

The Research Proposal

Martha J. Bianco, Ph.D.

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Purpose

◆ Why have a proposal?

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Essential Elements

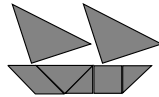
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Proposed Title

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Research Question

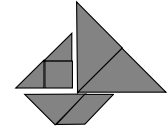
- ◆ What question is this research attempting to answer?



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Attention Grabber

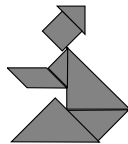
- ◆ Generate interest
 - Who cares?
 - Who is your audience?
 - Why is this important / significant?
- ◆ Your rationale
- ◆ Significance / importance of your research



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Background

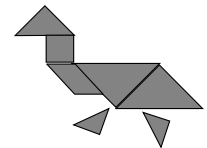
- ◆ Very general overview of what is known
- ◆ Establish the context
- ◆ Connection with Forbidden Knowledge
- ◆ Provide history and background
- ◆ Operationalize (define) key terms



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Alternative Explanations

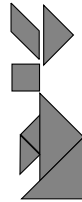
- ◆ Competing explanations
 - Different points of view
 - For example: pro & con
- ◆ Schools of thought
 - Different theories
 - Alternative positions



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Thesis Statement

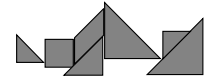
- ◆ What you plan to argue or show
- ◆ Your theory
- ◆ Your main purpose
- ◆ Your goal



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Methodology

- ◆ How you will conduct your research
 - Literature review
 - ◆ Compare and contrast differing theories
 - ◆ Historical review
 - Secondary statistics
 - ◆ Gather and analyze existing data (e.g., Census, GSS)



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Methodology

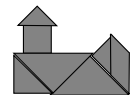
- ◆ How you will conduct your research
 - Interviews
 - Content analysis
 - Surveys, field observation, experiments



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Paper Plan

- ◆ Tentative organization of paper
 - Background and history
 - Literature review
 - Research methodology
 - Findings



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Paper Plan

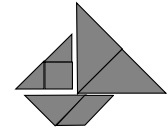
- ◆ Tentative organization of paper
 - Interpretation
 - Identification of problems
 - Recommendations for further research
 - Works Cited



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Annotated Bibliography

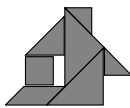
- ◆ 5 to 10 works
 - Final paper should have 10 to 15 works
- ◆ All MLA-required citation information
- ◆ Credibility of author(s)
- ◆ Biases, if any, of author(s)
- ◆ Advantages and / or disadvantages
- ◆ Usefulness to your paper



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Typical Order of Elements

1. Cover page, with title
2. Abstract
 - ◆ 1-paragraph summary, single spaced
 - ◆ Begins at top of first page of text
3. Introduction
 - ◆ Attention-grabber
 - ◆ Research question
 - ◆ Thesis statement



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Typical Order of Elements

4. Operationalizations
5. Background
6. Alternative Explanations
7. Methodology

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Typical Order of Elements

8. Paper plan
9. Conclusion
 - ◆ Tie back to intro / thesis statement
 - ◆ Leave reader excited to read your work
10. Annotated Bibliography
11. Works Cited (may be more extensive)

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The E-Portfolio



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Underlying Philosophy

- ◆ Goal-setting
- ◆ Self-assessment
- ◆ Reflection



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Purpose

- ◆ Multimedia résumé
- ◆ Work, skill, sample portfolio
- ◆ Job advancement
- ◆ Course placement
- ◆ Graduate school admissions
- ◆ Legacy



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e-portfolio Samples

- ◆ <http://www.cyborglab.pdx.edu/portfolioproject/>
- ◆ <http://web.pdx.edu/~hea/unst/index.php>
- ◆ <http://www.marthabianco.com/Courses/FK/eportfolios.html>

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Proposal Sequencing

Author's Order

1. Curiosity
2. Literature review
3. Annotated bib
4. Alternative explanations
5. Research question
6. Thesis
7. Methodology
8. Operationalization
9. Background
10. Paper plan
11. Citations
12. Introduction
13. Conclusions
14. Title and cover
15. Abstract
16. Works Cited

Reader's Order

1. Cover and title
2. Abstract
3. Introduction
4. Research question
5. Thesis
6. Operationalizations
7. Background
8. Alternative explanations
9. Citations throughout
10. Methodology
11. Paper plan
12. Conclusion
13. Annotated bib
14. Works Cited
15. Curiosity
16. Desire to read paper

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