

## Qualitative Research Proposal

For your qualitative research proposal, you need to include the following information in order (Use the headings to clearly indicate what information you are discussing). This information is more detailed than the PowerPoint (M7 Zoom session) but not as detailed as what was (or will be) addressed in the Zoom session in Module 7.

### **Title page**

You do need to create an APA style title page that has title that clearly indicates what your proposed study is about.

### **Abstract** (not to exceed 100 words)

### **Introduction** (written in 3<sup>rd</sup> person)

An introduction is a paragraph or two that should capture the reader's attention and make them interested in your topic (entices them to read the rest). Explains the topic, discuss the topic's significance and discusses the line of argumentation in the proposal

### **Literature Review** (no longer than 5-6 pages; written in 3<sup>rd</sup> person)

The literature review is the synthesis of all the information pertaining to what you are proposing that you learned from scholarly peer reviewed journal articles on your topic. Think about the articles you have read and looking back on them ask "What does this article contribute to your knowledge for your research". The literature review needs to logically progress from one paragraph to the next. This is a skill that is acquired by writing literature reviews, but it can also be improved by reading literature reviews.

Literature reviews are a synthesis. Focus on and organize your literature review in terms of what you know about the themes/topics addressed in the articles. What did the articles have in common about each of the in terms of themes/topics; as a whole what did you learn from all the articles. For further information and examples see Writing Tools in the Content section of course shell.

In the literature review you want to **avoid** writing an annotated bibliography such as the following example of an annotated bibliography style:

First paragraph: Davis and Smith found...and then discussing their article

Second paragraph: Sampson and Laub found....and then discussing their article

Third paragraph: Woods and Mahoney found....and then discussing their article  
and so on with each paragraph until every article has been discussed

The literature review should demonstrate why there is a need to do the research you are proposing – for example see the Drug court article from Module 3 – it discussed what is known about drug courts, how they have been studied and that no qualitative research had compared successful completion to non-completion of the program participants.

### **Importance/Why are you interested in this research?** (written in 1<sup>st</sup> person)

This requires only a paragraph or two about why you think this topic is important and why you are interested in this research.

**Theoretical Perspective** (written in 3<sup>rd</sup> person)

Select the best theoretical perspective for your research. The articles you read should guide this decision. Your choice of theoretical perspectives is not limited to criminological/criminal justice theories -- some may have business or psychology theories. Discuss the most appropriate (should make the most sense) theory, explain the theory and how it is applied to your research.

**Research Questions (3 or 4)** (written in 3<sup>rd</sup> person)

Research questions are the questions you seek to answer in your research. They should be in research question format. There also needs to be a brief introduction/explanation to the research questions in this section of your proposal. See the research questions you developed in Written Assignment 1 (but do not include the bulleted items after each research question).

**Methodology** (discuss only what is applicable to your research; best if majority written in 3<sup>rd</sup> person)

In this section you would discuss exactly how you would conduct the proposed qualitative research. See below for elaboration on what needs to be included in a methods section for various qualitative methodologies (quantitative methods are not acceptable for this assignment).

\*With all methodologies you must justify why it is appropriate for your research

**Possible limitations** (written in 3<sup>rd</sup> person)

Discuss the limitations (and/or weaknesses) of the research you proposed. The limitations may be due to time, money, location, access, etc.

**Core Value** (written in 1<sup>st</sup> person)

Discuss the Core Value of Personal Development. Discuss your personal development in writing this qualitative research proposal. You can expand to the whole class if you so desire.

**Conclusion** (written in 3<sup>rd</sup> person)

Summarize what you have proposed. Usually a paragraph or two. No new information.

**References (on a separate page titled "References")**

All references should be formatted in APA style. References shall not include nonacademic sources such as popular magazines or newspapers. Nor shall it include encyclopedias or online encyclopedias such as Wikipedia or numerous websites.

There is no page requirement for the research proposal; it should be as long as it takes to complete all the necessary requirements. As a guide, the research proposal will probably be somewhere between 15 and 20 pages. Research proposals are written in sentence and paragraph format – no bulleting items.

Components of the qualitative research proposal methodology section are organized on the next pages by methodology. The lists are not all inclusive; in your proposal you must address all the methodological issues involved in the research you are proposing. Keep in mind that when proposing research, you must justify your methodological choices (explain why) i.e. why is your unit of analysis, sampling method or population, etc. appropriate.

## **Ethnographic Field Study**

### **Methodology**

- Population
- Study Population
- Field Site
  - Location
  - Getting permission
  - observation logistics
- Address issues human subjects review board may have\*\*
- Address issues of confidentiality and/or anonymity
- Collection of data
  - schedule for observations (time line)
  - length of observations – number of hours or days of observation
  - cost estimate of study
- Conceptualize start codes

### **Appendix: Informed Consent Form**

## **Interviews**

### **Methodology**

- Source of data
  - Population
  - Study population
  - Sampling method/sampling frame
  - desired number of respondents (sample size)
- Address issues human subjects review board may have\*\* -
- Address issues of confidentiality and/or anonymity
- Collection of data
  - how the interviews will be administered
  - approximate length of interviews
  - time line (schedule) for interviews
  - cost estimate of study
- Conceptualize start codes
- Design interview instrument and attach to proposal

### **Appendices:**

- Interview Instrument
- Informed Consent Form

## **Content Analysis**

### **Methodology**

- Source of data
  - Unit of observation
  - Population
  - Study population
  - Unit of analysis
  - Sampling method/sampling frame
  - sample size
- Address issues of access to data
- Collection of data
  - schedule of data collection (time line)
  - cost estimate of study
- Conceptualization of start codes
- Type of analysis (manifest or latent content – keep in mind that since this is a qualitative proposal it should be latent)

## **Focus Groups**

### **Methodology**

- Source of data
  - Population
  - Study population
  - Sampling method/sampling frame
  - desired number of respondents (size of focus group)
  - Number of focus groups & make up of focus groups (demographics)
- Address issues human subjects review board may have\*\*
- Address issues of confidentiality and/or anonymity
- Collection of data
  - how the focus groups will be administered (interviewer selection, etc.)
  - approximate length of focus groups
  - time line (schedule) for focus groups
  - cost estimate of study
- Conceptualize start codes
- Design interview instrument for focus group and attach to proposal

### **Appendices:**

- Interview Instrument
- Informed Consent Form

\*\* If you have questions about what issues a human subjects review board would want addresses look at the Informed Consent Form you used in Written Assignment 3. You can also go to Saint Leo's Institutional Review Board webpage and review their information.