

PRST6998 Professional Project Proposal Process

Step 1: Complete the Professional Project Proposal

The proposal for your Professional Project must be approved by the MPS Program Director before the beginning of your PRST6998 Professional Project class. In your PRST 6300 Research Methods course you were required to complete a Research Proposal related to your MPS concentration area, which includes an Introduction, Literature Review, and Methodology Section. All students should be prepared to complete the research based Professional Project upon successful completion of PRST 6300 Research Methods. However, for the Professional Project, you can choose to continue the research using your previous proposal, create a proposal on a new topic that is related to your concentration area, or complete an internship-based Professional Project.

For the research-based Professional Projects, follow the outline below to construct your proposal. For the internship-based Professional Project, you will need to set up an internship that is related to your concentration area that is not part of your normal job hours or responsibilities. The internship could be with the organization that you are working for or with another organization. There may be special project within various departments within the organization that would be of value to your education and the organization, as well. Please reach out to the MPS Program Director with any question regarding the details of internship opportunities to ensure that the internship meets the Professional Project requirements before you finalize the internship proposal.

Note: If you are doing your project in conjunction with a field location, you must have the signed permission of the field supervisor along with the field supervisor's contact information.

Research-Based Project Proposal Outline (follow this outline as you construct your proposal)

I. Cover Page

- A. Include your name, project title and contact information (name, email, phone number).
- B. Use your name and project title as a header on each page.

II. Introduction

- A. General introduction. In this section, let the reader know in a few sentences what your project will be addressing. State at the outset what you are interested in researching. Explain how the topic of your Professional Project is related to your MPS Program of Study, including an explanation of how the project makes use of the knowledge you gained from your MPS courses. The Professional Project should be the logical culmination of what you have studied in the MPS program.

- B. Clearly state your research problem.
- C. Break down your research problem into a series of more specific questions, or, whenever feasible, into hypotheses. Be sure to indicate the process by which you have arrived at the predictions you make so that you can justify your hypotheses; make them intellectually compelling to your reader. Hypotheses, as a rule, flow from a logical process that includes consideration of what previous research has, or has not, demonstrated.

III. Review of Literature

- A. Indicate which studies have already been done on the same or related topics; which questions or hypotheses have been offered; major findings; consistencies and inconsistencies among these findings. Appropriate citations would include recent (within the last five years) peer-reviewed articles published in regionally, nationally, or internationally recognized professional journals; books; monographs; etc. Magazine, newspaper, web-news articles or other types of articles or publications are generally not appropriate for scholarly papers.
- B. After reviewing the literature, place your own research within a context of already existing knowledge. Is your research an attempt to retest previous research findings? Investigating some aspect(s) of previous research in greater depth? Exploring areas suggested by previous findings? Studying a problem about which little or nothing is known, but which needs to be investigated for practical or theoretical reasons?

IV. Definitions of Variables

- A. Clearly identify all your research variables and state which ones you will be treating as dependent and which as independent variables. If there are intervening variables, which you think are likely to affect your findings, specify these as well. (If your research is exploratory and it is unclear just what the variables are to be, or if it is descriptive research in which there are no dependent and independent variables, make appropriate adjustments in your presentation.)
- B. Define your research variables, preferably in operational terms. You can—and should—use definitions found in the literature if they are adequate for your purpose. When you do so, specify your references carefully.

V. Methodology

- A. Specify the research sample—who the subjects of your research will be and how you are going to select them. Give your reasons for choosing such a sample.
- B. Identify your procedure. Indicate which techniques of data collection you plan to use (observation, interviews, questionnaires, records, personal documents, etc.), and any relevant information about your research design.
- C. Discuss how you intend to analyze your data.

Note: For students completing a training oriented research project. This section may detail the focus audience for the training. The training methods and materials that will be included as part of the project, how the training will be evaluated, etc.

VI. Citations (References)

Include all sources that you cited in your proposal and list these in a reference page in APA style. A thorough proposal would include a minimum of 30 sources. The References should include no more than 5 *non peer-reviewed* sources and the majority of references used should be with the past 5 years.

VII. Appendices

Include your research instrument

Step 2: Submit Your Proposal to the Human Subjects Research Review

All students who propose to engage in any research activity involving the use of human subjects must have prior approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB is responsible for safeguarding rights and welfare of all persons participating in research projects. If you plan to do research with human subjects, please check with your MPS Program Director or your Project Class Instructor. You should submit your IRB request through your Project Class Instructor. **You must secure IRB approval prior to beginning any research.**

Step 3: Submit Your Proposal to the MPS Director for Approval

The MPS Director must approve your Proposal before you begin research. The approval process will include interaction with the MPS Director to help you refine your proposal. The best proposal is one that leads you easily through your research or internship responsibilities. **An approved Proposal (including IRB approval if necessary) is required before the start of your PRST 6998 Professional Project course.**

Checklist before Submitting Your Proposal:

- ___ The manuscript follows APA Style
- ___ The reference page includes at least 30 sources
- ___ The references include no more than 5 *non peer-reviewed* sources.
- ___ The majority of references used are within the past 5 years
- ___ All personal pronouns have been eliminated
- ___ Spell check and grammar check