



Guidelines for Writing the Thesis/Project Proposal for the Anthropology Masters Programs

The thesis/project proposal should address the following questions:

- 1) **What is the problem/question to be addressed?**
- 2) **What is the relevance of the problem/question?**
- 3) **How will your thesis/project research help to solve or answer this problem/question?**

A proposal is written after a review of the pertinent literature and consultation with advisors. There are no specific length requirements, but in practice, a reasonable minimum might be 3-5 pages, excluding bibliography. The proposal should be organized into sections (see suggested outline below), and be written with fully developed paragraphs. Referencing may be done in any format consistent with current anthropological literature. Much of the proposal can be used directly in the body of the final thesis, so writing a well crafted proposal serves dual purposes and is essentially a draft of parts of your thesis.

Suggested Outline

Abstract:

A concisely written summary (250 words max) of the project including background information, objectives and methods of the proposed research, and the significance of the study.

Introduction:

A general discussion of the background and objectives of the study. This is where you catch the attention of the reader – tell them about the significance of the question(s) to be addressed and the impact your proposed work will have on these questions. In some cases, you might then include a very short statement about how the rest of the proposal is organized to set the expectations of the reviewer.

Project Description:

Includes more detailed discussions of your problem – of what you intend to do. This section should detail the significance of the proposal. It should include a detailed discussion of the specific goals. The objectives section is one of the most important sections of the proposal because listing specific goals helps the author/reader focus on what data will be important to the study.

Work Plan:

This timetable predicts the duration of each step and the overall project. The purpose of the work plan is to show that you have thought carefully through what needs to be done, and how and when it will be done. In practice, you will almost certainly need to modify the plan

as the work proceeds, but establishing a plan from the outset can help you foresee and avoid potential difficulties.

References:

Include a bibliography of work related to the subject of your research and work that will inform the reader of your approach to the topic.

Criteria for Evaluation of a Thesis/Project Proposal

- 1) The merit of the proposed research – Does the research help to solve a problem or answer a question?
- 2) How well the proposed research is placed within the context of existing knowledge about your subject of study
- 3) How clearly and concisely the proposal is written
- 4) Realistic plan