

Thesis proposal (pass/fail)
To be submitted 15-10-2021

Format

The format of the thesis proposal should be as follows:

Front page with your name and student number, the name of the program, the name of your supervisor(s), and a word count for the 'body of the text' (see below).

The body of text should be max. 750 words and contain:

Page 1:

- Start with a paragraph about a problem in the real-life world (so that a BoS member not familiar with statistics understands why you are pursuing research in this direction);
- Then, add a paragraph describing what is known in the literature
- Also describe what is not known and which gap you will address in your thesis
- End with a clear research question + hypothesis + expectations

Page 2:

- Your analytic strategy how you are planning to answer your research question. Be as specific as possible and preferable use an illustration to help the reader understand how all your plans connect.
- Also, include information what data you are going to use and if you already have ethical consent (more information in another post).
- Describe what software/packages will you use
- Also, add a possible journal for publication (this helps to determine the intended audience of your thesis and hence writing style).

Page 3:

- Add reference list for the references used in the text (not part of the word count) – you can use the formatting style of the chosen journal
- Add about 20 extra references that will be used for the thesis (you do not have to have read these already).

Please send your final proposal to:

- a) the exam committee/board of studies;
- b) your thesis supervisor(s);
- c) your mentor in the research seminar;
- d) the course coordinator of the thesis.

Grading

The Board of Studies will review the proposals (2 social sciences professors per proposal) and decide between:

- The thesis proposal is sufficient (**a pass**); sometimes this is accompanied by some minor suggestions that can be helpful and should be discussed with your thesis advisor and/or mentor, but there is no need to send the thesis proposal back to the Board for re-evaluation.

- The thesis proposal has serious shortcomings (**a fail**) that need to be considered and improved within a given timeframe. Clear questions or recommendations for improvement will be provided and should be discussed with your thesis advisor and mentor. An improved version must be sent to the Board. The Board will re-evaluate the thesis proposal until they consider the plan sufficient (**a pass**).

Note that this evaluation process is done to increase the success chances of all theses. It has no effect on the final grade for the thesis, and also not on the grade for the research seminar course.

You will receive written feedback from the Board of Studies on your proposal only when you receive a fail. If you receive a pass, you will normally not receive written feedback. This does not mean your proposal is flawless, but that the board deems your thesis proposal feasible and of sufficient quality.