

## How to comment on research proposals

- The main purpose of a research plan is to explain what is or are the questions that the author plans to answer, what kind methods will be used to find an answer, and why the answer could be interesting and important. Most important comments pertain to how the plan achieves or does not achieve these main goals.
- Do not merely repeat what is in the proposal. For example, if the author claims that the question is important because of X do not write that you agree that it is important because X, or that you disagree because not X. You can have a different take on why it is or is not important. You should add further reasons why X or not X.
- Do you anticipate problems in executing the plan that are not mentioned in the proposal?
- Point out dubious or misleading claims and factual mistakes.
- Clarifying questions. What arguments or claims do you not understand, or are not sure that you understand them the way the author intended?
- What more would you like to know about the project? Further questions or closely related questions that the plan raises.
- Present a fact or a claim from a named (or linked) source and explain why it is relevant for the proposed research. Explain how it casts doubt or increases our confidence in a point made by the author.
- Your additional ideas. Could this or a closely related question be answered in a different way (specify)? Could the results also have this type of uses or implications? Explain why you think this might be the case.
- Do not worry about the author's page limit. You can ask for further information, even though it would not have fit in the proposal. However, comments about how something that was left out would be more important than something that was included are particularly valuable.
- All submitted comments must be about content, not form or style. You will do the author a favor by correcting errors in grammar or spelling but they do not belong in the thesis seminar. You should deliver possible corrections outside the MyCourses system.