the university with options for creating a permanent structure or memorial for our Aggies Missing in Action. It is our duty to honor their sacrifices and preserve their memory, and to one day bring them home.

Section 2.3: Objective(s)/Goal(s)

My research objective is to accurately identify, categorize, and map the locations of all Aggie servicemen from World War II through the Vietnam War who are currently Missing in Action in order to provide students and researchers a platform to track progress towards future recovery efforts. As the first full-scope analysis into the lives and service of these Aggies, my research will also identify ways for Texas A&M to honor their service and sacrifices.

Section 2.4: Methodology/Theoretical Framework

I plan to conduct my research through a historical lens, relying on historical, geospatial, and theoretical archaeological research methods. Properly identifying Aggies Missing in Action requires the use of sources involving lists of Aggies Killed in Action such as The Book of Aggie Lists and Aggies Go to War, which are cross checked against lists of military personnel currently Missing in Action provided by the Defense POW MIA Accounting Agency. The current number of Aggies Missing in Action, which rests at 165, has been derived from this research method. The information provided by the DPAA also includes the names of units the Aggies served with as well as last known location. Resources from the Association of Former Students as well as Texas A&M yearbooks will provide their photographs and confirmation of their attendance at the university. The personal background information of the Aggies, such as birthdate, hometown, marriage, military records, etc. will be provided by interns under the supervision of Dr. Erika Bravo, Texas A&M's DPAA Research Partner Historian, using online genealogical resources such as Ancestry, Family Search, Newspaper Archives, etc. provided by Texas A&M Library Databases. This information will be collected in a database and categorized and mapped using software such as ArcMap and ArcGIS, also provided by Texas A&M.

Section 2.5: Bibliography/References/Works Cited**MLA (MODERN LANGUAGES ASSOCIATION) EXAMPLE**

Mathis, Carlton et al. "What Prevents Business Faculty and Students from Participating in Undergraduate Research?" *Council on Undergraduate Research Quarterly*, vol. 35, no. 4, 2015, 35-41.

APA (AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION) EXAMPLE

Mathis, C., Ramos, H., Gonzalez, E., & Datta, S. (2015). What prevents business faculty and students from participating in undergraduate research? *Council on Undergraduate Research Quarterly* *Council on Undergraduate Research Quarterly*, 35(4), 35-41.

CHICAGO EXAMPLE

Mathis, Carlton et al., "What Prevents Business Faculty and Students from Participating in Undergraduate Research?" *Council on Undergraduate Research Quarterly* 35, no.4 (2015): 35-41, accessed June 15, 2023, <https://www.cur.org/what/publications/journals/curq/issues/>.

Section 5: Contingency Plan

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The virtual nature of the project addresses many issues arising from inability to travel, obtaining research space, and other in-person resources as all genealogical and mapping resources are available online through Texas A&M University. Basic information on an individual's location, unit, and dates of service, are also available through the DPAA's online databases. While in-person research at Texas A&M libraries will be conducted, if for any reason I am unable, all needed resources are accessible through online platforms provided by the University.

The nature of the project also addresses a potential for incomplete data, as the goals of the project will still be met as the use of a database and story map to catalog the initial data about the servicemen will allow future students and researchers to continually update and complete any missing information.

Any lack of biographical information on an individual Missing in Action will not affect the overall analysis of their place in the conflict in which they were lost. Certain Aggies with information pointing to research trends who have served and are Missing in Action will be highlighted, but each serviceman will have their basic information listed, which can readily be found through genealogical, historical, and archival resources.

Section 6: Timeline

Section 6.1: September and October Goals

September Goals

- **Week 1: September 1-7**
 - Beginning of Fall History Research Internship to continue summer work on researching MIA Aggies.
 - Conduct a meeting with faculty advisors to go over the scope and aim of the project, finalize the thesis application and discuss presenting at Symposium.
 - Continue GIS story map software training.
 - **Sept. 5, 2025, at 9:00 AM: Thesis App Deadline**
- **Week 2: September 8-14**
 - Wait to receive application comments and revise application.
 - Begin a rough outline of proposed thesis sections and talk with advisors about how to incorporate the digital component.
 - Attend a Research Compliance Drop-in to ensure project is in compliance.
- **Week 3: September 15-21**
 - Begin to pick out certain stories to highlight in the thesis and finalize selection of one story.
- **Week 4: September 22-28**
 - Begin an analysis of Aggies MIA, their connection to each other, and the greater conflict.
 - Monthly Project Check with faculty advisors.

October Goals

- **Week 1: September 29 - October 5**
 - Have all pictures and names of Aggies Missing in Action finalized.
 - Have all relative personal information on the Aggies completed (predetermined by Aggie MIA research spreadsheet)
 - Read over the URS Canvas Community and mark requirements/deadlines in calendar.
- **Week 2: October 6-12**
 - Complete a basic story map with all finalized pictures and MIA locations.
 - Finalize rough draft of story map- find editors.
 - Review Thesis templates and finalize selection with advisors.
- **Week 3: October 13-19 (Fall Break)**
 - Sign up for October Group Check-in on Canvas.
- **Week 4: October 20-26**
 - Attend October Group Check-in meeting.
 - Start to incorporate previous outline into my thesis template.
- **Week 5: October 27- November 2**
 - Review materials on URS Canvas page for Orientation Quiz.
 - Monthly Project Check with faculty advisors, submit presentation for review.

Section 6.2: November and December Goals

November Goals

- **Week 1: November 3-9**
 - November 4: Complete Orientation Quiz on Canvas by midnight deadline.
 - Identify a publisher and begin writing an abstract.
 - November 9: Deliver presentation at Never Forgotten: Conflict Archaeology and Military History at Texas A&M Symposium.
 - Sign up for November Group Check-in on Canvas.
- **Week 2: November 10-16**
 - Complete Public Presentation Report and submit on Canvas (not due until April 15).
 - Begin writing a rough draft of the complete research, starting with a detailed outline.
 - Attend November Group Check-in meeting.
- **Week 3: November 17-23**
 - Continue writing thesis, finish at least 250 words.
 - November 18: Complete Thesis Formatting Quiz on Canvas by midnight deadline.
 - Start preparing fall Progress Report
- **Week 4: November 24-30 (Thanksgiving Break)**
 - Register for UGST 405 Thesis Writing Course.
 - November 24: Exhibit due for Advanced Museum Studies Class.
 - Monthly Project Check with faculty advisors.

December Goals

- **Week 1: December 1-7**
 - December 5: Attend POWER Writing Productivity Session.
 - December 7: Submit Progress Report 1 by midnight deadline.
 - Continue any edits towards the GIS portion of the project.
 - Conduct end of semester meeting with advisors & send thesis draft to advisor before Winter Break.
- **Week 2: December 8-14**
 - End of Fall 2025 Semester Dec. 16
 - Continue writing, incorporate feedback and edits from advisors.
- **Week 3: December 15-21**
 - Continue writing for at least 30 minutes per day.
- **Week 4: December 22-28**
 - Winter Holiday
- **Week 5: December 29 – January 4**
 - Winter Holiday

Section 6.3: January and February Goals

January Goals

- **Week 1: January 5-11**
 - Continue to write Thesis. Goal: 30 minutes per day.
 - By the end of Winter Break: have at least 1,000 words written.
- **Week 2: January 12-18**
 - January 12: First day of Spring 2026
 - January 15: Attend Writing Abstracts Workshop and incorporate advice into draft.
 - Continue writing, finish at least 375 more words.
 - Sign up for January Group Check-in on Canvas.
- **Week 3: January 19-25**
 - Attend January Group Check-in meeting.
 - Submit Installment 1 to faculty advisors for edits and approval.
 - Fill in Preliminary Pages in Thesis Template in preparation for Installment 1 deadline.
 - Sign up for a meeting with the University Writing Center to go over proofreading.
 - Finalize draft abstract for URS Symposium
 - January 25: Register for URS Symposium by midnight deadline.
- **Week 4: January 26- February 1**
 - January 30: Attend Thesis Help Drop-in Session 1.
 - Monthly Project Check with faculty advisors.
 - Incorporate edits from advisors into thesis draft & check word count.
 - Begin working on presentation draft for URS Symposium.
 - February 1: Submit Installment 1 by the midnight deadline.

February Goals

- **Week 1: February 2-8**
 - February 3: Finish writing and submit Progress Report 2 by midnight deadline.
 - Work on Installment 1 revisions
 - Finish writing methods section (word count goal: 2,000 words)
 - Send presentation draft to advisor for feedback.
- **Week 2: February 9-15**
 - Continue writing (word count goal: 3,500 words minimum)
 - Finalize URS Symposium presentation and print poster
 - Finish reviewing all sources and begin organizing citations
- **Week 3: February 16-22**
 - February 18: URS Symposium
 - Continue writing (word count goal, Installment 2 minimum: 4,125 words)
- **Week 4: February 23- March 1**
 - Send Installment 2 to faculty advisors to approve.
 - February 27: Thesis Help Drop-in Session 2
 - Monthly Project Check with faculty advisors.
 - Incorporate edits from advisors into draft.
 - March 1: Submit Installment 2 by midnight deadline.

Section 6.4: March and April Goals

March Goals

- **Week 1: March 2-8**
 - March 3: Progress Report 3 & Proof of Conference, deadline at midnight
 - Finalize complete draft of thesis.
 - Submit final draft to faculty advisors for edits.
- **Week 2: March 9-15 (Spring Break)**
 - Continue edits and work on ensuring formatting is correct.
 - Incorporate all suggested formatting edits from Installment 2 and finalize thesis document
 - Sign up for March Group Check-in 4.
- **Week 3: March 16-22**
 - Attend March Group Check-in 4 meeting.
 - Make sure all aspects of the thesis are formatted correctly.
 - Submit final draft to faculty for approval.
- **Week 4: March 23-29**
 - Incorporate final edits from faculty advisors into draft.
 - Monthly Project Check with faculty advisors.
 - Attend Final Thesis Help Drop-in Session on either March 30 or March 31 to finalize formatting.

April Goals

- **Week 1: March 30 – April 5**
 - **April 1, 9:00 AM - FINAL THESIS DEADLINE**
- **Week 2: April 6-12**
 - Final thesis document formatting check, fix document formatting as requested by program staff.
 - Double check Public Presentation Report (submitted in Fall) is correct before the April 15 deadline.