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UNIVERSITY • CANADA

Writing a Proposal

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Overview

- What is a research proposal?
- Formulating a research question
- Some important considerations
- Elements of a research proposal
- Other things to include
- Length and format
- Style guides

What is a research proposal?

A clear and comprehensive statement of a *research question* that you intend to study in order to find out, demonstrate, document, or prove something worth knowing.

Formulating a research question

- The research question should be clear, focused, and interesting
- The scope of the project should be realistic
- The researcher should have the training, time, and resources needed to answer the question

Some important considerations

- Why is the research needed?
- What is known about the topic?
- Who are the experts?
- How will the research be conducted?
- Is the research ethical?

Elements of a research proposal

- Introduction → state the research question
- Lit review → situate your research
- Rationale → why is the research needed?
- Methodology → how will you do the research?
- Organization → chapter or section summaries

Other things to include

- Title page → use our template
- Bibliography → primary & secondary sources
- Ethics approval statement if you will be working with human subjects
<https://www.uwo.ca/research/ethics/human/index.html>
- Appendices or other illustrative material as needed

Length and format

- PhD/DMA thesis → 20–25 pages
- DMA Research Paper → 4–5 pages
- 12 pt typeface, double-spaced, paginated
https://www.grad.uwo.ca/about_us/regulations/index.html
- Format:
 1. Title page (title, date, supervisor or director, second reader)
 2. Body with section headings (20-25 pages or 4-5 pages)
 3. Bibliography
 4. Any supplemental material

Style guides

- *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 17th edition
<https://www-chicagomanualofstyle-org.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/home.html>
- *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (Turabian), 9th edition
- *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 7th edition
- *MLA Handbook*, 9th edition
<https://doi-org.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/10.1632/ORIW5168>



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