

Format and Content

In matters of format, graduate written work must follow the latest edition of *Andrews University Standards for Written Work*. This is especially true of the proposal and the dissertation. In matters of style, the Leadership and Educational Administration Department follows the APA (American Psychological Association) style of scholarly writing. (See *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 6th ed., and *APA Style Guide to Electronic References*, available from <http://books.apa.org/books.cfm?id=4210509>). If there is a difference between APA and Andrews University Standards for Written Work, AU Standards must be followed. AU Standards, as well as other documents and forms related to the dissertation, are reviewed on our web page in more detail. In addition to explaining format and style rules, these documents explain procedures and policies that are important in the dissertation process. They also provide templates and directions for preparing the dissertation in Microsoft Word.

Ultimately, the Dissertation Office of the School of Graduate Studies is responsible for assuring conformity to the *Andrews University Standards for Written Work*, and the chair, department, school, and graduate division ensure compliance with other policies. When participants first begin writing their proposal, they are encouraged to make a brief visit with the Dissertation Office or arrange a consultation via e-mail at dissertationoffice@andrews.edu. This will allow the Dissertation Office to alert participants early on to policies and format issues they need to attend to.

In addition to format, proposals share some common elements. The items to include and the location of the items within sections may vary, but the following are normally included in a research proposal:

A. Chapter 1: Introduction

1. Introduction and background of the problem
2. Statement of the problem
3. Purpose of the study
4. Research questions or objectives/hypotheses and sub-hypotheses
5. Research design
6. Theoretical/conceptual framework
7. Significance/importance of the study
8. Assumptions
9. Definition of terms
10. Limitations and/or delimitations of the study
11. Summary
12. Outline of the remainder of the proposal

B. Chapter Two: Review of Literature

A brief overview and description of representative literature related to the topic should be included. When appropriate, this overview of the proposed literature search should support the methodology used in the research. For certain types of research, such as statistical or clinical studies, this may require a brief description of procedures and instrumentation of previous studies. The committee may want to know the proposed search strategy to be used in the various databases, as well as the key words that will be used.

C. Chapter Three: Methodology

Research methods vary depending on the nature of the study. For example, historical, philosophical, and developmental studies each have their own unique requirements. The following is a list of the most common elements included in the methodology for quantitative educational research:

1. Description of the population, setting, and any sampling procedures used.
2. Identification of the independent, dependent, and classification variables and, sometimes, formulating a workable statement of the research hypotheses in null form to prepare for a research design permitting statistical inferences.
3. Instruments used, tests, measures, interview or observation schedules, scales and questionnaires including details of validity and reliability, or
4. A design for instrument development, including procedures for showing validity and reliability.
5. Pilot studies.
6. Procedures:
 - a. Field, classroom, or laboratory procedures
 - b. Data collection and recording
 - c. Null hypotheses, data processing, and data analysis