**DISSERTATION RESEARCH PROPOSAL**

The proposal is an extension of the dissertation prospectus and is used to evaluate the viability and feasibility of the study. It includes the first three chapters of the dissertation and will be used as the basis for the preliminary defense prior to submission of the IRB application.

The proposal will be evaluated to ensure clarity, conciseness, and manageability of the study's research questions. The design method's appropriateness and alignment in relation to the study's purpose are ensured. The feasibility of the candidate to complete the study using their respective skillset, available resources, and allotted time frame will be considered. The detailed explanation of where the study fits within the current literature and the gap it seeks to address will be analyzed. Lastly, the data collection and analysis procedures will be assessed to ensure the manner in which the data was collected, from whom it was collected, and how it was analyzed, will adequately answer the research question(s) posed and determine accuracy of the hypotheses (if applicable).

As the proposal is a plan for research, the future verb tense will be used. Once the research receives IRB approval and is complete, the tenses of verbs must be changed to the past tense.

*(Please delete this informational page before submitting the document)*

**TITLE OF DISSERTATION HERE CENTERED WITH UPPERCASE LETTERS**

**UPPERCASE BOLDFACE LETTERS APPEARING AS AN**

**INVERTED PYRAMID**

Doctoral Proposal

Submitted to the

Faculty of the College of [College Name]

Westcliff University

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of [Program Title]

Concentration: [Concentration Title if Applicable]

by

[Doctoral Candidate’s Full Name]

[Month, Year]

Copyright © [Full Name], [Year]. All rights reserved.

## 

## Table of Contents

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION 1

Problem Background 1

Problem Statement 1

Purpose of the Study 2

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework 2

Research Questions 2

Hypotheses 3

Nature of the Study 3

Research Methods 3

Data Collection 3

Data Analysis 4

Significance of the Study 4

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW 5

Section Heading 5

Summary 5

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY 6

Research Design 6

Target Population 6

Data Collection 6

Data Analysis 7

Assumptions and Delimitations 7

Assumptions 7

Delimitations 7

Trustworthiness 7

Summary 8

References 9

APPENDICES 11

Appendix A 12

Proposal Formatting Guide 13

# CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Chapter One of the dissertation introduces the study problem, background of the problem, and identifies the framework of the research. In the introduction to this chapter, provide context of the chosen topic, clarity of scope in how this research will engage with the topic, and an overview of the structure of the dissertation and chapter flow. The following subsections are required at minimum, but additional subsections can be included if deemed appropriate.

| **Criterion**  **\*(Score = 0, 1, 2, or 3)** | **Learner Score** | **Chair Score** | **Committee Member #1**  **Score** | **Committee Member #2**  **Score** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Introduction**  (Typically three to four paragraphs or approximately one page) | | | | |
| The learner introduced the dissertation topic supported by prior research as defined by the problem space. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner introduced a background of the problem statement. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner indicated a purpose statement to provide context to the chosen topic. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner provided an overview about how the study advances knowledge and practice (supported by research current within 5-years on the gap in literature or problem space). |  |  |  |  |
| The learner wrote this section in a way that is well structured, has a logical flow, uses correct paragraph structure, sentence structure, punctuation, and APA format. |  |  |  |  |
| **\*Use the following scale to score each requirement:**  0 = Not Present. Substantial Revisions are Required.  1 = Present. Does Not Meet Expectations. Revisions are Required.  2 = Acceptable. Meets Expectations. Some Revisions May be Suggested or Required.  3 = Exceeds Expectations. No Revisions are Required. | | | | |
| **Reviewer Comments:** | | | | |

### Problem Background

The problem background will provide information regarding the central problem of inquiry the research seeks to address. A focused, timely, and relevant problem, as supported by the current scholarship, is required. In this section, verify the existence of this problem through evidence-based research, the extent to which it spans, who or what it impacts, and how it has been presented within current scholarship. Objectively identify what the research will achieve within the context of this centralized problem and the continued inquiry into the problem that is needed.

### Problem Statement

Based on the context of the central problem identified in the problem background section, this section indicates specific problems that this research addresses. These problem statements form the basis of the research question(s) posed. Each problem statement should be evidence-based and contextualized within the current scholarship. Problem statements are written as single sentences but should be followed by discussion on the origins and potential impact of each problem as it connects to the aforementioned centralized problem. Add a maximum of three problem statements in this section. The format of the problem statements should follow:

**Problem Statement 1:**Identify the specific problem.

[Include discussion in paragraph format with APA citations].

### Purpose of the Study

Based on the context of the centralized and specific problems indicated above, this section will explain, in general terms, the purpose or reason for this study. Identification of the research method and design, direction, objective, and overarching goal of the study is incorporated and expanded upon in this section. This section begins with the statement: The purpose of this study is…

| **Criterion**  **\*(Score = 0, 1, 2, or 3)** | **Learner Score** | **Chair Score** | **Committee Member #1**  **Score** | **Committee Member #2**  **Score** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Background of the Problem**  (Typically two to three paragraphs or approximately one page) | | | | |
| The learner provides a brief history of the problem space to include a summary of results from the prior research on the topic. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner provided focused, timely, and relevant problems, as supported by the current scholarship.  The learner provides a clear statement of what still needs to be known or understood: “The research that needs to be better known is …” |  |  |  |  |
| The learner verified an objective existence of this problem through evidence-based research, the extent to which it spans, who or what it impacts, and how it has been presented within current literature (No more than three problem statements).  Note: The format of the problem statements should follow:  **Problem Statement 1:**Identify the specific problem… |  |  |  |  |
| The learner built a justification for the current study, using a logical argument supported by appropriate in-text citations. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner states what needs to be known or understood and how this research may contribute to profession or societal needs. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner writes this section in a way that is well structured, has a logical flow, uses correct paragraph structure, sentence structure, punctuation, and APA format. |  |  |  |  |
| **\*Use the following scale to score each requirement:**  0 = Not Present. Substantial Revisions are Required.  1 = Present. Does Not Meet Expectations. Revisions are Required.  2 = Acceptable. Meets Expectations. Some Revisions May be Suggested or Required.  3 = Exceeds Expectations. No Revisions are Required. | | | | |
| **Reviewer Comments:** | | | | |

### Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

This section explains the theoretical or conceptual foundation of the research and its credibility in the context of previous studies and/or commonly accepted theoretical understandings. A conceptual framework identifies the expected outcome(s) of the research through identification of the variables and how they connect or impact one another. A theoretical framework identifies, compares, and synthesizes prevalent theories established in literature that support the basis of the study and its theoretical context.

### Research Questions

In this section, identify the research question(s) that will guide the research. This question(s) should align with the problem statement(s) and ensure appropriate collection of data to achieve the purpose of the research. Research questions are formatted as simple interrogative sentences, address one issue per question, and cannot be answered with a yes or no response. In addition to listing the question(s), explain in subsequent paragraphs how the answers to the research question(s) will cumulatively lead to the achievement of the purpose of the research. As noted in the problem section, the research questions must be directly aligned with the problem statements and study purpose. The format of a research question should be incorporated as follows:

**Research Question 1:** What is your research question?

[Incorporate information regarding how this question will lead to the achievement of the aforementioned purpose].

### Hypotheses

This section is optional and will be dependent upon the type of study conducted (verify with the Dissertation Chair). Hypotheses primarily identify the expected outcomes of a quantitative or mixed methods study and must be directly aligned with the research question(s).

| **Criterion**  **\*(Score = 0, 1, 2, or 3)** | **Learner Score** | **Chair Score** | **Committee Member #1**  **Score** | **Committee Member #2**  **Score** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Theoretical and Conceptual Framework**  (Each definition may be a few sentences to a paragraph.) | | | | |
| The learner explained the theoretical or conceptual foundation of the research and its credibility in the context of previous studies and/or commonly accepted theoretical understandings. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner identified research question(s). |  |  |  |  |
| The research questions are aligned with the problem statement(s) and are appropriate for collecting data to achieve the purpose of the research.  The learner addressed one issue per question and is not considered a yes or no response. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner defines any words that may be unknown to a lay person (words with unusual or ambiguous meanings or technical terms) from the research or literature. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner conceptually defines all variables in the study. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner supports definitions with citations from scholarly sources, where appropriate. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner wrote this section in a way that is well structured, has a logical flow, uses correct paragraph structure, sentence structure, punctuation, and APA format. |  |  |  |  |
| **\*Use the following scale to score each requirement:**  0 = Not Present. Substantial Revisions are Required.  1 = Present. Does Not Meet Expectations. Revisions are Required.  2 = Acceptable. Meets Expectations. Some Revisions May be Suggested or Required.  3 = Exceeds Expectations. No Revisions are Required. | | | | |
| **Reviewer Comments:** | | | | |

### Nature of the Study

This section provides an overview of the study’s method, design, and data collection and analysis methodology. Note that this section is more general, as the doctoral candidate will expand upon the details of the research methodology in Chapter Three. The following subsections are required at minimum, but additional subsections may be included if deemed appropriate.

#### Research Methods

#### This subsection identifies if the study is quantitative, qualitative, or both (mixed methods) and explains the rationale for the selection in the context of the purpose of the research. Include the research design, justification for the design, and an overview of the plan for implementation of the study.

#### Data Collection

This subsection describes the primary and/or secondary data to be gathered for the study and how and why the specific data collection method(s) will be employed. A description of the data collection instrument(s) and method to be used in the research is explained, and the rationale justified. Indicate the underlying population, sampling method, and minimum sample size to be gathered from the target population.

#### Data Analysis

In this subsection, the doctoral candidate identifies the data analysis methodology chosen for the study and presents justification for the selection. The data analysis method must be aligned with the study method and design choice for the research. The software application to be used for analysis should also be noted here as well as any data assumptions to be tested prior to data analysis to address the research questions.

### Significance of the Study

The significance of the study explains the potential impact of the study. Specifically, the doctoral candidate describes, in scholarly, objective, and unbiased language, the study’s potential contribution to the existing body of knowledge on the chosen topic and the relevant field. Doctoral candidates can stipulate who or what may benefit from this research and the extent of that benefit.

(Note: The doctoral candidate must use non-confirmatory language, such as: *The potential findings of the study* ***may*** *lead to a better understanding of the effectiveness of computer assisted instruction; the evaluation of employee attitudes* ***could*** *help improve productivity*).

| **Criterion**  **\*(Score = 0, 1, 2, or 3)** | **Learner Score** | **Chair Score** | **Committee Member #1**  **Score** | **Committee Member #2**  **Score** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Nature of the Study, Significance, and Limitations**  (Each limitation may be a few sentences to a paragraph.) | | | | |
| The leaner provided a general analysis of the study’s method, design, and data collection and analysis methodology. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner identified the purpose and justified using quantitative, qualitative, or both (mixed methods) to provide the rationale. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner identified anticipated limitations. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner described the primary and/or secondary data to be gathered for the study and why the specific data collection method(s) is used. |  |  |  |  |
| Learner provided a rationale for each anticipated limitation for using that methodology. |  |  |  |  |
| Learner discussed consequences for the generalizability and applicability of the findings based on anticipated limitations. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner describes provides a transition discussion to Chapter 2. |  |  |  |  |
| All research presented in the chapter is scholarly, topic-related, and obtained from highly respected academic, professional, original sources. In-text citations are accurate, correctly cited, and included in the reference page according to APA standards. |  |  |  |  |
| **\*Use the following scale to score each requirement:**  0 = Not Present. Substantial Revisions are Required.  1 = Present. Does Not Meet Expectations. Revisions are Required.  2 = Acceptable. Meets Expectations. Some Revisions May be Suggested or Required.  3 = Exceeds Expectations. No Revisions are Required. | | | | |
| **Reviewer Comments:** | | | | |

# CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter begins with an introduction defining the context, explaining the reason for the review, identifying the sequence/organizational approach followed, and specifying what the scope of the review entails. Following the introduction, use an APA level one heading and appropriate heading levels, thereafter, depending upon the organization of content. At least one paragraph of the Chapter Two introduction section must describe the literature sourcing strategies and techniques to be used and include the academic databases, keywords, and key phrases to be used for sourcing.

| **Criterion**  **\*(Score = 0, 1, 2, or 3)** | **Learner Score** | **Chair Score** | **Committee Member #1**  **Score** | **Committee Member #2**  **Score** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Introduction to the chapter and Background to the problem**  (Typically two to three pages) | | | | | |
| The learner provides an orienting paragraph, so the reader knows what the literature review will address. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner describes how the chapter is organized (including the specific sections and subsections). |  |  |  |  |
| The learner describes how the literature was surveyed so the reader can evaluate thoroughness of the review. This includes search terms and databases used. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner provides a broad overview of how the research topic has evolved historically. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner writes this section in a way that is well structured, has a logical flow, uses correct paragraph structure, sentence structure, punctuation, and APA format. |  |  |  |  |
| **\*Use the following scale to score each requirement:**  0 = Not Present. Substantial Revisions are Required.  1 = Present. Does Not Meet Expectations. Revisions are Required.  2 = Acceptable. Meets Expectations. Some Revisions May be Suggested or Required.  3 = Exceeds Expectations. No Revisions are Required. | | | | | |
| **Reviewer Comments:** | | | | | |

**[Add Section Heading]**

The organization of the literature review varies depending upon the approach chosen by the doctoral candidate to present the information logically and cohesively. Section headings in the body of the chapter will be organized by headings that reflect each area of the literature reviewed. The literature review should be a comprehensive synthesis of previous research. The review should predominantly focus on literature published within the last five to 10 years and should consist of comparing, contrasting, and identifying patterns and limitations within the most prevalent studies related to the doctoral candidate’s topic. The literature review will end with the identification of a gap present within the literature reviewed, to which the dissertation will address.

| **Criterion**  **\*(Score = 0, 1, 2, or 3)** | **Learner Score** | **Chair Score** | **Committee Member #1**  **Score** | **Committee Member #2**  **Score** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Review of the Literature**  (Approximately 30 pages) | | | | |
| The learner provides an orienting paragraph, so the reader knows what the literature review will address. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner describes how the chapter is organized (including the specific sections and subsections). |  |  |  |  |
| The learner’s Chapter 2 has approximately 30 pages. **This reflects a typical literature review, *not a rule.***The page length ensures that the literature review reflects a foundational understanding of the theory, literature, and research studies related to the topic. Remember, the literature review is an ongoing process to dissertation completion. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner described prior empirical research that has been done on the variables and the relationship between the variables. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner discussed and synthesized studies related to the dissertation topic. May include (1) studies focused on the problem from a societal perspective, (2) studies describing and/or relating the variables, (3) studies on related research such as factors associated with the themes, (4) studies on the methodological approach and instruments used to collect data, (5) studies on the broad population for the study, and/or (6) studies similar to the study. The themes presented, and research studies discussed and synthesized in the Review of the Literature demonstrates understanding of all aspects of the research topic, the research methodology, and instrumentation. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner structures the literature review in a logical order, including actual data and accurate synthesis of results from reviewed studies as related to the learner’s own topic. The learner provides synthesis of the information, not just a summary of the findings or annotation of articles. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner includes in each major section (theme or topic) within the Review of the Literature an introductory paragraph that explains why the topic or theme was explored relative to the overall dissertation topic. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner includes in each section within the Review of the Literature a summary paragraph(s) that (1) compares and contrasts alternative perspectives on the topic and (2) provides a synthesis of the themes relative to the research topic discussed that emerged from the literature, and (3) identifies how themes are relevant to the dissertation topic, research methodology and selected instrumentation. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner provides additional arguments for the need for the study that was defined in the Background of the Study section. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner ensures that for every in-text citation a reference entry exists. Conversely, for every reference list entry there is a corresponding in-text citation. **Note:** The accuracy of citations and quality of sources is verified by learner, chair, and content expert. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner uses a range of references including founding theorists, peer-reviewed empirical research studies from scholarly journals, and governmental/foundation research reports. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner verifies that all references are scholarly sources. **NOTE:** Websites, dictionaries, publications without dates (n.d.), are not considered scholarly sources and are not cited or present in the reference list. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner avoids overuse of books and dissertations.  **Books:** Recommendation: No more than 10 scholarly books that present cutting edge views on a topic, are research based, or are seminal works.  **Dissertations:** Recommendation: No more than five published dissertations should be cited as sources in the manuscript. (This is *a recommendation, not a rule*). |  |  |  |  |
| The learner writes this section in a way that is well structured, has a logical flow, uses correct paragraph structure, sentence structure, punctuation, and APA format. |  |  |  |  |
| **\*Use the following scale to score each requirement:**  0 = Not Present. Substantial Revisions are Required.  1 = Present. Does Not Meet Expectations. Revisions are Required.  2 = Acceptable. Meets Expectations. Some Revisions May be Suggested or Required.  3 = Exceeds Expectations. No Revisions are Required. | | | | |
| **Reviewer Comments:** | | | | |

### Summary

In this section, the doctoral candidate summarizes the main findings from the literature review chapter and transitions into the next chapter. There should not be any subsections in the summary.

| **Criterion**  **\*(Score = 0, 1, 2, or 3)** | **Learner Score** | **Chair Score** | **Committee Member #1**  **Score** | **Committee Member #2**  **Score** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Chapter 2 Summary**  (Typically one or two pages) | | | | |
| The learner summarizes the problem space, what still needs to be known, and how it informs the problem statement. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner identifies the theory(ies) or model(s) describing how they provide the foundation for the study. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner builds a case (argument) for the study in terms of the value of the research and how the problem statement emerged from the identification of the problem space and review of literature. |  |  |  |  |
| The content of this section reflects that learners have done their “due diligence” in synthesizing the existing empirical research and writing a comprehensive literature review on the research topic. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner summarizes key points in Chapter 2 and transitions into Chapter 3. |  |  |  |  |
| This chapter and the literature referenced is scholarly, topic-related, and obtained from peer-reviewed, academic, professional, or original sources. In-text citations are accurate, correctly cited and included in the reference page according to APA standards. |  |  |  |  |
| **\*Use the following scale to score each requirement:**  0 = Not Present. Substantial Revisions are Required.  1 = Present. Does Not Meet Expectations. Revisions are Required.  2 = Acceptable. Meets Expectations. Some Revisions May be Suggested or Required.  3 = Exceeds Expectations. No Revisions are Required. | | | | |
| **Reviewer Comments:** | | | | |

# CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

The methodology chapter begins with a brief restatement of the nature and purpose of the study. In the text of this chapter, the doctoral candidate provides a detailed explanation of the method choice, design of the research, procedures to be followed, and analysis to be conducted using the data acquired in order to achieve the goal of the study. In this chapter, all aspects of the methodology applicable to the research must be explained in such a way that other researchers could replicate the procedure. This chapter must include the following sections and subsections at minimum. Additional sections and subsections may be added if deemed appropriate.

| **Criterion**  **\*(Score = 0, 1, 2, or 3)** | **Learner Score** | **Chair Score** | **Committee Member #1**  **Score** | **Committee Member #2**  **Score** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Chapter 3 Methodology Introduction**  (Typically two or three paragraphs) | | | | |
| The learner begins by restating the Problem Statement for the study. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner provides a re-orienting summary of the research from Chapter 2 and outlines the expectations for this chapter. |  |  |  |  |
| The section is well structured, has a logical flow, uses correct paragraph structure, sentence structure, punctuation, and APA format. |  |  |  |  |
| **\*Use the following scale to score each requirement:**  0 = Not Present. Substantial Revisions are Required.  1 = Present. Does Not Meet Expectations. Revisions are Required.  2 = Acceptable. Meets Expectations. Some Revisions May be Suggested or Required.  3 = Exceeds Expectations. No Revisions are Required. | | | | |
| **Reviewer Comments:** | | | | |

### Research Design

In this section, a description of the plan for implementation of the research design and procedure is provided. Identify the steps to be followed in order answer the research question(s) and determine the accuracy of the hypothesis(es) (if needed). The alignment of the research design with the purpose of the study must be evident throughout the content of this section and justified when applicable. The specific choice of design and the design conventions must be described within the context of the study.

| **Criterion**  **\*(Score = 0, 1, 2, or 3)** | **Learner Score** | **Chair Score** | **Committee Member #1**  **Score** | **Committee Member #2**  **Score** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Research Design**  (Typically one or two pages) | | | | |
| The learner identifies the research design and provides the rationale supported by empirical references. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner justifies why the design was selected as the best approach to collect the data as opposed to alternative designs. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner uses authoritative source(s) to justify the design.  ***Note:*** *Use peer-reviewed literature and not introductory research textbooks (such as Creswell) to justify the research design or data analysis approach.* |  |  |  |  |
| The learner writes this section in a way that is well structured, has a logical flow, uses correct paragraph structure, sentence structure, punctuation, and APA format. |  |  |  |  |
| **\*Use the following scale to score each requirement:**  0 = Not Present. Substantial Revisions are Required.  1 = Present. Does Not Meet Expectations. Revisions are Required.  2 = Acceptable. Meets Expectations. Some Revisions May be Suggested or Required.  3 = Exceeds Expectations. No Revisions are Required. | | | | |
| **Reviewer Comments:** | | | | |

#### Target Population

#### This section identifies the target population, size of the population, sampling method, minimum sample size, and demographic characteristics of the sample. Justify the rationale for choices made in selection of the sample to ensure the study sample is reflective of the target population.

| **Criterion**  **\*(Score = 0, 1, 2, or 3)** | **Learner Score** | **Chair Score** | **Committee Member #1**  **Score** | **Committee Member #2**  **Score** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Population and Sample Selection** | | | | |
| The learner defines and describes the *population of interest* (such as project managers in CA).  The learner defines and describes the *target population* from a sample (such as project managers in CA who operate in the construction industry).  The learner defines and describes the *study sample*, who are the individuals who will volunteer or be selected from the target population. |  |  |  |  |
| **Quantitative Only** | | | | |
| The learner describes the minimum required sample size and the rationale.  The learner uses the following parameters for sample size calculation:   1. **TAILS**: Tails depend on the alternative hypotheses. A directional hypothesis requires a one-tailed test and a nondirectional hypothesis requires a two-tailed test. Note that not all analyses require tails specification. 2. **EFFECT SIZE**: “Medium” (almost always the G\*Power default). Although there are several different measures of effect size, Cohen's *d* = 0.5 is considered a medium value. If a larger effect size is supported by the research literature, the effect size value can be increased. 3. **ALPHA**: α error probability = 0.05 (not including any Bonferroni correction). 4. **POWER**: Power (1 - β) error probability = 0.80 (Any deviation from this default will need a strong argument and support from the literature.) |  |  |  |  |
| The learner describes calculation of the *target sample size*. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner defines and describes the sampling procedures (such as convenience, purposive, snowball, random, etc.) supported by scholarly research sources. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner discusses the primary plan to obtain the sample (plan “A”) as well as two back up plans to use if plan “A” does not provide the minimum target sample size. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner describes the process used to obtain site authorization to access the target population. This includes the information required to obtain this authorization, such as a description of confidentiality measures, the limits of study participation requirements, and geographic specifics, for example. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner writes this section in a way that is well structured, has a logical flow, uses correct paragraph structure, sentence structure, punctuation, and APA format. |  |  |  |  |
| **Qualitative Only** | | | | |
| The learner describes the required sample size to secure adequate qualitative data as based on the literature related to the design indicated in the previous section and provides the rationale for how this size was derived. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner defines and describes the sampling procedures (such as convenience, purposive, snowball, etc.) supported by scholarly research sources. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner discusses the primary plan to obtain the sample (plan “A”) as well as two back up plans to use if plan “A” does not provide the minimum target sample size. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner describes the process used to obtain site authorization to access the target population and study sample. This includes the information required to obtain this authorization, such as a description of confidentiality measures, the limits of study participation requirements, and geographic specifics, for example.  The learner includes evidence of site authorization in Appendix B prior to IRB submission.  If public data sources or social media are used to collect data, and no site permission is required, the learner provides a rationale and evidence for why these sources can be used without this permission. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner writes this section in a way that is well structured, has a logical flow, uses correct paragraph structure, sentence structure, punctuation, and APA format. |  |  |  |  |
| **\*Use the following scale to score each requirement:**  0 = Not Present. Substantial Revisions are Required.  1 = Present. Does Not Meet Expectations. Revisions are Required.  2 = Acceptable. Meets Expectations. Some Revisions May be Suggested or Required.  3 = Exceeds Expectations. No Revisions are Required. | | | | |
| **Reviewer Comments:** | | | | |

#### Data Collection

This section is an extension of the data collection procedure and the nature of the collected data identified in Chapter One. Elaborate upon the instrument chosen for data collection and reliability (quantitative) or transferability (qualitative) of the data collection method and instrumentation to be used to collect reliable and valid (quantitative) or trustworthy (qualitative) data. Indicate any inclusions or exclusions of data throughout the collection process.

Please note, if the instrument that will be used for data collection was not created by the doctoral candidate, copyright or intellectual property permission must be obtained, specified, and presented in an appendix. Additionally, each applicable instrument used must be presented fully as separate appendices and referenced in this section.

| **Criterion**  \***(Score = 0, 1, 2, or 3)** | **Learner Score** | **Chair Score** | **Committee Member #1**  **Score** | **Committee Member #2**  **Score** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Quantitative Data Collection Only**  (Typically one to three pages) | | | | |
| The learner provides a discussion of the instrumentation or research materials to be used to collect the *research data* to address the research questions that include:   1. How the instrument was developed and constructed. 2. The structure of the instrument, including subscales, etc. 3. The type and number of items or questions per scale and/or subscale. 4. How the instrument is scored (such as the sum or mean of the items, or other mathematical formula, Cronbach’s Alpha). 5. The statistical scale of measurement (nominal, ordinal, interval, or ratio) of data obtained from the instrument 6. A *brief* history of instrument use: studies that used the instrument, specifying the different populations (and geographic locations) |  |  |  |  |
| If research data is from an electronic database (archival, or secondary data), the learner provided the following information:   1. Identify the database and indicate exactly how the data will be obtained or accessed. 2. Confirm that the database actually contains data on the variables that are needed to address the research questions. 3. Identify the source of the data (e.g., agency, website, etc.), and indicate how the data will physically be obtained and in what format. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner includes a copy of all instruments, surveys, questionnaires and related scoring information in Appendix E. For any instruments or research materials that require “permission to use,” Appendix E must include evidence of having obtained such permission. |  |  |  |  |
| **Qualitative Data Collection Only** | | | | |
| The learner provides a detailed discussion of the sources to be used to collect the *research data* that will be used to address the research questions. The required details include:  How the instrument was developed and constructed.  Interview questions must be aligned with the research design and collect the information to address the research questions and problem statement. |  |  |  |  |
| If the learner’s research data will come from an electronic database (archival, or secondary data), they provide the following information:  Identify the database and indicate exactly how the data will be obtained or accessed.  Confirm that the database actually contains data on the phenomenon or case that are needed to address the research questions.  Identify the source of the data (e.g., agency, website, etc.), and indicate how the data will physically be obtained and in what format. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner provides a detailed discussion of the instrumentation and/or research materials to be used to collect any *additional data*, such as data to be used for participant screening/selection and/or demographic data. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner includes a copy of all instruments, questionnaires, surveys, interview protocols, observation protocols, focus group protocols, or other research materials in an Appendix. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner provides a detailed discussion of the sources to be used to collect the *research data* that will be used to address the research questions. The required details include:  How the instrument was developed and constructed.  \*\* Interview questions must be aligned with the research design and relate to the research questions and problem statement. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner writes this section in a way that is well structured, has a logical flow, uses correct paragraph structure, sentence structure, punctuation, and APA format. |  |  |  |  |
| **\*Use the following scale to score each requirement:**  0 = Not Present. Substantial Revisions are Required.  1 = Present. Does Not Meet Expectations. Revisions are Required.  2 = Acceptable. Meets Expectations. Some Revisions May be Suggested or Required.  3 = Exceeds Expectations. No Revisions are Required. | | | | |
| **Reviewer Comments:** | | | | |

### Data Analysis

This section explains how and why the data will be analyzed using the chosen data analysis method . Ensure there is no information included regarding the findings or results of the data collected. This section must only focus on the process of analysis and justification of the decisions made throughout the process.

| **Criterion**  \***(Score = 0, 1, 2, or 3)** | **Learner Score** | **Chair Score** | **Committee Member #1**  **Score** | **Committee Member #2**  **Score** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Quantitative Data Analysis Procedures Only**  (Typically one to three pages) | | | | |
| The learner restates the problem statement or purpose statement, along with the research question(s) and associated hypotheses. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner describes in detail all procedures that will be used to prepare and “clean” (Data Preparation and Cleaning) the data prior to data analysis. This may include, for example, the planned treatment of missing values, outliers, erroneous information, and any other circumstance that might affect the “goodness” of the data. Such treatment might include deletion of cases, or data imputation, for example. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner indicates how the *research* variables and additional data (such as demographic data) will be described. This includes both the frequency and percentage of the sample for each group/class for all categorical variables and descriptive statistics for all continuous variables (i.e., mean, median, standard deviation, standard error, *skewness*, and *kurtosis*). For example: frequency of gender from the demographic profile and average score for the continuous research variable. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner describes the statistics or other information that will be provided for assessment of measurement instrument scale and/or subscale reliability, if applicable. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner describes and provides a rationale for the choice of a statistical or analytical procedure(s) that will be used to perform the specified hypothesis tests.  The learner states the level of statistical significance (alpha) that will be required to reject a null hypothesis for all hypothesis tests. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner describes the data assumptions required for the selected statistical analyses, and the method(s) that will be used to test each assumption. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner describes how violations of data assumptions will be resolved, paying special attention to assumptions involving normal data distributions and homogeneity of variance.  The learner describes the ramifications of a potential shift from a parametric to a nonparametric analysis, including specifying the nonparametric analysis that would be employed. The learner lists the data assumptions for the nonparametric alternative and indicates how they would be tested. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner provides description of how the final results will be reported. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner writes this section in a way that is well structured, has a logical flow, uses correct paragraph structure, sentence structure, punctuation, and APA format. |  |  |  |  |
| **Qualitative Data Analysis Procedures Only**  (Typically one to three pages) | | | | |
| The learner restates the problem statement or purpose statement, along with the research question(s) |  |  |  |  |
| The learner describes how raw data are prepared for analysis (i.e., transcribing interviews, conducting member checking, how all sources of data will be organized. and checking for missing data).  The learner describes (for both paper-based and electronic data) the data management procedures adopted to maintain data securely, including the length of time data will be kept, where it will be kept, and how it will be destroyed |  |  |  |  |
| The learner describe evidence of qualitative analysis approach, such as coding and theming process, which must be completely described and include the analysis /interpretation process. Clear evidence from how codes were combined or synthesized to create the themes must be presented. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner provides support that the proposed quantity and quality of data are expected to be sufficient to answer the research questions. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner provides description of how the results will be reported. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner writes this section in a way that is well structured, has a logical flow, uses correct paragraph structure, sentence structure, punctuation, and APA format. |  |  |  |  |
| **\*Use the following scale to score each requirement:**  0 = Not Present. Substantial Revisions are Required.  1 = Present. Does Not Meet Expectations. Revisions are Required.  2 = Acceptable. Meets Expectations. Some Revisions May be Suggested or Required.  3 = Exceeds Expectations. No Revisions are Required. | | | | |
| **Reviewer Comments:** | | | | |

### Assumptions and Delimitations

#### Assumptions

This subsection describes study assumptions for the dissertation. Validity and conformity of these assumptions must be justified.

#### Delimitations

This subsection identifies the boundaries set for the study, focusing on intentional exclusions made by the researcher. The reasons for setting the boundaries of the delimitations are stated and justified in this subsection.

| **Criterion**  **\*(Score = 0, 1, 2, or 3)** | **Learner Score** | **Chair Score** | **Committee Member #1**  **Score** | **Committee Member #2**  **Score** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Assumptions and Delimitations**  (Typically three to four paragraphs) | | | | |
| The learner provides a brief overview of assumptions and delimitations. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner states the assumptions and provides a rationale for each assumption. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner identifies the methodological delimitations of the study and provides a rationale for each delimitation. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner discusses strategies to minimize and/or mitigate the potential negative consequences of those assumptions and delimitations. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner writes this section in a way that is well structured, has a logical flow, uses correct paragraph structure, sentence structure, punctuation, and APA format. |  |  |  |  |
| **\*Use the following scale to score each requirement:**  0 = Not Present. Substantial Revisions are Required.  1 = Present. Does Not Meet Expectations. Revisions are Required.  2 = Acceptable. Meets Expectations. Some Revisions May be Suggested or Required.  3 = Exceeds Expectations. No Revisions are Required. | | | | |
| **Reviewer Comments:** | | | | |

**Trustworthiness**

This section explains how the doctoral candidate will ensure trustworthiness of the data to be obtained and methods to be used for the study. Defend the protocol and procedures set to ensure the rigor and worthiness of the study. This section is generally accompanied by subsections, dependent upon the type of study conducted. Acknowledge any personal bias(es) that could impact the results. For qualitative research, trustworthiness of the data must be evaluated and assured for the four criteria of trustworthiness: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. For quantitative research, the assessment of internal validity, external validity, reliability, and objectivity must be described.

| **Criterion**  \***(Score = 0, 1, 2, or 3)** | **Learner Score** | **Chair Score** | **Committee Member #1**  **Score** | **Committee Member #2**  **Score** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **quantitative Trustworthiness (Ethical Consideration)**  (Typically three to four paragraphs or approximately one page) | | | | |
| The learner provides a discussion of ethical issues per IRB guidelines that relate to the target population of interest. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner identifies the potential risks for harm that are inherent in the study and describes how they will be avoided and/or mitigated. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner describes the procedures for obtaining informed consent and for protecting the rights and well-being of the study participants. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner presents ethical criteria of anonymity, confidentiality, privacy, strategies to prevent coercion, and any potential conflict of interest. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner describes the data management procedures adopted to store and maintain paper and electronic data securely, including the minimum 3-year length of time data will be kept, where it will be kept, and how it will be destroyed. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner includes copy of site authorization letter (if appropriate), IRB Informed Consent (Proposal), and IRB Approval letter (Dissertation) in appropriate Appendices. |  |  |  |  |
| Section is written in a way that is well structured, has a logical flow, uses correct paragraph structure, sentence structure, punctuation, and APA format. |  |  |  |  |
| **Qualitative trustworthiness** | | | | |
| The learner discusses how the study represents the participants’ experiences |  |  |  |  |
| The learner discusses how the findings may be applicable to policy, practice, future research. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner describes the threats to the credibility and transferability of the study inherent in the study design, sampling strategy, data collection method/instruments, and data analysis. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner addresses how these threats will be minimized. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner provides detailed research protocols. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner discusses how the study could be confirmed or findings corroborated by peers. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner describes the threats to dependability and confirmability of the study inherent in the study design, sampling strategy, data collection method/instruments, and analysis. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner includes appendices for copies of instruments, materials, qualitative data collection protocols, codebook(s), and permission letters from instrument authors (for validated instruments, surveys, interview guides, etc.) |  |  |  |  |
| Section is written in a way that is well structured, has a logical flow, uses correct paragraph structure, sentence structure, correct punctuation, and APA format. |  |  |  |  |
| **\*Use the following scale to score each requirement:**  0 = Not Present. Substantial Revisions are Required.  1 = Present. Does Not Meet Expectations. Revisions are Required.  2 = Acceptable. Meets Expectations. Some Revisions May be Suggested or Required.  3 = Exceeds Expectations. No Revisions are Required. | | | | |
| **Reviewer Comments:** | | | | |

**Summary**

In this section, the dissertation candidate summarizes the main findings from the methodology chapter. There should not be any subsections in the summary.

| **Criterion**  \***(Score = 0, 1, 2, or 3)** | **Learner Score** | **Chair Score** | **Committee Member #1**  **Score** | **Committee Member #2**  **Score** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Chapter 3 Summary**  (Typically one to two pages) | | | | |
| The learner summarizes the following key points:   * Methodology/design * Population * Sample size/selection * Instrumentation * Data collection * Data analysis |  |  |  |  |
| The learner concludes a proper transition discussion that focuses on Chapter 4. |  |  |  |  |
| The learner writes this section in a way that is well structured, has a logical flow, uses correct paragraph structure, sentence structure, punctuation, and APA format. |  |  |  |  |
| **\*Use the following scale to score each requirement:**  0 = Not Present. Substantial Revisions are Required.  1 = Present. Does Not Meet Expectations. Revisions are Required.  2 = Acceptable. Meets Expectations. Some Revisions May be Suggested or Required.  3 = Exceeds Expectations. No Revisions are Required. | | | | |
| **Reviewer Comments:** | | | | |

**References**

The reference list contains all sources cited in the proposal. There should be one-to-one correspondence between the citations in text and those included in the references. The references follow APA 7th edition and start on a new page after the summary of the methodology chapter of the proposal.

While formatting references, ensure:

1. They are organized alphabetically.
2. A hanging indent of 0.5” is used.
3. They are double-spaced with no additional space ‘before or after.’
4. DOIs are used whenever available, and hyperlinked.
5. Database URLs are not included.
6. References are predominantly from the last five to ten years.
7. References are from credible sources.

## General Information on Appendices

Appendices are referenced in the text of the dissertation and organized alphabetically, not numerically (Appendix A, Appendix B). The appendices section will begin with a cover page. The title of each appendix begins with a level one heading and is included in the table of contents.

Number the pages in the appendices consecutively. Each appendix should contain only one item. A sample of the appendices cover page and an associated appendix can be found below.

*(Please delete all instructional template notes before submitting the document)*

**APPENDICES**

**Appendix A: Type Appendix A Title Here**

[Add appendix information here]

**Proposal Formatting Guide**

Please see the following formatting guides below. Delete this page prior to submission of proposal.

**General Guidelines**

1. The proposal text should be double-spaced with all paragraphs indented.
2. Font should be black and Times New Roman 12-point (except for tables/figures, see below).
3. All margins should be set to one (1) inch (top, bottom, left, right), on all pages.
4. Align text to the left (do not use full justification).
5. The spacing should be set to zero (0) point before and after lines of text (paragraph spacing).
6. Seriation should follow APA 7th edition guidelines.
7. Level headings should follow APA 7th edition (except for chapter titles - see deviations from APA 7th edition below).
8. In-text citations should follow APA 7th edition guidelines. All claims and references to ideas or conclusions found in a source must be properly cited. Results of the doctoral candidate’s findings do not need citation support.
9. Language used in reference to people or people groups should adhere to the bias-free guidelines stipulated by APA 7th edition.
10. Using survey instruments developed by third parties requires the owner's written permission to use or proof of purchase. In this case, the permission or the proof should be provided in an appendix separate from the one that contains the survey.

**Opening Pages**

1. The dissertation title should be bold, in all caps, and in an inverted-pyramid format.
2. For the Title Page, there should be no visible page number, though it is counted in the numbering. The Table of Contents should be numbered by Roman numerals. The pages in the main body of the proposal should be numbered by Arabic numerals.
3. Entries in the Table of Contents should not be bolded or italicized.

**Tables and Figures**

1. Tables and figures may be displayed in color to enhance clarity.
2. Contents of tables and figures must be no less than 9-point font; notes for tables and figures must be no less than 10-point font; table/figure numbers and titles must be 12-point font.
3. Tables or figures used from alternative sources require copyright permission and should be stipulated in the note under the table/figure.
4. If a table requires more than one page, divide the table so that all separated portions share a common heading row. Wide tables may be presented in landscape orientation.
5. All tables and figures should have an in-text callout and should be placed as close to their callout as possible.

**Deviations from APA 7th Edition**

1. Chapter titles are to be centered and in all caps.
2. The appendices section will begin with a cover page.