

HM598 / Unit 6 Assignment

Capstone Project: Applied Research Proposal

You have been working on your applied research proposal over the past two terms. You have chosen a topic, developed a problem statement, reviewed the literature, revised your problem statement, and proposed a plan for data collection and analysis. While you will not go out and complete the data collection, you have learned how research can be applied to improve an organization or impact policy in a community.

Your Final Project is to put everything together again. Review each portion of your project carefully and make any additions or revisions necessary. Consider and implement that feedback you have received from your classmates and your instructor throughout the course.

Your research proposal must be 20-25 pages in length and include a minimum of 15 scholarly, peer-reviewed sources. The following items must be included:

- **Project Timeline:** Create a timeline for the completion of each major step in the research study, including a brief narrative that describes the associated tasks that would need to be completed for each major milestone in the timeline. Not to exceed one page.
- **Introduction:** Identify the study topic/problem and where the issue is occurring, highlighting key information and examples to illustrate the applied research problem.
 - **Problem Statement** A succinct paragraph addressing the 5 Ws of the proposed study: what the problem is, why it is a problem, where specifically the problem is occurring, who/what will be studied, and over what time period (when) you would propose to conduct the study.
- **Literature Review** Review at least 15 original peer-reviewed research studies on your topic, summarizing the results of each study and comparing the results to the larger body of research on the topic. This must be a synthesized discussion of the literature focusing on subtopics and trends, rather than a review of each source one by one.
- **Proposed Methods** Outline how you propose to collect and analyze data for your study. Make sure to address the following items:
 - **Main Concepts** to be studied (i.e., your main independent and dependent variables, qualitative components to be addressed, etc.)
 - **Conceptual and Operational Definitions** for your primary study variables or components. These should be limited to only those terms relevant to an understanding of your specific study. Definitions must be brief statements supported by scholarly sources. Not to exceed one page.
 - **Research Question and Hypothesis (quantitative) or Thesis (qualitative)** that the applied study would address/answer were it to be conducted.
 - **Sampling Design or Strategy** for your study. Explain how you would identify members of the population and how you would select the study sample, including the type of sampling you would use and the rationale for why it is the most appropriate.
 - **Study Setting Considerations.** Discuss which principle from each of the four sets (individual or collective, differentiation or integration, centralization or decentralization, and linear or nonlinear) characterize the organizational behavior and management structure in your study setting. Explain the organizational culture in your setting in terms of individuals, groups, leadership, management, goals, and values. Discuss how this organizational

culture might impact your proposed data collection process and the interpretation of the information collected.

- **Proposed Method and Design.** Would the data be quantitative, qualitative, or mixed? Explain. Would the study involve experimental design, quasi-experimental design, process evaluation design, outcome evaluation design, cross-sectional or longitudinal design, etc.? Explain the rationale for your selections and support the justification.
- **Data Collection.** How would you collect the data? Would you use quantitative surveys/questionnaires, qualitative interviews, participant observation, focus groups, and/or secondary data, for example? Discuss any data collection tools you would use, including examples of questions you might ask or data fields that you might collect. If proposing to use more than one form of data collection, explain why each form is necessary for your proposed study and how each would produce different data to increase the overall rigor of the study. What would you need to do to schedule and coordinate the data collection? Be specific in your explanation.
- **Data Analysis Method** Explain how you would prepare your data to analyze it, distinguishing quantitative from qualitative data preparation. Discuss how you would code and analyze the data that you propose to collect. What steps would you take to ensure that your data collection and data analyses were both consistent (reliable) and accurate (valid)? What analysis summary tools (charts, figures, tables, and/or graphs) would you use to quickly and effectively report your findings? Would you be theming the data, would you produce summary statistics such as means, medians and/or modes, etc.? Explain how your proposed analyses would accurately and reliably summarize the data collected. What charts, figures, or tables would you use to summarize your results? Explain and support your rationale.
- **Ethical Considerations.** Discuss the ethical issues that would need to be addressed before conducting your proposed study. Such issues include but are not limited to honesty, confidentiality, carefulness, objectivity, and respect for intellectual property, openness, and human subject considerations. Describe how you would ensure the protection of any human subjects and confidentiality of data for your proposed study, including how you would ensure “informed consent” of all study participants.
- **Expected Results:** Discuss of the results you would expect if your study was actually conducted, and how these anticipated findings relate to the findings from studies discussed in your literature review, contributing to the current trends in research. Assess how your expected results could be used to identify principles of leadership to inform administrators, stakeholders, and the public in terms of policy and practice related to your topic. In other words, what practical applications might your study findings have for organizational leaders and policy makers, and what recommendations might you make to them as a result? Use examples to support your discussion.
- **Conclusion:** Summarize the primary goal of the proposed study and the expected benefits of conducting the study. Restate the main points of the proposal and the importance of conducting the research you propose.

Be sure to write in a scholarly and objective tone, avoiding the use of first person, personal pronouns, contractions, and colloquial or conversational language. Use citations from scholarly, peer-reviewed sources throughout to support your content and credit sources of information and ideas.