

Research Proposal Checklist

Note: This is a general guideline and each individual should determine what is required for their proposal based on their specific university requirements.

Title

- Does it summarize the main idea of the proposed research?
- Will the general public understand it?
- Can it stand alone? Is it fully explanatory?

Background and Significance of the Research

- Will the results of the research fill a gap in our knowledge?
- A brief synopsis and background of the complex problem you plan to study.
- 1–3 paragraphs (3–8 sentences per paragraph).
- Professional and polished, do not submit sloppy drafts to your committee.

Problem Statement

- 1–2 paragraphs.
- Present problem, research focus, and population affected.

Purpose of the Study

- 1 short paragraph (the most important statement of your proposal).
- Clearly outlines the participants, the topic, and the methodology.

Literature Review

- Does the proposal demonstrate thorough and current understanding and knowledge of the peer-reviewed literature related to the topic?

- Does the proposal identify and describe the specific type of methodology—e.g., qualitative (ethnography, grounded theory, case study, etc.), quantitative (descriptive, quasi-experimental, etc.), or mixed methods (from both traditions)?
- Do I demonstrate a thorough and current understanding of the peer-reviewed literature relating to my topic?
- Introduce literature through themes.
- Themes should flow naturally for the reader.

Methodology

- Method (i.e. qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods) and brief synopsis.
- Brief rationale for the selected approach.
- Research questions and hypothesis are stated clearly.
- Description of the variables (independent, dependent, mediating, etc.).
- Description of the population under study.
- Description of how the researcher will identify and recruit a sample.
- Description of any necessary permissions to access and recruit the population or data sources under study.
- Data collection tools (survey, artifacts, interviews, etc.).
- Describe any ethical considerations.
- Describe data analysis plan (software, coding process).
- Provide a specific and detailed timeline for how you will complete your study.
- Provide a graphic organizer so your committee can see a visual of your study outline and timeline.

- Summarize paragraph restating the main ideas, topic, and issues you addressed in this section.

Reference

- I am using the correct citation style?
- Do I cite my references appropriately in my literature review, theoretical review, and methodology?