

MSOL 299 Project course description and structure

Updated 7/1/09

There will be a lot of flexibility with the advisor and student. The following are only guidelines. Assessment of student performance (grades) will be based on the demonstrated ability of the student to integrate the acquired knowledge into a project. The reports will be kept on record by the MSOL program and may be submitted to WASC and shown to others at any time.

It is recommended that the project include the following elements, but details are flexible and are to be discussed and agreed upon between the student and the advisor:

1. Advisor – 299 instructor. There are several ways for a student to identify an advisor for a project.
 - A. Look at the list of instructors from your area of study. Look at their web pages. Find one that works in a research area where you would like to do a project. Contact the potential advisor directly.
 - B. Contact your area director and request help.
2. Project Topic
 - A. Contact a potential advisor via e-mail
 - B. Set up a time to call and discuss the topic of the project.
 - C. Write a short (one page or less) project description and send it to the potential advisor.
 - D. At this point, sign up for the 299 course with that advisor. The MSOL office will help with this.
3. Begin the project course
 - A. Preliminary review, written and oral (power point) due week 3
 - a. Typically 15-20 page written report with references.
 - b. Includes background, detailed weekly plan of proposed work for balance of term
 - C. Critical review, written and oral due week 7.
 - a. Typically 40-45 page written report with figures and references
 - b. Includes analytical and computational work, sample calculations
 - D. Final review, written report and oral due week 10.
 - a. Typically 50-60 page written report
 - b. Includes detailed summary of work (analytical and computational as appropriate), recommendations, references.

An example final report for an undergraduate project course, MAE 154B, has been placed on the MSOL web site. My approach was to give feedback on each of the preliminary and critical reports and request corrections and modifications that would be incorporated into the subsequent report.