

Masters Thesis Proposal Outline

INTRODUCTION (1 PAGE)

- What is the general topic area
- Why this topic is relevant/important (how important to sociologists, to the broader community, etc.)
- What is the specific scope of your research interest

LITERATURE REVIEW (7-8PP)

- The literature review should be a well-organized overview of the research most closely related to your work.
- This might likely include the dominant debates, theoretical approaches, methodological research designs that have been used to understand your topic
- You are trying to demonstrate two things:
 1. You are familiar with the research that has been done in this area and can explain to fellow sociologists who might not be familiar with this specific literature, what is out there
 2. You have found a gap or “lacunae” in the literature...something that has not been well researched (or not been researched utilizing a certain theoretical perspective or methodological design

RESEARCH QUESTION (1/2 P)

A concise formulation of your specific research question. If you have taken Graduate Social Theory, think about the process we went through with the “Hypothetical research question” assignment. Review some of the feedback you received.

METHODOLOGICAL DESIGN (1-2PP)

- What is your methodological approach?
- How will you get access?
- How many cases will you include?
- Describe how the cases be selected (random, etc.)
- What will be the duration (time-frame) of your research?
- How will you record your observations?
- How will you **code** the data?
 - Will you start the research with already established research categories (deductive approach) or will you look for the categories (to code) to emerge from the data (inductive approach/grounded theory)?
- Other considerations specific to your approach
- Will your **analysis** of the coding be qualitative, quantitative or both?

REFERENCES

- Bibliography -List only those authors included in your 7-8 page literature review.