

Master's thesis seminar

26E99905

Assignment 2

First draft of research proposal (1200-1500 words, excluding references)

With the (first draft) of your research proposal your task is to answer the following questions 1) What do you plan to accomplish, 2) Why do you want to do it, 3) What are the research questions, 4) What is the scholarly discussion you are engaging with and 5) How are you going to do it, and 6) What is the timetable for your research project?

Name & student number:

Major:

Supervisor (agreed/suggestion/no idea):

Word count

Title of your study (make it interesting)

What you plan to accomplish? Articulate clearly what is the research problem you intend to study.

- “In this thesis I examine strategizing in virtual worlds. That is, I study what people do when they work with strategy rather than examining which strategies as such lead to success or failure.” (Vesa, M. 2013).

Why do you want to do it? Describe briefly the background of your work. Why did you choose this topic? What problems will the research solve? Articulate clearly why the study is important and interesting to you, to practice and academically. Focus especially on articulating the academic relevance of the study by positioning your study within particular academic discussion(s). This is really important. If you do not have a scholarly discussion to converse with you will have no thesis. You can start by identifying a particular conversation in the field (strategy, institutional theory, etc.). Within this broader field you can identify the specific area you will focus on (strategy – strategy as practice; institutional theory – institutional work). Finally your goal is to identify what is not yet known within this specific field. The final step demands substantial reading and is a hard task at this stage but give it a try.

What are the research questions? Based on the background of your study, formulate the exact research questions your study intends to solve. Focus on making the questions as specific as possible, and formulate them in an academic language (i.e. avoid consultant jargon such as “solving problem X for company Y”). You may have a general question which is then divided into several sub-questions.

- What, how?
- Make sure that the literature you refer to is relevant to your research questions.
- Make sure that you use the conceptual tools provided by the literature(s)

What is scholarly discussion you are engaging with?

This is where you provide more detail about what others have done in the area, and what you propose to do. Give a brief description about prior research in your chosen area(s) that you consider relevant for your study. Consider especially research that is relevant for your chosen research questions. The literature should be up to date; try to report on the current understanding in the field. If you choose to only report on older studies, chances are you are missing something important. Acknowledge the work of others through referencing. Remember to include a complete list of citations at the end of your plan in academic format.

How you are going to do it?

Report on the methods that you intend to use to conduct your fieldwork (i.e. interviews, case studies, surveys, ethnography, archival methods, mixed methods etc.). Justify the chosen method; how is it the best for answering your research questions? In case you do not know which methods you will use, discuss the pros and cons of the ones you consider most relevant.

What is the timetable of the study?

Present a REALISTIC plan of how you will execute your thesis research: literature review, collection of data, analysis of data and write-up process in general. Establish clear checkpoints and deadlines so that your supervisor will get a realistic picture of how you plan to work on your thesis.

Other information

Report here on other relevant details regarding your study that your supervisor should be aware of.

List of references

MAKE SURE THAT THE TITLE, OBJECTIVE AND RESEARCH QUESTION(S) ARE IN LINE.

MAKE SURE THE TEXT CONSTRUCTS A NARRATIVE