

## **SOUTH CAROLINA HONORS COLLEGE SENIOR THESIS PROPOSAL GUIDELINES (SPRING 2020)**

The thesis proposal should make a convincing scholarly case which details, contextualizes, and supports your proposed thesis topic. It should be written in an academic and professional tone, in either first or third person. Sources from the bibliography **must be incorporated and cited throughout** the main body of the proposal (ie in the introduction) using either parenthetical citations or footnotes. **Please proofread and check for grammatical errors prior to submission.** Proposals should be **5–10 pages** in length, saved as a PDF or Word document, and are required to be written in the format below **with headings included.**

### **THESIS TITLE**

### **YOUR NAME**

### **INTRODUCTION & THESIS STATEMENT**

The introduction sets the context for your proposed project and captures the reader's interest. Your introduction should cite research from the bibliography, to contextualize what you are proposing to study, and include an identifiable thesis statement. The thesis statement should capture the essence of your intended research topic and also help put boundaries around what you intend to do (eg define the scope of your idea). If proposing a project based thesis, your introduction and thesis statement(s) should detail both the project itself and the required written, research portion of the thesis.

When you select your topic consider the scope and whether this is a manageable project to complete within your proposed timeline. Alternatively consider whether there sufficient scholarly research to support your proposed topic. Even when relying largely on primary data collection, all theses should incorporate secondary research, so an understanding of the existing body of literature on your topic is critical.

If your project is connected to research done with support from a university or SCHC grant (Magellan, SURF, Exploration, etc) please explain in this section (3-5 sentences) how your thesis project will expand upon that supported project. Your honors thesis should not simply be a resubmission of the work done for your grant, but should be an extension of this research, whether through a more comprehensive write up of the project, an analysis of a separate facet of your data, a comparison to the existing body of literature, etc.

### **APPROACH OR METHODOLOGY**

A methodology describes the broad philosophical underpinning for your chosen research methods, including whether you are using qualitative or quantitative methods, or a mixture of both, and why. You should provide a specific, detailed plan for **how** you will go about assessing your key questions and/or analyzing your proposed subject, and **why** the proposed methodology constitutes the best way to pursue the study objectives. This section should be **highly detailed** and answer the following questions:

- What methods will be used to answer your proposed question or analyze your proposed topic? What types of methodological models will you follow?
- How will you locate, analyze, and utilize secondary research? What types of questions will you ask/themes will you explore when reading your sources?
- Do you plan to collect primary data and if so how will it be collected and analyzed? If you plan to administer a survey, conduct interviews or a focus group, identify the intended target population (i.e college students from SC) and the number of respondents/participants you hope to include.

### **EXPECTED OUTCOME AND POTENTIAL SIGNIFICANCE**

What do you expect to produce or learn or create through this thesis? How will it be significant in or

contribute to your field or discipline? While we do not necessarily expect your findings/analysis to be groundbreaking, we want you to consider how your proposed research has the potential to yield information or analysis that is unique/meaningful. How will it be significant for you, personally or professionally (eg will you try to publish or present your findings)? In short, what do you hope will result from completing this thesis and what meaningful issues/questions/themes will you attempt to address?

**ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY – 5 sources in accepted format for field (MLA, APA, Chicago, etc.)**

An annotated bibliography is a list of citations to books, articles and documents. Each citation is followed by a brief (approximately 150 words) descriptive and evaluative paragraph, which is the annotation. The purpose is to inform the reader of the relevance, accuracy, and quality of the sources cited and how they will be used in your proposed research. **These five sources, which should be scholarly/academic, MUST also be cited, where relevant, in the other sections of your proposal. If research from this section is not incorporated in the main body of your proposal, you will be asked to resubmit.**

**TIMELINE**

Include a timeline outlining your planned research and writing. This timeline can be written in any format which best helps you to organize the necessary steps to complete your thesis, from now until graduation. Items to include are the meetings with your thesis director and/or second reader, research/data collection, outlining, draft submission, tentative defense date, etc. This timeline is tentative (therefore subject to change) but should be highly detailed and provide you a template for establishing deadlines with your thesis director/second reader in your senior year.