

## Appendix 1

### DISSERTATION PROPOSAL GUIDELINES (Revised 2007)

#### THEORETICAL DISSERTATION PROPOSAL (20-30 pages)

- I. ABSTRACT (1 page)
- II. TABLE OF CONTENTS
- III. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND / OVERVIEW (2-6 pages)  
State your topic and the perspective from which you wish to approach it. Describe the field in which it is located, the background of the topic, its outer limits (things that the dissertation will not cover that might be expected).
- IV. THESIS STATEMENT / RESEARCH OBJECTIVES (1-2 pages)  
State the thesis that the dissertation will develop and what the work will attempt to accomplish. Depending on the nature of the dissertation, include a thesis statement (a statement that can be true or false), one or more research objectives (themes or issues that the dissertation will explore; no truth-value statements), or both.
- V. LITERATURE REVIEW (6-8 pages)  
Include a preliminary literature review on the topic of the dissertation. Write the review in a way that paves the way for your original contribution. If appropriate, organize it chronologically or thematically.
- VI. SIGNIFICANCE (2-3 pages)  
Clarify the original contribution of the dissertation to the existing scholarship. What significance do you see this work having within your discipline and related disciplines, as well as for yourself? This section is usually divided into subsections: a) academic significance; b) personal significance; c) social significance; and d) spiritual significance.
- VI. THEORETICAL TOOLS (2-6 pages)  
Name the standpoint or standpoints to the body of existing knowledge that you will apply to your research topic. Describe your perspective (e.g., Jungian, transpersonal, psychoanalytic, Buddhist, shamanic, etc.) Name and discuss any specific methodological tools (e.g., hermeneutical, critical theory, historical, feminist, etc.) that you will use for your research.
- VII. CHAPTER BREAKDOWN (2-3 pages)  
Describe what each chapter of the dissertation will discuss.
- VIII. RESEARCH BIBLIOGRAPHY (2-4 pages)  
Include the most significant works/materials that will be used in your research, preferably arranged according to some kind of topical headings, noting, if appropriate, primary and secondary texts.
- IX. REFERENCES  
Include a list of all the works (books, articles, etc.) quoted in the dissertation proposal, according to a standard system of citation (APA, Chicago, MLA, etc.).

**QUALITATIVE DISSERTATION PROPOSAL**

(25-40 pages)

- I. Abstract (1 page)
- II. Table of Contents (1)
- III. Introduction (4-6 pages)  
The introduction should include
  - A. A description of the topic under investigation.
  - B. A statement of what the study will attempt to accomplish and its purpose(s).
  - C. A discussion of key concepts and terms.
  - D. A section on the relevance of the study which should cover at minimum the empirical and or philosophical relevance (how to it contribute to an identified academic discipline, field of study and/or community of practice) as well as the social or cultural significance of the study. Some projects may also include personal and spiritual relevance which takes into account your personal narrative.
- IV. The History of the Problem (Review of the Literature) (8-16 pages)  
A clear and detailed articulation of the research literature to be reviewed and a rationale for the parameters of the review. The review of the literature establishes your knowledge of the field and connects your particular research topic to the major themes or “bigger picture” of your field of specialization. The literature review also establishes that your dissertation is an original contribution.
- V. Methods and Procedures (6-10 pages)  
A discussion of the particular method you will be using and a detailed and specific description of how you will apply that method to your research project, including descriptions of:
  - A. Rationale for choice of methods
  - B. The design of the study, the specific research tools (interview protocols, etc) and procedures used.
  - C. Research participants, rationale for selection and how they will recruited.
  - D. The methods for analysis and interpretation of your data.
  - E. Delimitations and limitations of the research and issues of validity
  - F. Ethical issues
- VI. References (4-6 pages)  
All authors and works cited or referred to in the proposal.  
  
Appendices ( as needed, e.g. Consent Form, Interview Protocol, specialized items).

**EMPIRICAL DISSERTATION PROPOSAL**

(20-25 pages)

- I. Abstract (1 page)
- II. Table of Contents (1 page)
- III. Introduction (3-4 pages)  
The introduction should include
  - A. A clear statement of the problem.
  - B. The goals of the study.
  - C. Section outlining the scholarly and personal relevance of the study.
  - D. Definitions of key terms.
- IV. The History of the Problem (Review of the Literature) (6-8 pages)  
A clear and detailed articulation of the research literature related to your topic (Who has said what in the field up to now that is related to your argument?) The review of the literature establishes your knowledge of the field and connects your particular research topic to the major themes or “bigger picture” of your field of specialization. The literature review also establishes that your dissertation is an original contribution.
- V. Methods and Procedures (6-8 pages)  
A detailed and specific description of what you intend to do and how you intend to do it, including, as appropriate, descriptions of
  - A. The study design
  - B. Control or contrast groups to be used, how they will be recruited or selected, and a discussion of their representation.
  - C. The measures to be used, with clear relationships established to the variables being studied, and including discussion of their reliability and validity.
  - D. Plans for data analysis and the rationale for any statistical tests your propose using.
  - E. Delimitations and limitation of the study and issues of validity.
  - F. Ethical issues.
- VI. References  
All authors of works cited or referred to in the proposal.  
  
Appendices (as needed, e.g. Consent Form, Interview Protocol, specialized items).