Guideline to write a Research Proposal within the Academic Department Marketing, Strategy & Leadership

Preliminary Remark

The preparation of a research/project proposal is a prerequisite for the acceptance of theses, project studies, interdisciplinary projects and external PhD projects within the academic department *Marketing, Strategy and Leadership*.

This information sheet contains guidelines for the form and content of the research/project proposal. You should only deviate from these policies in exceptional cases and after consultation with the supervising chair.

Before submitting the research proposal of a final thesis (master's thesis, bachelor thesis), it is usually recommended to clarify first whether the topic of the thesis fits with the content and fulfills the formal requirements of the supervising chair. For project studies and interdisciplinary projects exist different guidelines, please refer information provided on the homepages.

Formal structure

Scope: Maximum 8 pages of text *without* references. To ensure that your synopsis formally complies with the general scientific standards, please pay attention to our **Guideline to write a Scientific Paper**.

Content

Your research proposal should detail the topic, goals, planned approach and time schedule of your work. It should be structured with regard to contents as follows:

1. Introduction

The introduction should introduce the problem statement of the work. You should present an overview of the topic, identify research gaps, and illustrate the relevance and objectives of your planned project for science and /or practice.

2. Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses

Here you should theoretically embed your topic in the current research, provide definitions and give an overview on the current state of empirical research on the topic. If possible, you should refer to research at the supervising Chair.

For ***theses, project studies*** and ***interdisciplinary projects*** applies: At the end of this part either research questions or initial hypotheses should be derived from the theory.

For ***external PhDs*** applies: Based on the presented theories the own substantive hypotheses should be formulated and explained.

3. Sample, Methods and Evaluation Procedure

Here, you should provide information about the design, the nature, and the implementation of the planned empirical work: You introduce your research design and your plans for the data collection and data analysis. This includes information on the population, planned sample, survey instruments, techniques and statistical methods. For more complex designs and/or the collections of several variables a tabular representation or equivalent presentation form is recommended. Information on the planned statistical analysis also is of central importance. You should demonstrate that you have the competencies necessary for collecting the data or that these can be developed.

4. Impact/ Significance of the Work

You should briefly mention to what extent the planned work is theoretically and practically relevant. Present concisely the value of your scientific work: What is the impact of your work? Why are the results fascinating? Which use do they have?

5. Time schedule

Please provide a brief time schedule to give us an overview. Usually, it is helpful to divide the schedule in the following phases:

- Theoretical preparation: Literature research
- Preparation of the empirical part
- Data collection
- Write the (final) thesis

A provisional timetable is important, even if you cannot estimate each step at the beginning. We consider that your schedule is preliminary and changes are—after consultation with your supervisor—at any time possible.

6. Literature

Here you should specify all the literature references used in the research proposal in correct citation form to APA standard. Our **Guideline to write a Scientific Paper** will help you.

Checklist

Finally, we would like to provide a checklist which summarizes the key points below. Please make sure that you give an answer to each point of this checklist in your synopsis.

- General description of the topic
- Research questions
- Research gaps
- Basic literature / relevant topics
- Expected results (which findings are interesting? why?)
- Relevance of the study from a theoretical and practical point of view
- Proposed method (e.g. N, design, measurement, etc.)
- Time and work schedule

We wish you good luck at writing your academic (final) thesis
and are excited to read your research proposal!