

Project Proposal Template

Resident Scholar Project

University of British Columbia, Department of Family Practice

Project Title

Introduction

- Topic overview
- Your question(s)
- Significance of your question(s)

Literature review

- Previous work or research
- Knowledge gap

Methodology

- Overview of approach
- Data collection
- Data analysis
- Ethical considerations
- Identify key stakeholders
- Budget

Strengths and limitations

Expected results

Bibliography / References

Appendices and Attachments

(Word count: 1200 words maximum)

Guidance Notes for the UBC Scholar Project Proposal

Project Title

Introduction

Topic overview :

The introduction should start by stating the topic area broadly in one or two sentences. Then quickly get more focused and specific about what your project will address. The goal is to briefly tell the reader what the proposal is going to be about.

Your question(s):

Briefly state what question(s) you will be addressing. You will state it in more detail later.

Significance of question(s):

Make a few points about why your question is important. You could do this by stating the implications of your project such as how it could increase medical knowledge, improve clinical care, inform health policy, or improve health care delivery. Try to catch the reader's interest.

Literature Review

Previous work or research:

The purpose of the literature review is to help the reader understand the context of your question(s) by first explaining what is already known about the topic. It does not need to be an exhaustive review; rather it should be a critical review of relevant literature or other work on the subject. Your reader should feel confident that you have found, read and considered the relevant knowledge for your topic.

When you write this section, start with general studies and then move to more focused studies specifically related to your project.

For the purposes of the Scholar Project, a literature review will not be considered adequate if it does not include the latest (as of March 31st) relevant published work or literature or does not include at least one systematic review or meta-analysis (if published and applicable)

Knowledge gap

This is where you state what is not currently known about your topic. This 'knowledge gap' is what your question(s) should address. Reiterate your question(s) in further detail in the context of your literature review and the knowledge gap. If appropriate, consider formatting your question in the PICOT format.

Methodology

Overview of approach

If doing a research study, state the study design (e.g., case-control, experimental, survey, qualitative, systematic review, program evaluation, etc.) and the reason for selecting this methodological approach for answering your question. For example, explain why you have chosen to do a survey versus doing

qualitative interviews. Or why you have chosen a systematic review versus a quantitative study. Explain the benefits of your chosen methodology.

If you are conducting a qualitative study, briefly comment on your philosophical assumptions/interpretive frameworks, methodological approach, strategies for validating findings, role of researcher, and data collection procedures.

Clarify your study population, the method of recruitment, inclusion and exclusion criteria, methods of randomization (if applicable), and the proposed intervention (if applicable).

For any variables that you are studying (e.g., demographic variables, exposure variables, outcome variables) include an operational definition of the variables. That is, give a clear description of what exactly you mean by each term and how it will be collected, recorded and analyzed.

If you are not doing a research study, explain how you will approach the topic.

Data collection

This section will explain how you will collect your data or assemble information, documentation, etc necessary for your project. Describe your collection methods (e.g., interviews, focus groups, online or paper based survey, chart review, self-administered questionnaire, systematic literature search, etc.), who will be collecting the data (e.g., resident, research assistant, medical office assistant, etc.), and data collection instruments (e.g., questionnaire, interview guide, medical record extraction form, audio-tape or video of interviews, standardized forms for systematically reviewing articles, etc.). If these instruments have been used before by other researchers, make reference to the relevant literature. If you are designing these instruments, seek appropriate guidance to ensure a valid and reliable instrument and remember to reference your sources (e.g., survey design textbook), and state if and how pilot testing will be done.

The more detail in this section the better. Keep in mind, part of the benefit of articulating your data collection strategies at this stage is so that you can detect potential problems before they occur.

Data analysis :

This section should explain how you will interpret the data you have collected. For quantitative data, you should explain what descriptive statistics you will use (e.g., median, mean, range, standard deviation, percentages, etc.) and which statistical techniques you will use for hypothesis testing (e.g., t-tests, ANOVA, correlation methods, regression, chi-squared tests, etc.). Consider reviewing this section with your statistician. For qualitative studies, describe which qualitative techniques you will use (e.g., qualitative description, immersion and crystallization, coding and thematic analysis, grounded theory, constant comparison technique, etc.).

Ethical considerations :

If there are any potential ethical concerns with your project or data collection, state them here along with a plan to address them.

Identify key stakeholders:

To ensure maximum knowledge translation and impact from your project, identify the key stakeholders who should be aware of your study, who may want to provide input into or feedback on your study, and

who may be interested in receiving a copy of your final paper. Note these individuals and your plan here. If you are doing a project which evaluates a component of the residency program, please contact the Program Evaluation Committee at tammy.compton@familymed.ubc.ca or postgrad.assistant@familymed.ubc.ca. If you are conducting a study or quality improvement project with a particular organization, program, clinic or group, contact the key stakeholders affiliated with the organization, etc.

Budget

Briefly indicate the anticipated expenses for your research study. State if you are applying for additional research funds, and, if so, from where. Remember that each resident is eligible to claim up to \$200 in expenses.

Strengths and limitations

Highlight the aspects of your project that are unique and strong. Consider what limitations (e.g., biases, low response rates, small sample size, etc.) may emerge and assess their potential impact. State how you might address these limitations to ameliorate their consequences.

Anticipated results and implications

This section should state your hypothesized results. Here, try to link together your question(s), your methods, your data analysis, and possible outcomes. Finish by reminding the reader of the importance of your work and the potential implications of your findings.

Bibliography

References should be current and complete. Check references for accuracy, completeness and proper format (according to the Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals; <http://www.icmje.org/>). References should be numbered in the order they appear in the text and should be limited to works cited in the proposal. List all authors if there are 6 or fewer; when there are 7 or more, list the first 6, the et al.

Reference management software – like RefWorks (free through UBC), EndNote, Zotero, Mendeley (free online), etc. – are very helpful in ensuring appropriate referencing, enable ‘cite while you write’ so that all references are adjusted automatically if you move text around or delete references, and they also provide a searchable database of your annotations or comments about articles as you read them. This helps you to develop your thoughts, write your paper, and search your comments/annotations at a later date when you are trying to remember something.

Appendices

If you have a copy of your survey, interview guide, recruitment poster or other documents relevant to your research, include them here. If you have more than one document, include a numbered list of what is included.

Additional resources

The Distributed Health Research Methods Course on Blackboard Connect