Smith College School for Social Work
Alumni Association

Thesis Awards

Guidelines

Abstract
A brief description of the research study.

Introduction to the Research Project
• Define and describe the theoretical or empirical research topic and its expected relevance to the field of clinical practice. This relevance can be related to one’s personal observations and/or as indicated in the literature.
• State your research hypothesis (a quantitative/qualitative/descriptive/explorative study) derived from above.

Preliminary Literature Review
• Cite references supporting the need for the study chosen as evidenced through the literature and statistical citations (or the lack therein).
• Cite references supporting your specifically chosen focus or theoretical rationale and the research already explored in that focus which you will be building on, even if minimal.
• Argue for the strength, originality and relevance of your hypothesis from this literature or theoretical review.

Methodology (6-8 pages) Study design plan:
• Brief restatement of research hypothesis.
• Brief restatement of research approach.
• Justification of research method to be used (e.g.: does instrument used to measure the research variable proposed have sufficient reliability and validity?) Use sample of instrument to be used.
• Data analysis methodology.
• Sampling plan of subjects for research (setting, procedure and number of subjects planned for).
• Plan for Human Subject Review. Approval must be given by research advisor.

Discussion and Conclusion
Implications of findings of study for the field and clinical practice.

Formatting Style
All references, literature review, citations and general layout must conform to APA publication style formatting. Please consult with your research advisor for questions regarding formatting of your thesis proposal.
Evaluation Criteria

- Originality of thought and relevance to the field.
- Strength and relevance of argument or hypothesis as reflected in the literature review or as an uncharted field of inquiry.
- Research or study design plan.
- Clarity, organization and writing.