

**Political Science 5**  
**Research Methods in Political Science**  
**Preparing the Research Prospectus**

1. What is the research question?
2. Why is this question significant (to political science and the larger world)? How does it contribute to our current understanding of this issue?
3. What are the key concepts? How will you define, measure, and operationalize them?
4. What is the dependent variable? The independent variable(s)?
5. What are the key hypotheses?
6. How will you test them?

The prospectus should also include an annotated bibliography of the sources you will use for your literature review: that is, each bibliographic entry should have a brief statement below it explaining what the article is about and why it is important to your paper.

*Do not wait until the last minute to get started on the final project. Begin thinking about the question and data you will use early on in the course, and get a head start on looking for relevant literature. If you start early, the whole experience will be much less stressful.*