

# Thesis Proposal Template

**Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**A proposal submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master's Arts  
In Interdisciplinary Studies**

**Name**

**Proposed Supervisor**

**FACULTY NAME - (IAS)**

**Proposed Reader(s)**

**FACULTY NAME(S) - (DEPT)**

**Date of Submission**

## THESIS PROPOSAL STRUCTURE

A research proposal is a statement of precisely what the researcher is going to investigate and why, and the method he or she is going to follow in answering the questions posed. It deals basically with:

- What the proposed research is about;
- What it is trying to find out or achieve'
- How it will go about doing that;
- What we will learn from it and why that is worth learning.

**There are no rules governing the form and content of a research proposal. They will vary depending on the unique nature of the problem to be studied. Yet, it is advisable to pay attention to the following step-wise outline for preparing a research proposal.**

1. TITLE
2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM
3. BACKGROUND AND HISTORY
4. JUSTIFICATION OF THE PROBLEM
5. LITERATURE REVIEW
6. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK/METHODOLOGY
7. RESEARCH SCHEDULE
8. BIBLIOGRAPHY

### 1. TITLE

Research proposal title should demarcate the main focus/ or theme of the proposed study.

### 2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Logically, the first step in any research is to provide a clear statement of the problem. This step is indispensable in the writing process in that it governs the organization and flow of the thesis/defense. The purpose statement should provide a synopsis of the purpose of the study, briefly define and delimit the specific area of the research, and foreshadow the questions to be raised. A problem may be stated in terms of a verbal statement, i.e., "The purpose of this research is to examine..." or "This study aims at ascertaining ...." Problem could also be stated in the form of a question like: "Why are Muslims divided?" or "What are the factors associated with the rise of hate crime against Muslims in the West?"

### 3. BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

The background and history highlights empirical foundations of research. The purpose of a background/history section is to give the reader the relevant facts about the topic and/or research site so that they understand the material or case in the proposal and how it links to the questions posed.

#### **4. JUSTIFICATION OF THE PROBLEM**

In stating the problem, it is also necessary to specify why it is important and what new insights may be found. What would be its net contribution to the body of knowledge in the field(s), and/or towards solving the problems for humanity at large?

#### **5. LITERATURE REVIEW**

A review of relevant literature is the third step and is of great significance. The literature review helps relate the proposed study to the larger ongoing discourse in the literature about a phenomenon, filling in gaps in the literature and extending earlier studies. The literature review is neither a chronological summary of related works nor a mere catalogue of previous studies published in the field. Literature review is a well-organized critical appreciation of related and relevant literature conceptually integrated within the logic of the proposed investigation. The student should show whether other researchers have studied the same or similar problems before, from what perspectives have these studies been conducted, and whether these researches have been theoretically or empirically adequate.

#### **6. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

A research problem should, where possible, be set within the framework of a theory. A "theory" is a collection of interrelated law-like statements or hypotheses aimed at explaining a phenomenon. Theories suggest hypotheses to be tested. A hypothesis is a conjectural, conditional (if-then) statement linking two or more variables. Hypothesis grows out of theoretical or conceptual frameworks. The theoretical or conceptual framework and the resultant hypotheses will identify and name the important variables to be studied. The student must identify the variables and define the variables or terms conceptually and operationally.

#### **Methods and Procedures**

The methods or procedures section is undeniably the heart of the research proposal. This section normally includes four main areas:

*Thesis: the type of study being conducted, data collection procedures, the sample selection and data analysis plan.*

*Project: the type of project being created, artifacts to be generated, procedures.*

#### **7. Proposed Chapter Outline\***

Research proposals also contain tentative chapter outline. It indicates the number of chapters the thesis or dissertation is expected to be composed of. It gives the tentative chapter headings with brief annotations of expected chapter content.

#### **8. Bibliography and Appendix**

The research proposal must contain a thorough, focused succinct bibliography. The candidate should follow the style appropriate to the primary field of study. The need for complete documentation generally dictates the inclusion of appropriate appendixes in proposals. The Appendix should contain a copy of the instrument and other documents not readily available