# NURS 6880 Project Proposal Template with Instructions

We will fill in the sections of your project proposal throughout the rest of the semester. This incremental review of your project will accomplish two things. First, a closer look at each part of your project plan will allow you to make sure your plan is complete and fill in any gaps or consider potential changes if needed. Second, completing the exercises in each section will allow you to start doing the writing that will become your capstone manuscript.

# Problem – Description

The purpose of a problem statement is to convince readers and decision-makers in your institution that the problem is serious, and that you have identified the gap(s) needing to be addressed; thus, a problem can be defined as the gap between the existing state and the desired state of a process. The problem statement is really about the “So What?”.

Some things to think about when developing a problem statement for your capstone project include: Why are you doing this project? What is the problem you’re addressing? Who is affected? When is it a problem? Why does it matter? How does it affect the patient or system? Has a cause been identified? What will happen if this problem is not addressed?

Write a one to two-paragraph problem statement. The bulk of this information will likely come from your project preceptor or other site team members. (Information in this section will become part of the Introduction – Problem Description section of your paper.) Address any feedback from previous assignments when you submit your proposal template for subsequent assignments.

## Problem Statement

[Your problem statement here.]

# Problem – Available Knowledge

The Available Knowledge section has a broader focus than just describing the local problem. Information in this section should expand on what is written in the Problem Description section and be supported by evidence.

Consider the following questions and write about what might be appropriate for your project. What is currently known about the problem in general, including relevant previous studies? Who is affected by the problem? What are the impacts of the problem? How does the problem affect those individuals? When is it a problem? Why is it a problem or why does the problem matter? What are the costs or the other negative impacts of the problem? How prevalent is the problem or how many people are affected? Are there any existing trends that contribute to the problem? Are probable causes of the problem identified? Are there any formal standards related to this problem?

Use proper APA citations and references. (Information in this section will become part of the Introduction – Available Knowledge section of your paper.) Address any feedback from previous assignments when you submit your proposal template for subsequent assignments.

## Available Knowledge

[Your available knowledge here.]

# Project Aim and Objectives

The project aim is a short statement of the overall purpose of your project. This is a broad statement that will be broken down into smaller objectives.

Write your one to two-sentence project aim. Address any feedback from previous assignments when you submit your proposal template for subsequent assignments.

## Project Aim

[Your project aim here.]

## Objectives

Objectives help identify the main steps in your project. They help organize activities to reach the goal identified in your project aim. Write a draft of your project objectives. An objective should consist of a measurable verb (i.e., assess, develop, implement, evaluate) and what you desire to happen. You only need to have as many objectives as is reasonable for the project. Address any feedback from previous assignments when you submit your proposal template for subsequent assignments.

Example: Assess parents of adolescents with Type 1 diabetes for their previous use of anticipatory guidance information.

Objective 1:

Objective 2:

Objective 3:

Objective 4:

# Current Conditions / Context

Describe what the current conditions look like. What is the setting where your project is taking place? (i.e., patients, staffing, system affiliation) You could describe the process currently in use. You might consider creating a diagram or flow chart. Is your capstone project part of a larger project? If so, describe how your project fits with the larger project or meets the goals of the organization. Who are the sponsors, team members, and beneficiaries of your project? Describe who will be directly and indirectly impacted by your project. Describe any contextual factors that may impact the success of your project. (Information in this section will become part of the Methods – Context section of your paper.) Address any feedback from previous assignments when you submit your proposal template for subsequent assignments.

## Context

[Your project context here.]

# Ethical Considerations

Quality improvement projects should follow standard ethical practices in healthcare. Describe any ethical aspects of implementing and studying the intervention(s) and how they were addressed, including, but not limited to, formal ethics review and potential conflict(s) of interest. Some sample text has been provided. Make any changes or additions relevant to your project. Find an article related to ethical considerations in quality improvement relevant to your project and cite it here using a proper APA citation and reference. (Information in this section will become part of the Methods – Ethical Considerations section of your paper.)

## Ethical Considerations

This project followed the governance and approval processes of the organization in which it was conducted. The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) provides guidance to help determine whether a project is considered research and subject to institutional review board (IRB) oversight (Office for Human Research Protections, n.d.). This quality improvement initiative was evaluated using the HHS criteria, and it was determined that the project did not meet the definition of research and was therefore not subject to IRB oversight. Nonetheless, the quality improvement activities were conducted in accordance with generally accepted ethical standards in research and healthcare.

# Rationale / Framework / Model / Theory

Describe the framework/model/theory used to guide the activities of your project. (You may have more than one.) Describe how it aligns with and guides the work on the project. It may be helpful to add a diagram of the framework if one exists. Many quality improvement projects follow the PDSA cycle. Cite relevant literature. You may also discuss any reasons or assumptions that were used to develop the intervention(s), and reasons why the intervention(s) was expected to work. Cite any evidence you may find supports why this type of intervention may work. (Information in this section will become part of the Introduction – Rationale section of your paper.) Address any feedback from previous assignments when you submit your proposal template for subsequent assignments.

## Rationale

[Your rationale here.]

# Objective – Methods – Deliverables - Table

Use the Objective-Method-Deliverable Table to list your objectives, associated methods, and deliverables (products/outcomes). Project methods should be described using verbs. This is a high-level overview. Specific tasks can be listed later in the Capstone Project Proposal. Deliverables should be described using nouns. What do you plan to produce? Be sure to include an Evaluate objective. (Information in this section will become part of the Methods – Intervention section of your paper.) Address any feedback from previous assignments when you submit your proposal template for subsequent assignments.

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| **Objective** | **Method(s)** | **Deliverable(s) (Product/Outcome)** |
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Will any of your methods or evaluations involve using questionnaires you create or existing instruments? Will you be creating any artifacts as part of your project? (i.e. presentations or documents of some sort) If so, provide the name(s) of existing instruments and cite literature that describes the instrument(s), validity evidence, or psychometric properties. If you're creating a questionnaire or other artifacts, create rough drafts to include as a table, figure, or appendix after the references in this assignment. (Information about the tools or instruments you use will become part of the Methods – Measures section of your paper.)

## Questionnaires or Instruments

[Describe your questionnaires or instruments, if any, here.]

## Analysis

What type of data do you think each questionnaire or instrument will generate? How do you intend to analyze it? (Information about how you intend to analyze your data will become part of the Methods – Analysis section of your paper.)

[List each instrument, what type of data, and how you will analyze it here.]

# Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) Diagram

Information in this section has been adapted from *Healthcare Project Management (3rd Edition)* (Schwalbe, 2021). A work breakdown structure (WBS) is a deliverable-oriented grouping of the work involved in a project that defines the total scope of the project. The WBS is a document that breaks all the work required for the project into discrete deliverables and groups them into a logical hierarchy. The WBS helps put the project team on the same page. If something is missing, it should be added to the WBS. If something additional is added to the WBS which is not intended to be completed as part of this project, it should be removed. A WBS is often depicted in a graphical format, similar to an organizational chart. The name of the entire project is in the top box, called Level 1, and the main groupings for the work are listed in the second tier of boxes called level 2. Additional breakdown can be done with additional levels. One of the main purposes of a WBS is to help breakdown major project deliverables into smaller ones.

The WBS should include only the project deliverables and not the tools, techniques, or actions to create those deliverables. The WBS helps you define the deliverables your project should deliver to be successful. One basic method to verify that your WBS is complete is to look at the lowest level of your deliverables and assess if they in combination will give you everything you need to create the higher-level deliverables. Notice that nouns are used to describe the deliverables and not verbs. The main thing to understand is that you’re organizing the main deliverables based on the work that needs to be done and not how the work will be done. The depth at which you decompose a deliverable depends on the complexity of the work, the uniqueness of the work, and the experience of the team. It is good to note the WBS includes the deliverables, but not the detailed characteristics of the deliverables. Specific details of deliverables should be outlined elsewhere.

Add a Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) list or diagram with deliverables listed in separate columns and tasks for each deliverable listed in separate rows below their respective deliverable. Plans may not be fully made yet. Just list things as they currently stand.

# Project Timeline

Information in this section has been adapted from *Healthcare Project Management (3rd Edition)* (Schwalbe, 2021). Once the deliverables have been defined in the WBS and the WBS Dictionary, the tasks required to produce each deliverable should be defined. Each task should include the task name and a brief description of the task. It’s often helpful to give each task a number. Additional task attributes may also be defined such as defining task predecessors and task due dates. Defining tasks for deliverables on the WBS should be done from bottom to top on the WBS. Deliverables at lower levels of the WBS should have their tasks defined before deliverables at higher levels since deliverables at higher levels are likely to be composed by combining deliverables from the lower levels.

The goal of the task definition process is to ensure that the project team members have an understanding of the work that needs to be done and so the work can be scheduled. It’s good to note at this stage that additional deliverables may be identified and should be added to the WBS. Note that unlike the deliverables described in the WBS, which are listed as nouns, activities are all listed using a verb and then a noun, using verbs such as review, create, develop, interview, write, distribute, and analyze.

After defining project tasks, the next step is task sequencing. Task sequencing involves reviewing the task list to determine the relationships or dependencies between tasks. It also involves determining the reasons for dependencies and the different types of dependencies. Some things to consider include if one task needs to be completed before another one can start? Can the project team do several tasks in parallel? Can some tasks overlap? Determining these relationships or dependencies between tasks has a significant impact on developing and managing a project schedule. Once task dependencies have been considered, tasks should be ordered in the sequence in which they need to be accomplished to successfully complete all aspects of the project thereby defining the project timeline.

Create a sequenced project timeline in a copy of the TaskGanttBlank sheet of your Capstone Toolkit. Submit the sheet in Canvas.

# References

Office for Human Research Protections. (n.d.). How does HHS view quality improvement activities in relation to the regulations for human research subject protections? [Question on Quality Improvement Activities FAQs page]. HHS.gov. retreived February 16, 2023 from <https://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/regulations-and-policy/guidance/faq/quality-improvement-activities/index.html>

Schwalbe, K. (2021). Healthcare project management third edition. Schwalbe Publishing

# Tables and Figures

[Each table or figure should start on a new page. Use Word – Insert – Page Break to move to the next page. Don’t use Enter to just go to the next line. The format will break when you make future edits if you use new lines instead of creating a page break.]

# Appendix

[Each separate item should start on a new page. Use Word – Insert – Page Break to move to the next page. Don’t use Enter to just go to the next line. The format will break when you make future edits if you use new lines instead of creating a page break.]