

Master Thesis Proposal Rubric

Student(s)/Work: _____

Reviewed by: _____

| Criteria | 4 - Superior command | 3 – Good control | 2 – Fair/some control | 1 – Minimal or no control |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Language Spelling Wording Grammar Sentence structure Paragr. structure Flow & Voice | <p>There are no errors that impairs the flow of communication.</p> <p>Perfect with <2 errors.</p> | <p>Occasional errors that have only minor impact on flow of communication.</p> <p>A few minor errors.</p> | <p>Frequent errors that impede the flow of communication.</p> <p>A few more serious errors.</p> | <p>Errors are serious and numerous. Reader must stop and reread and may struggle to discern the writer's meaning.</p> <p>Multiple, serious errors.</p> |
| Formalia Format, Layout, Style & Length | <p>All required formal information is present and correct.</p> <p>Follows the proposed proposal structure, format, layout, and style.</p> <p>Is of appropriate length and adheres to length limits.</p> | <p>All required formal information is present but something is unclear.</p> <p>A few minor deviances from the proposed structure, format, layout and style.</p> <p>Adheres to length limits but is a bit too short to give enough detail of the proposal.</p> | <p>Some formal information is missing.</p> <p>Several deviances from the proposed structure, format, layout and style.</p> <p>Adheres to length limits but is too short to give enough detail of the proposal.</p> | <p>Several pieces of the formal information is missing.</p> <p>Major and multiple deviances from the proposed structure, format, layout and style.</p> <p>Does not adhere to length limits.</p> |
| References Citations | <p>Relevant prior work of high quality is extensively referred to (typically 7-12 papers).</p> <p>Key papers for the topic are referred to.</p> <p>Proper and consistent formatting of reference list.</p> | <p>Relevant prior work is referred to but not all are of the highest quality or there are too few of them.</p> <p>Some key paper is missed.</p> <p>One inconsistency in the formatting of the reference list.</p> | <p>Relevant prior work is referred to but there is one that is irrelevant/unrelated to topic.</p> <p>Some of the referred works are of low quality.</p> <p>Key papers are missing.</p> <p>A few inconsistencies in the formatting of the reference list.</p> | <p>Few prior works are referred to (<4) or there are several that are irrelevant/unrelated to topic.</p> <p>A majority of referred works are of low quality.</p> <p>Key papers are missing.</p> <p>Multiple and serious inconsistencies in the formatting of the reference list.</p> |
| Type | <p>Type of research work and thesis is described in detail.</p> | <p>Type of research work and thesis is described.</p> | <p>Type of research work and thesis is unclear or in unorthodox terms.</p> | <p>Type of research work and thesis is missing or erroneously described.</p> |
| Scope | <p>Appropriate scope for a 20 week master thesis.</p> | <p>Appropriate scope but maybe a bit too ambitious.</p> | <p>Scope may not be ambitious enough.</p> | <p>Scope is not ambitious enough, sounds like a one-month project.</p> |

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|----------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Background & Justification | <p>Clearly identifies a gap/lacuna in existing knowledge.</p> <p>Topic is clearly justified and the thesis will likely lead to an actual contribution to it.</p> <p>Many previous studies are referred to; obvious that they did their homework. Organization makes connections between different themes in the literature clear.</p> | <p>Identifies a gap/lacuna in existing knowledge.</p> <p>Topic is justified and the thesis will likely lead to an actual contribution to it.</p> <p>Many previous studies are referred to. Organization of different themes in the literature is somewhat ad hoc.</p> | <p>Description of gap/lacuna is incomplete or unclear.</p> <p>Importance is addressed but is not convincingly shown.</p> <p>Author has done a good job gathering prior work but the analysis is mechanical and enumerative rather than conceptual and integrative.</p> | <p>No gap/lacuna is identified or described.</p> <p>Topic seems trivial or author does not let us know why we should care about it.</p> <p>Too few references or organization is not clear enough. Evident that authors do not have a deep enough grasp of the area.</p> |
| Aims & Objectives | <p>The aim is clearly and concisely stated.</p> <p>A few, additional objectives further detail and sub-divide the aim. Objectives are clearly connected to and follow from the aim.</p> | <p>The aim is clearly stated.</p> <p>Objectives further detail and sub-divide the aim. Objectives are connected to the aim.</p> | <p>The aim is stated.</p> <p>There are some objectives but they are only partly connected to or follow only partly from the aim.</p> | <p>The aim is missing or unclear.</p> <p>Objectives are missing, are not connected to the aim or are too many and overlapping.</p> |
| Research Questions, Hypotheses | <p>Research questions or hypotheses are clearly stated and testable/answerable.</p> <p>If all questions are answered, the aim of the thesis is automatically met. The questions add up to the solution of the problem.</p> | <p>Research questions or hypotheses are clearly stated and mainly testable/answerable.</p> <p>If all questions are answered, the aim of the thesis is mostly met. The questions add up to a solution of the problem.</p> | <p>Research questions or hypotheses are stated but only partly testable/answerable.</p> <p>Even if all questions are answered, the aim of the thesis will not be met.</p> | <p>Research questions or hypotheses are not clearly stated or not testable/answerable.</p> |
| Research Methodology | <p>Clear and reasonable description of research methods to be used.</p> <p>Diverse set of research methods clearly suitable for answering research questions.</p> | <p>Clear description of research methods to be used.</p> <p>Research methods suitable for answering majority of research questions.</p> | <p>Description of research methods to be used. Somewhat unclear or incomplete.</p> <p>Research methods are not fully suitable for answering research questions.</p> | <p>Inappropriate choice of research methods or methods unclearly described,</p> <p>Research methods are not suitable for answering research questions.</p> |
| Originality, Inventiveness & Creativity | <p>Proposal has several creative/original/inventive elements and a clear potential for making a creative contribution.</p> | <p>Proposal has some creative/original/inventive element and a potential for making a creative contribution.</p> | <p>Proposal has no creative/original/inventive elements but some potential for making a creative contribution.</p> | <p>Proposal is uninspired and describes straightforward work with little to no creative potential.</p> |
| Motivations, Alternatives | <p>Choices made are well motivated. Many alternatives are discussed.</p> | <p>Choices made are well motivated. Some alternatives are discussed.</p> | <p>Choices are partly motivated. Not many alternatives are discussed.</p> | <p>Choices are not motivated. No alternatives discussed.</p> |