

M.S. Sociology Program
Department of Sociology
Southern Connecticut State University
SOC 590: Thesis Proposal Guidelines

There are no rigid rules governing the length, structure or format of the Thesis Proposal. It should be roughly 5-double spaced pages. Two things are important to remember: (1) you want your proposal to adequately describe the focus and scope of your project, and (2) the time and effort that you spend developing your proposal will improve and guide the research and apply to the final thesis document.

The following outline presents a suggested structure of the major sections usually present in a Thesis Proposal:

- I. **Problem Statement.** This section presents a clear statement of the specific topic to be addressed and the purpose of the work to be proposed. Precisely, what is the problem to be solved, the issues to be analyzed, the questions to be answered, or the project to be completed?
- II. **Literature Review.** This section demonstrates that you are familiar with the current related body of knowledge and that you have an understanding of the wider implications of the topic. It gives recognition to other scholars and it also allows you to point out what is new about your research. Be sure to indicate if you are building on a previous study or a well-established theory; addressing certain gaps in knowledge that exist; or adding to existing knowledge by doing a study with a different or more complete methodology. B.
 - a. At least five other studies should be discussed in the literature review. After you have written the literature review read it carefully and make sure it is clear. Notice whether you can easily determine how the proposal is building on earlier studies, as well as exploring a line of research that is new.
 - b. When you mention other studies, they are usually cited by the author's last name and the date of publication. For example: "Another important study in the area (Chan and Gibbs, 2003) found that..."
- III. **Methodology.** Provide a description of your general research design. The methodology should be sufficiently detailed so that it can be replicated. Discuss the types of sources you will use (e.g., primary or secondary texts, interviews, surveys, personal notes, etc.).
- IV. **Bibliography.** You will provide a full citation to all the studies you cited in your proposal using ASA format. You can find citation details here.
https://www.asanet.org/sites/default/files/savvy/documents/teaching/pdfs/Quick_Tips_for_ASA_Style.pdf