

## **SUGGESTED FORMAT FOR A DISSERTATION PROPOSAL**

There is no one correct format, but the following areas usually should be included in the proposal submitted to the graduate committee for approval of a dissertation topic. Qualitative studies may have somewhat different headings and organization. Creswell (1994) provides discussion and examples of qualitative and quantitative proposals. Use modified APA format for the proposal and references (see SOE handout). If major deviations from this typical format seem desirable they should be approved by your committee.

### **CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION**

Statement of the research problem (including context)  
Research questions or hypotheses  
Definitions of terms  
Delimitations  
Assumptions and limitations  
Significance of the study  
Researcher's perspective (may be in chapter 3)

### **CHAPTER 2 - LITERATURE REVIEW**

An organized preliminary review of the literature should be written sufficiently to verify the need for and design of the study and to identify journal articles, dissertations, books and other materials that are related to the dissertation topic. The review may be organized historically, by major concept or theories, by research questions, or in some other logical way.

### **CHAPTER 3 - METHOD**

Research approach and rationale  
Participants (population and sampling procedures)  
Measures (variables, instrumentation, and materials)  
Validity and reliability (trustworthiness)  
Procedure (for data collection)  
Data analysis

### **REFERENCES**

Attach questionnaire, interview schedule, etc, as an APPENDIX