**CAPSTONE PROPOSAL TEMPLATE**

Your proposal should be set up in *memo format:*

**TO**:  (Instructor’s name)

**FROM**: (Your name)

**DATE**: (Submittal date)

**SUBJECT**: (Proposal to complete a research paper on…(be specific; explain what your subject will deal with)

Include the following five major section headings in the proposal:

**PROJECT SUMMARY**

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

**METHODOLOGY**

**PRELIMINARY OUTLINE**

**SCHEDULE FOR COMPLETION**

**PRELIMINARY WORKS CITED OR BIBLIOGRAPHY**

**Statement of Thesis and Project Summary**

*Provide a brief thesis statement (in 1 or 2 sentences) that clearly sets out what you intend to do (to demonstrate, to argue, to explain or to accomplish) in your thesis. Indicate how you plan to develop the discussion in your thesis in order to achieve this. (Depending on what you are doing, answering one or more of the following questions may help here: How will you present your argument? How will you establish your claim or claims? How will you structure your experiment or project?) Be sure to address carefully the nature of the contribution each of your emphases will make to this discussion. Remember that, at this early stage, your proposal is a living document - that is, it is subject to (and will almost certainly undergo) significant revision, growth, and redirection.*

**Review of Literature**

Discuss what work has already been done on this *project*.  Do not simply say that you have found and will consult a particular magazine, journal, or book for information.  Your instructor will assume that you have read enough in your sources to provide information in the proposal that directly relates to the concept and scope of your long paper.

When you give this information, be sure to cite your sources as you discuss specific articles or books.  For example:  Mary Smith and Harvey Jones agree that dance education in the schools would intensify student creativity (33-36); yet another prominent researcher claims that “there is no positive proof of the relationship between dance education and creativity at this time” (Duffey 98).  Whenever you cite sources in your text, be sure you list that source on the Preliminary Bibliography page.  Make sure too, that you don’t just throw a quote into a paragraph.  All quotes should be introduced or integrated into the structure and meaning of the paragraph.

And don’t just put in information from sources and leave it at that.  Your instructor wants to know how valid your information is and how it connects to your concept, so evaluate and tie these quotes and paraphrases to your own research question.  (Note: if you are proposing to complete a research paper based primarily on original research, please consult your instructor about what you need to include in this section).

**Methodology**

What method(s) will help you frame your thesis/project and accomplish your goals? Some examples of methods are scholarly literature review, interviews, surveys, focus groups, case studies and action research.

**Preliminary Outline**

If you wish, your outline may be single-spaced. Set it up similar to this sample:

I Introduction

(Provide your research question or thesis statement here).

II First Major Idea/Category of Support for Thesis

* + - 1. Sub-idea
      2. Sub-idea

III Second Major Idea /Category of Support for Thesis

* + - 1. Sub idea

1.

2.

* + - 1. Sub idea

1.

a.

2.

b.

**Schedule for completion**

 Set up a realistic schedule for completion of the sub-tasks for the research paper.  Don’t underestimate the time it takes to revise. 

Task      Completed by

Background Research     (provide dates)

Bibliographic Research

Interviews Completed

Library Loan applications submitted

First Draft Completed

Second Draft Submitted

Etc.

**Preliminary Works Cited or Bibliography**

Your bibliography should be on a separate, attached sheet and should include the works you cited in the Review of Literature section of your proposal plus any sources you think you will use in the research paper itself (somewhere around 10 sources for library research, 5 for original research).   (Some instructors will require a more comprehensive *bibliography* and will have you annotate sources you have found that may help you complete your research paper but which you have not cited in this proposal.  If so, your instructor will guide you in preparing this bibliography).

Use the documentation format most commonly used in your field of study.  The use of a good writing handbook for accuracy is essential to the successful completion of this project.   
 

Adapted from:

Paxman, David B. et al. *Writing About the Humanities.* Needham Heights, Simon &

    Schuster Custom Publishing, 1996.