

## Research Proposal Format Example

Following is a general outline of the material that should be included in your project proposal.

### I. Title Page

### II. Introduction and Literature Review (Chapters 2 and 3)

- A. Identification of specific problem area (e.g., what is it, why it is important).
- B. Prevalence, scope of problem.
- C. An overview of what we know (literature review). What has previous research found out about the problem? What methods and samples did they use? What are your main variables of interest and what do we know about them from previous research (include conceptual definitions of terms)? Add critiques of other research (i.e., strengths and weaknesses of previous research).
- D. An overview of what we don't know (i.e., gap/gaps in the literature that you plan to address in your project).
- E. Statement of the purpose of your study and research question(s). Relate these to the gap in the literature you are addressing. Include hypotheses, if applicable.

Note: Be sure to organize and use subheadings as well as integrate the literature in a way that tells your story.

### III. Methodology

#### A. Design (Chapters 4, 5, and 6)

- 1. Will this be a qualitative, quantitative, or mixed? What is your rationale?
- 2. What type of specific design will be used? What is your rationale?
- 3. What specific research methods will be used (e.g., control group, comparison group, survey, interviews, etc.)? What is your rationale?

#### B. Sample and Procedures (Chapter 7)

- 1. Describe your study population and proposed sample (expected size, demographics, etc.)
- 2. How will the sample be selected? Once they are selected what procedures will they follow as they participate in your study.

3. Informed consent: Explain thoroughly how you will gain informed consent or document why informed consent is not required for this project.

4. Describe ethical considerations and measure taken to protect human subjects.

C. Measurement (Chapters 8, 9, and 10)

1. Describe the instruments and/or procedure (e.g., interview questions and settings) you will use to measure the variables or capture a participant's experience. If you select an existing instrument, be sure to provide information on strategies used to demonstrate validity such as: reliability, number of items, how they are scored, what the scores mean, who items were developed for, etc. Include a copy of any instrument you plan to use and explain how it is scored and whether there are any norms or cutoff scores. If you use a behavior counting procedure, be sure to provide a rationale. If your study is qualitative you must provide your interview questions, including prompt questions and outline strategies used to demonstrate trustworthiness.

D. Are there other ethical or political issues associated with this research as you have designed it? How will you address these issues? How you will address any cultural considerations, if appropriate (there are always some).

F. Analysis Plan: Describe all steps related to preparing and analyzing your data.

G. Limitations: Identify and discuss several methodological limitations.

IV. References

V. Appendices (include consent forms, measures, etc.)

We strongly suggest you construct and include a flowchart outlining your procedures.