

## 26E99905, Master's Thesis Seminar

### Assignment 4

#### Full length research proposal

##### Instructions for submitting

1. Upload the research proposal to Mycourses – Assignments – Assignment 4
2. Email the research proposal to your supervisor (It is not recommended to send the research proposal before the deadline unless your supervisor has agreed to read and grade the research proposal earlier)

##### Instructions for writing a research proposal

(4500-5000 words in English, 3400-4000 in Finnish excluding references)

The aim of a research proposal is to convince others that your thesis is worthwhile and you know how to do it. In lots of ways it is similar to writing a project proposal of any kind. In the proposal your task is demonstrate 1) what you plan to accomplish, 2) why is it important and 3) how you are going to do it, and 4) what is the timetable for the research project. The proposal should contain sufficient information convincing the reader that your study is interesting and important, that you have good grasp of the relevant literature and your method fits with your RQ as well as theoretical framing of the study.

The proposal is not a fixed blueprint, so be prepared to flexibly revise it according to new insights and newly aroused questions.

##### Cover page

- title (focused, interesting, accurate, descriptive)
- your name & student number & major & supervisor
- abstract (100 -150 words) Focus on the topic, RQ and justifications of the study i.e. positioning.
- table of contents of the proposal
- word count

##### Introduction (600-1000 words)

Make an intriguing start and argue why your study is important and interesting. Link your study with a specific academic discussion and concepts. Clearly indicate in the introduction what are the academic and non-academic objectives of the study (e.g. practical, political, social). Then formulate clear research questions (1-3) derived from the border objectives. Justify why your study is important. Your justifications can be empirical in nature (the empirical phenomenon has not been studied/ not studied in particular industrial sector/company size/Finland etc.) or theoretical (to provide new theoretical concepts / model to the body of knowledge you are conversing with) or methodological (using a methodology or method seldom used in the field) or any combination of these.

All research is part of a larger scholarly discussion and through the justifications you position your study within the discussion you are involved with. This is not something that can be done without substantial reading. Some scholars call the process gap spotting.

### **Literature review (2500-3000)**

Provide the reader with a coherent and focused overview of the current state of the research that is immediately connected to your study.

- Reference the most important scholars and contributions.
- Discuss the theoretical scope of the framework of ideas you are using.
- Demonstrate that you understand the ideas, concept and theories you are using and what kind of methodological implications they carry.
- Show how the concepts and theories link to your RQs and justifications and how you are going to use them.
- Remember to do a critical literature review i.e. not just reference the studies but analyze and synthesize them and spell out how they inform your study.
- In the end specify / elaborate your research questions if necessary.

### **Methodology and Method (400-800 words)**

Describe first is your study qualitative or quantitative and why. Then briefly describe the general research tradition you will follow in your research design (narrative, case, regression, factor analysis etc.) and argue why it will be good approach for your study. Then define the sample of your research (number and nature of participants / texts / videos etc. you intend to collect and why) and what kind of data collection and analysis methods you intend to use.

- Make sure your research strategies are in line with your research questions and the onto-epistemological starting points of your theoretical frame.

### **Timetable (100-150 words)**

Develop a time table in table form, indicating the sequence of research phases and the time that you will probably need for each phase. Please make the time table realistic taking into consideration your studies, work and family responsibilities etc.

### **Table of contents**

Imagine what you research will look like in the end and write a table of contents for the study.

### **List of References (not included in word count)**

NOTE! Make sure that the proposal constructs a coherent narrative and the title, the abstract and the content of your proposal clearly correspond to each other!