# מבל נקי

**Israel National Defense College**

**The 48th Class 2021-2020**

**Guide to the Final Research Project**

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# **Introduction**

The final research project is one of the most important tasks carried out during the INDC academic year (which also serves as 20% of credits required for the MA degree). This is an obligating, creative and challenging undertaking; it is the essence of the creativeness of each participant as individuals and of each team working together.

The personal style of each and every one of you, the energy you bring to the team's dynamics, the challenges you will meet along the way, and the joint experience that will evolve while working with your academic instructor will all influence the final product - a research project that represents the unique intellectual world of its authors.

You will choose the literary material, define the method of your work, draft the research questions and define the pace.

The goal of this pamphlet is to provide basic guidelines and direction for the research process and the writing of the final project. The guide includes technical details (e.g. the number of words, font size and method of printing) and more significant information, such as working with the academic advisor, the structure of the work, writing style and more. This pamphlet is a useful guide intended to help you understand the process and the roles of your partners in this journey. It will serve you when you face obstacles and pitfalls and will help you turn the writing of this paper into a creative and committed experience.

Good luck!!

# **Part I: The Preparation Stage**

## Multi-disciplinary teams

The work on the final project is a group effort. Each team will have three participants coming from different backgrounds and schools of thought that will facilitate multi-disciplinary research. Therefore, the choice of the team's members must be based on the differences between them on one hand, and the desire to carry out a joint research project, on the other. The composition of the teams, in general, is at the discretion of the participants. However, the INDC staff will consult and ensure the teams are indeed multi-disciplinary.

## Choosing the subject and the research question

The subject of the work must be directly related to national security issues. It must be currently relevant and allow multi-disciplinary research. When choosing the subject, we want you also to think of the reader of the work (i.e. who is the paper directed to, which organization will receive the work, etc.). The topic should represent the professional fields of each of the team's members in order to ensure everyone's continuous interest in the project. It is also easier to write an academic paper that holds importance for you beyond the INDC.

You can choose from the list of subjects provided by the various organizations when discussing the project, but it should be modified to the specific field of the participants. Topics not included in this list can also be offered by the participants.

The research question is the heart of the project, and it needs to be drafted clearly and convincingly; it needs to present an intellectual challenge addressed by critical thinking. The question needs to be both open and complex.

## Presentation for Committee Approval

You will be requested to present the project's subject and research question to the Final Project Committee, comprised of the Commandant, Prof. Yossi Ben-Artzi, Dr. Doron Navot and the Chief Instructor. You will only be able to start your research after the committee has provided its approval.

## Academic advisors and the method of work

Academic conventions mandate that final projects are accompanied by an academic advisor. This method places importance on the mentoring process that develops with the team on one hand, and the authors' independence, on the other. The academic advisor will introduce you to experts in specific fields that help in the creation of a quality paper. During the process of writing the paper, the academic advisors will instruct you on a team basis. The level of connection with the academic advisor will vary from team to team. There will be teams that will be able to write their paper in a relatively independent manner. In these cases, the relationship between the team and the academic advisor will be limited, however, the INDC requires at least two direct meetings between the team and the academic advisor. Experience has shown us that many teams need the guidance and close cooperation with the academic advisor, which serves as a primary condition of the process' success.

The choice of academic advisors is the responsibility of Prof. Yossi Ben-Artzi and Dr. Doron Navot, and many parameters are taken into consideration. Besides being an expert in the field of the final project, it is important the team chooses a guide that facilitates the team's learning, from a personal, national security and multi-disciplinary aspect. The availability of the academic advisors must also be taken into consideration, in addition to the methods of communication with them. The participants are welcome to recommend academic advisors who meet these criteria.

The interaction between the academic advisor and the team mostly depend on you. We recommend that you maintain continuous contact with your academic advisors and report your current situation and consult them with how to continue. This is beyond the requirement that the academic advisor approve the research proposal prior to being submitted to the Final Project Committee. We recommend not being dependent on consultation at the outset, but to present portions of the work as they evolve. This will ensure the project progresses in an acceptable manner. On the other hand, efforts should be made not to occupy the academic advisor with too many drafts. Therefore, please do not ask the academic advisors to correct grammatical and styling errors, and do not expect them to do so. This is the reason that the INDC staff is at your disposal, and you are welcome to approach them with any issue. The academic advisor's role is to assist you with the content and method.

## Preparing a detailed work schedule

The following is a table of the defined schedule for each stage of the process. This table is intended to help you prepare a work plan that is acceptable to the entire team.

|  | **Subject** | **Essence of the stage** | **Date** | | | | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Sept** | **Oct** | **Nov** | **Dec** | **Jan** | **Feb** | **March** | **April** | **May** | **June** | **July** |
| 1. | Presentation to the class | Chief Instructor + Prof. Ben Artzi presentation | 15.9 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2. | Choosing teams | Submission of proposal and team membership |  | 15.10 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3. | Approval of teams and topic | Presentation to the Final Project Committee |  | 25-29.10 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4. | Start with approved academic advisor | Initiation meeting |  |  | 29.11 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 6. | Writing the research proposal | Meetings with the team + academic advisor + accompanying instructor + Anat for reading material + language consultant |  |  |  | 27-31.12 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 7. | Submission of the research proposal | Each team submits |  |  |  |  | 5.1 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 8. | Approval of research proposal | Committee approval |  |  |  |  | 19.1 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 9. | Writing the final project | Meetings with the academic advisor + language consultant + instructors |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | Writing the work |
| 10. | Presentation of first draft of the final project to the plenum | Academic advisor + instructor + language consultant |  |  |  |  |  |  | 24.3 |  |  |  |  |
| 11. | Receiving written feedback | Academic advisor + instructor |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 12.4 |  |  |  |
| 12. | Presentation of the final project in the plenum | PPT approval - Anat |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 28.4 | 3.5  6.5  18.5 |  |  |
| 13. | Final submission following corrections |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 1.6 |  |
| 14. | Receiving feedback and grade |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 1.7 |

## The role of accompanying instructors

Each final project will have an accompanying instructor from the INDC staff. Their role is to assist you to focus on the subject of the work, to enhance the passion to research, to pique your curiosity by introducing you to relevant experts who can assist you, to recommend places that are worthwhile to visit and relevant to the research question, and more. The instructors are also responsible to ensure that schedules are met and that tasks are submitted in a timely manner. They can also help you in reviewing drafts and providing comments to improve the paper.

# **Part II: Writing the Research Proposal**

After the topic, research question and academic advisor have been approved, the research proposal must be written.

The research proposal will be submitted to the Final Project Committee.

## The research structure

The research proposal will range between 5-8 pages (not including the bibliography).

The research project must include the following:

* Cover page - project name, the team's members, the academic advisor, date.
* The project's goals.
* The importance of the subject to national security.
* The research question and secondary inquiries.
* The research method.
* The project's structure (detailed outline).
* The project's limits (what the project does not address).
* Terminology - a short theoretical background presenting the project's main terminology.
* List of sources (partial).

## Proposal submission

Prior to submitting the proposal for the academic advisor's approval, it is recommended to submit it to the accompanying instructor for review. After receiving approval from the academic advisor, the proposal must be submitted to the Final Project Committee. The proposal will be submitted in an MS-Word file, font 12 (titles - font 14), double spaced and justified to both sides.

The proposal will be submitted according to APA citation conventions, which are attached as an appendix.

# **Part III: Working on the Project**

## Collecting data and findings (texts, meetings, interviews).

Most sources of information used in the INDC are texts, both primary and secondary. In the data-collection stage, it is recommended to use the Senior Learning Center to assist you in finding relevant reading material. In addition, it is recommended to search the Haifa University library and other academic repositories. Private instruction sessions will be provided upon request.

Your team's resourcefulness can discover new things. Therefore, you can not only rely on the research's literature. You should initiate meetings with stakeholders and experts, carry out extensive interviews with senior officials and decision makers, visit various institutions that are related to the research question, etc. The INDC staff will help you connect to relevant functionaries to collect data.

## Data analysis and interpretation

The next stage is sorting and organizing the data. Here, your ability to find new relationships and connections is expressed. When analyzing the information, it is recommended that you use the tools taught in the INDC courses, e.g. Basics in National Security, Strategic Thought, Approaches and Schools of Thought in Political Science, etc.

The rules of academic writing must be kept in mind as they require you to cite (in parenthesis) the source of your information. In each paragraph in which you quote a text, the author's surname must be cited in parenthesis, then a comma, the year of publication and pages of the publishing periodical. For example: (John Doe, 1975, p. 34). This allows the reader to verify the information to which you are referring. When you write your own interpretation of the information you have read, you do not need to cite the source.

When you address work carried out by a specific researcher, e.g. Freud, but you have not actually read Freud's book and are referring to a secondary source, you must note (in parenthesis) the book you are actually reading, and not the original source. For example, if Freud is mentioned in a book written by John Doe, the following should be noted: Freud claims that.... (Doe, 2019, p. 7).

An important note: INDC projects do not use footnotes. If you have something important to say, write in the body of the paper. If what you have to say is not really important - leave it out.

## The Project's Structure

The recommended structure in the INDC is as follows (the number of sections may vary):

|  |
| --- |
| Executive Summary  Table of Contents  Introduction (5-8 pages)   1. The goal of the work 2. The research questions 3. Terminology/theoretical background 4. The method 5. The importance to national security 6. The project's boundaries   Part I - Name (15 pages)   1. Sub-section 2. Sub-section 3. Sub-section   Part II - Name (15 pages)   1. Sub-section 2. Sub-section 3. Sub-section   Part III - Name (15 pages)   1. Sub-section 2. Sub-section 3. Sub-section   Discussion - discussing the findings of the work, presenting a model, recommendations to decision makers (10 pages).  Summary - reviewing the research question and its objectives - (2-3 pages).  Bibliography |

The final paper will have between 50-80 pages; font 12 (titles font 14), double spaced and with justified paragraphs.

Each project must also include a cover page with the logo and name of the institution, the title of the project and the names and ID numbers of the authors. The name and title of the academic advisor and submission date must also be included.

If you decide to write a page of acknowledgements, attach it after the cover page and before the table of contents.

A good project is one that is balanced from all aspects. For example, the length of the chapters must be more or less equal. When one chapter is very long (e.g. 30 pages) and another is very short (e.g. 3 pages), it disturbs the balance. If there is no way to extend or shorten a chapter, it should be noted in the description of the chapters in the Introduction (this section is shorter because.... / this is the main section, therefore...). Moreover, when you divide a chapter into sub-sections, make sure that one or two paragraphs could not be combined into one. On the other hand, 10 consecutive pages without any division makes it hard to read and understand.

Do not forget to add page numbers. The pages from the introduction to the very end of the paper need to be numbered. The cover page, table of contents, summary and bibliography are not to be numbered.

It is recommended to include visual aids into the paper, such as photos, caricatures, graphs, and tables. When you present numerical or quantitative data, it is recommended to do so in an appropriate graph and not just with verbal explanations. The visual materials must be numbered and given a title. For example:

**Table no. 1: The Number of Positive Covid-19 Cases in Bnei Brak**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

The same is true for photos, graphs and illustrations. At the end of the paper, lists of tables, photos and illustrations must be added, including the page number on which they appear.

For example, this is how a list of graphs and tables should appear:

List of illustrations and tables:

Illustration No. 1: Noteworthy points 6

Illustration No. 2: Increase of a trend 14

Illustration No. 3: Violence in the city 21

Table No. 1: List of participants 28

Table No. 2: Viable solutions 33

## Submitting a draft to accompanying instructor, academic advisor and colleagues

When you have completed a draft, even for part of the work, it is recommended to be assisted by colleagues. Utilize the advantages of working as a team and read (even out loud) the parts of the project that were written by other members of the team. You will be surprised that sometimes you have to make an effort to understand what you yourself wanted to express. Do not give up if you find that you need to write numerous drafts. Collect as many comments as you can from anyone you can; make the necessary corrections and write a better version. The writing process is one of "back and forth", and it is the only way to achieve successful results.

## Preparation of a professional PPT and its presentation in the plenum

Between April 28th and May 18th, 2021, you will be asked to present your project, in its current state, to the plenum. This is an important step, because this in when all the team's members contribute to one unified presentation. When the final paper is presented, no one is supposed to know that it was divided among three authors who are not professionally or organizationally related. The final result is a product from all the team's members, and everyone must stand behind the final presentation. When presenting the final project, it does not matter who wrote each specific chapter - what is important is the final product.

When presenting, the logical progression of the idea must be presented rationally. Make sure you do not repeat any content or ideas. It is important to make sure all the graphs are presented in a unified manner throughout the presentation. When preparing the presentation, read the paper from start to finish, and focus on the main messages. Anat Chen, in the Senior Learning Center, is available for consultation and advice.

The presentation will be held in the plenum with the presence of the Final Project Committee, led by the Commandant. The time allotted for the presentation is limited, and it cannot be exceeded. The important part is the time for comments and remarks. Make sure you leave time for this. We recommend writing your comments on paper and addressing them before you submit the final copy.

# **Part IV: Submitting the Final Project**

## Literary editing

Many people find it difficult to express their thoughts on paper in a clear and simple manner. We therefore recommend that you invest some effort in the writing style and the manner in which you organize your ideas for the reader, who is not necessarily familiar with the subject you have written about.

Write in short and concise sentences. When a sentence is too long, by the time they reach its end, the reader has forgotten what was written in its beginning. Do not feel you need to emulate the original book or article from which you have taken the information. Write your understandings in your own words.

Pay attention to paragraphs. Proper paragraphing assists the reader's understanding. Without this, or if it is done incorrectly, it makes the reading difficult and fatigues the reader. Each sentence must end with a period. Commas and periods are never proceeded by a space.

An academic paper is written in paragraphs. This is different than military writing conventions. You must make an effort not to write in "bullets", but in full paragraphs. Each paragraph should only have one main idea. If the paragraph is too long, see how it can divided into two. There must be a logical connection between each section. When you read the paragraphs you have written, write the connection between them in the margins. This will help you find where you need to move a paragraph from one place to another. In general, each page should have between two and four paragraphs.

The connection between sections must also be clear. The method must be from the general to the specific, or vice versa.

For assistance in this area, Dr. Orna Kazemirsky, the INDC's language consultant, is available for assistance. Dr. Kazemirsky has many years of experience assisting students writing INDC papers. Each team working on its final projects has "a bank" of 8 hours with the language consultant that can be used at the team's discretion. We highly recommend using these hours with the language consultant, even in the beginning stages of the project.

## Checking citations according to academic norms

Experience from Israel's academia shows that many students, in all disciplines, find it difficult to correctly cite their sources. The reason is that it appears that this is a task that requires significant patience. We ask you exercise this lesson in patience and meet the citation requirements set forth by academia.

The method adopted by the INDC for final projects in Political Science is APA. Attached to this booklet are examples for citing sources according to these conventions. When preparing a bibliography for your project, you must pay attention to the following:

* Separate the sources by language. The Sources appearing in the same language as the paper itself will appear first, and then those from foreign languages (in alphabetical order of these languages). Sources in different languages should not be mixed up. Within each of these lists, there also needs to be a distinction between the types of sources. First are books and articles, then legal rulings, government decisions, international conventions, interviews, internet sites and archived materials.
* Within each of these lists (Hebrew, English, other), organize the sources alphabetically according to the author's surname.
* For every piece of information, you must pay attention to two things: the order in which you write the information and the punctuation in every piece of writing. Sometimes you need a comma, and sometimes you need a period (full stop). Sometimes you need parenthesis and sometimes you need a semicolon. Follow the rules, and with a little patience, you will have created a proper and correct bibliography.
* If a team needs help for a specific issue, they can turn to Dr. Anat Chen in the Senior Learning Center for assistance.

## Preparing an executive summary

Writing an executive summary is an important stage since it is a "window" to your project. The working premise is that the executive summary will serve you to present the project to potential readers outside of the INDC - for example, in your organic organizations and by other relevant professionals. The summary will help you turn your project into an article, if you choose to do so, which makes investing time in the executive summary worthwhile.

The Commander of the IDF Colleges sends chosen works to relevant functionaries with a cover letter and the executive summary. This comes from the reasoning that after reading the summary, these functionaries will request the final project in its entirety or have it presented to them.

## Printing the project and preparing the final files

Experience has shown that the participants often find it hard to submit a final version that can be then sent to external organizations. Make sure the submission of the draft is clean from comments and corrections to ensure the printed copy is clean and respectfully represents the authors.

Before you sent a final draft for printing, save it in a PDF file to preserve the format and paging. Check there are not any blank pages and titles have not jumped from page to page. The final files can be sent by email to the INDC secretariat to be printed. The email with the final project must note how many copies should be made, in color or B/W, two-sided printing and how it should be bound. You also should inquire with the academic advisor how many copies need to be submitted, and how - email or hardcopy. The Final Project Committee will accept copies submitted to the INDC secretariat.

## Submitting the project to the academic advisor

The academic advisor will read the work and provide feedback and a grade, which will be submitted to the Final Project Committee. There are times when the academic advisor will request some corrections. The final draft submitted to the Final Project Committee must be after all comments by the academic advisor have been addressed.

## Submission to the Final Project Committee

The last date for submission of projects to the committee is June 1, 2021. It is important to point out that this is the date when activities relating to the US study tour are planned to begin, and we want to start it with "a clean slate" after this task has been completed. For this reason, there will be no extensions to the submission date. You will have three free days before the final submission date to focus and invest your final efforts. Take advantage of this opportunity and submit on time.

## Feedback and grades

The grade provided by the academic advisor is 80% of the final grade; the grade provided by the Final Project Committee is 20%. It is important to note that the Final Project Committee considers the grades in a relative manner. This means that the projects are graded on a scale where the best paper receives the highest score, followed by papers compared to this work. Each member of the committee has equal influence on the grade.

Each team member will receive a grade for the final project. The Final Project Committee will notify the academic advisor of the final grade, in addition to providing feedback to the team.

# **Part V: Project Publication and Dissemination**

## Presenting the project to the Chief of the General Staff

When the Chief of the General Staff arrives for a summation session, several chosen projects will be presented, according to the discretion of the Commandant. Presenting the project to the Chief of the General Staff is an opportunity to present the topic researched and influence senior echelons.

## Contributing to the INDC repository

The final project will be saved as a PDF file and available in the INDC website.

## Publication of Projects

The Commandant will send, to relevant organizations, the executive summaries of chosen projects. The decision lies solely with the Commandant, after consulting with the team members and the distribution list.

In addition, the participants are invited to distribute their project to their home organizations and other relevant parties they believe are relevant.

## Publishing projects in periodicals

The significance of the publication of final projects in periodicals is twofold: the ability to influence and the ability to take responsibility. Beyond the exposure of the message and recommendations your work offers to the public at large, the publication of the article awards added value to your intellectual and writing abilities. The article will undergo professional editing on behalf of the publication, and it will be a publication of which you will be proud. The Chief of the General Staff has recently obligated senior officers to read key articles appearing in military periodicals. Your article may serve these senior officers. Take advantage of this opportunity to easily reach the "publication desk" made available by the INDC. IDF publications, such as *Ma'arachot* and *Ben HaKetavim*, provide valuable opportunities to have your work published in the future.