

NOTE ON MSc PROPOSAL AND THESIS

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The objective of this note is to provide guidelines and structure for the MSc proposal and thesis.

General Advices

- The research process is a big chunk. Break down the task in smaller chunk.
Eat the elephant one bit at a time.
- Have a title as soon as possible.
- Focus on determining research objective and research questions.
- Prepare the one-page summary.
- Prepare the structure of the proposal.
Have in the first phase of writing a very detailed table of contents with your ideas.
The number of levels in the table of contents could go to 5 levels in the ideas phase.
The number of levels in the final table of contents will probably go up to 3 levels.
Use the Word / Word Perfect tools to generate table of contents.
- Include as many ideas as possible to organize your proposal/thesis structure.
- Include the page numbers at the end of a level 1 chapter and level 2 section.
This will help to keep in mind the objective in terms of pages per chapters and sections.
- Even during the proposal phase, you could think about the way results will be presented.
This may help in visualizing the presentation of data and results which may help in which information is needed.
- Remember, a thesis is a process.
- Don't worry too much; the title, research questions and structure may change a couple of times during the writing process. It's normal.
- Use a footer on all your documents with your name, date and page number.
Be proud of your work and you will have a .
- Don't hesitate to consult your supervisor and committee members, if you have questions or if you want to make sure that you are on the right track.

One-Page Summary (see thesis Brouard (2014, p.79) and Pilon (2019, p. 120) for examples)

Title	
Research theme	
Source of the problem	- Practical problems - Theoretical problems
Managerial problem	
Research objective	
General research question	
Specific research questions	
Type of research	
Research approach	
Research strategy	
Data collection methods	
Organization and participant selection	

Note: for a lot of choices refer to :
Brouard (2018) Note on Business Research Process: A Summary

Structure of the Proposal (~35-50p.)

- TABLE OF CONTENTS (include possible tables and figures in TOC)
 - ABSTRACT
 - LIST OF TABLES
 - LIST OF FIGURES
 - CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEMATIZATION (12-15p.)
 - 1.1 Introduction (1p.)
 - 1.2 Research theme (1p.)
 - 1.3 Source of the research problem (3p.)
 - 1.4 Managerial problem and justification (4p.)
 - 1.5 Research objective (1p.)
 - 1.6 Research questions (general & specific) (1p.)
(+ Table one-page summary) (1p.)
 - CHAPTER 2: CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS (15-20p.)
 - 2.1 Core concepts 1 (4p.)
 - 2.2 Core concepts 2 (4p.)
 - 2.3 Core concepts 3 (4p.)
 - 2.4 Relevant theories (2p.)
 - 2.5 Conceptual framework (3p.)
(+ Figure of the model)
 - 2.6 Hypotheses, if applicable ? (2p.)
 - CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY (10-15p.)
 - 3.1 Research approach (1p.)
(type / purpose of research)
(qualitative / quantitative / mixed (quant/qual))
 - 3.2 Research strategy (2p.)
Type: experiment, survey, case studies, action research, other
Time horizon: cross-sectional / longitudinal
Study setting: field / laboratory
 - 3.3 Data collection methods / Research tactics (3p.)
(observation, questionnaires, interviews, secondary data, archives, trace, other)
 - 3.4 Organizations and participant selection (2p.)
Unit of analysis
(individual, dyads, groups, divisions, organizations, industry, clusters, nations)
Sampling design
(probability / non probability; sample size; sample selection)
 - 3.5 Measurement (operational definition; scaling) (1p.)
 - 3.6 Quality of the research (1p.)
 - 3.7 Data analysis (1p.)
 - 3.8 Ethical considerations (½p.)
 - 3.9 Expected timeline (½p.)
 - REFERENCES (5-10p.)
 - APPENDICES (ex: interview guide, questionnaire, letters, consent form)

Structure of the Thesis (~80-100 p.)

- TABLE OF CONTENTS

- ABSTRACT

- LIST OF TABLES

- LIST OF FIGURES

- CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEMATIZATION (12-15p.)
(1.1-1.6 see content of proposal)

- CHAPTER 2: CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS (15-20p.)
(2.1-2.6 see content of proposal)

- CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY (10-15p.)
(3.1-3.8 see content of proposal)

- CHAPTER 4: RESULTS (10-15p.)

4.1 Results on ...

4.2 Results on ...

4.3 Results on ...

- CHAPTER 5: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION (10-15p.)

5.1 Analysis

5.2 Discussion

- CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION (5-10p.)

6.1 Overview

6.2 Implications

6.3 Limitations

6.4 Suggestions for future research

- REFERENCES (5-10p.)

- APPENDICES (ex: interview guide, questionnaire, letters, consent form)

Title Page

CARLETON UNIVERSITY
SPROTT SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

MSc Thesis Proposal

[Title]

by

[name of student]

Presented to the MSc Thesis Proposal Committee:

x (supervisor)

y

z

date