

Department of Behavioral & Community Health

Dissertation/Thesis Proposal Format

Current Department regulations call for all proposals to comply with the following:

1. A formal announcement containing the student's name, date and time of the meeting, title of the research project, and names of committee members must be posted on the Graduate Bulletin Board ten (10) working days prior to the meeting.
2. A copy of the proposal that will be presented must be provided to each member of the committee ten (10) working days prior to the meeting.
3. All proposal meetings should take place in the Department Conference Room, if available. Your advisor can reserve the conference room for you.
4. The general format for the proposal calls for it to include what ordinarily represents the first three chapters of a dissertation/thesis (as described below).

- a. Proposal of descriptive or experimental research should comply with the following:
 - 1) Designate the style manual to be followed in preparation of the dissertation/thesis. (Department recommends APA/Graduate School Thesis/Dissertation Manual, available at www.gradschool.umd.edu)
 - 2) Include each of the following three (3) sections and subheadings as appropriate:

Section I:

- a. Problem statement
- b. Hypotheses
- c. Brief justification or rationale for the problem
- d. Definition of variables and/or terms

Section II: Literature reviewed in formulating the problem and hypotheses in full narrative form. If the literature review is not complete, an additional expanded content outline may be included to complete this section.

Section III:

- a. Description of the population to be studied
 - b. Description of the sampling procedure
 - c. Designation of the validity and reliability of testing devices
 - d. Procedural outline of steps to be followed in completing the study including timeline
 - e. Proposed data analysis specific to hypotheses and/or research questions
- 3) Include a complete bibliography of references read to date in preparation of the proposal.
 - 4) Include all proposed instruments and other pertinent material in appendices.
 - 5) Include a copy of Human Subjects Approval or application (where applicable).

- b. Proposal of Historical/Philosophical Research should comply with the above format except as follows:

Section III:

- a. Designation of literature, documents, records, etc.
- b. Statement of criteria/reasons for selection of sources

- c. Explanation of the external and internal criticism to be applied to sources and/or justify the authority of sources
- d. Description of analysis process
- e. Same as Section III d. above.