

SUGGESTED FORMAT FOR A DISSERTATION PROPOSAL

There is no one correct format, but the following areas usually should be included in the proposal submitted to the graduate committee for approval of a dissertation topic. Qualitative studies may have somewhat different headings and organization. Creswell (1994) provides discussion and examples of qualitative and quantitative proposals. Use modified APA format for the proposal and references (see SOE handout). If major deviations from this typical format seem desirable they should be approved by your committee.

CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

Statement of the research problem (including context)

Research questions or hypotheses

Definitions of terms

Delimitations

Assumptions and limitations

Significance of the study

Researcher's perspective (may be in chapter 3)

CHAPTER 2 - LITERATURE REVIEW

An organized preliminary review of the literature should be written sufficiently to verify the need for and design of the study and to identify journal articles, dissertations, books and other materials that are related to the dissertation topic. The review may be organized historically, by major concept or theories, by research questions, or in some other logical way.

CHAPTER 3 - METHOD

Research approach and rationale

Participants (population and sampling procedures)

Measures (variables, instrumentation, and materials)

Validity and reliability (trustworthiness)

Procedure (for data collection)

Data analysis

REFERENCES

Attach questionnaire, interview schedule, etc, as an APPENDIX