

## Assignments 4-5

### Research Proposal

While the aim of the previous assignments was to experience different research methods and reflect on them, the aim of writing a research proposal is to use these experiences and reflections to consider choices of methods and methodologies for one or more research projects.

A research proposal is a document proposing **a plan** for a research project. The research proposal should make clear what research question(s) will be addressed and how the researcher(s) will address them, what you expect to learn, etc. Please note that you do not have to carry out the activities you plan for in this research proposal: You can plan for an ideal project and adapt to your master projects later.

For the last two assignments, you will write a research proposal, i.e., you will plan a project using the concepts and the curriculum that you have learned in this course. As in assignments 1-3, you can combine working in groups with working with your master topics and the assignments invite you to make some individual research proposals and discuss them in the group.

### Deadlines and feedback sessions

Assignment	Delivery	Feedback
4: First draft of RP	Wed Apr 19, 12 noon	April 25
5: Final draft of RP	Wed May 10, 12 noon	May 16, Project presentation and feedback (tentative)

In the group, you can choose to relate the plan to your master topics if they are somehow similar or related. You can plan variants of a topic, or a collective case study or several smaller projects under one umbrella if you cannot agree on a common topic or plan. If you do so, discuss differences and similarities in the plan. You can follow the structure from assignment 3. The group submits a common assignment report.

A research proposal will usually include a brief description of previous research, but for these last assignments, writing about previous research will not help you practice concepts from the course. These assignments will help you to practice the curriculum so spend only a little effort into writing about your master topics. Use maximum two references on your master topics and max 100 words about previous research only to connect the research question(s) with the chosen methodologies and methods. See the appendix below for suggestions on how to structure the research proposal.

Submit one paper per group in email to [guribv@ifi.uio.no](mailto:guribv@ifi.uio.no). To document that all group members have participated, you will write a group log to be handed in with the assignment.

The group log will contain information about the dates of group meetings, who was present, and the content of the meetings (e.g., “discussion” or “writing assignment”).

**Assignment 4 — Research proposal: first draft**

- 3-5 pages (1500-2500 words)
- Times New Roman font size 12 (or similar)
- Use min. 2 references from the curriculum.

**Assignment 5 — Research proposal: final draft**

- 7-10 pages (3500-5000 words)
- Times New Roman font size 12 (or similar)
- Use min. 4 references from the curriculum.

Project presentations will take place in the exercise session Tuesday May 16 and (tentatively) feedback is given in the lecture session afterwards.

## **Appendix:**

### **Suggestions on how to structure your research proposal**

**Front-page:** Title, group nr, names, course, year, word count

**Table of content:** list of the sections + page numbers

**1. Introduction.** Give the reader a short and precise presentation of the content of your research proposal: What will this research be about? Describe the motivation for your proposed study: What will you explore and why is this interesting to a larger audience? Shortly describe what you intend to accomplish with the study. *Please note that your introduction should not exceed 100-150 words.*

You might want to position your work in relation to existing research literature. If so, use maximum two references to indicate related research or relevant findings in your area of interest, and state how your research will contribute to this (*max 100 words and two references*). You can also draw on the three group assignments to formulate your purpose statement. Did your observation(s) and interview raise questions you would like to explore further?

**2. Research question(s).** From the broad purpose statement, you narrow the focus to one or a few research questions to be answered. The research questions should guide data gathering and is a key question that the researchers will ask themselves in the observational procedure or during semi-structured interviews. Use questions starting with ‘how’ or ‘what’. Questions starting with ‘why’ suggest cause and effect, for which a quantitative approach is usually more appropriate.

**3. Present the case or the field.** What will you do to answer your research questions? Who and what will be included in your study? Describe the field setting in terms of where, what, who, when, how long, and why.

**4. Methodology and methods.** Describe the methodology you have chosen, and the methods you plan to use. Here you describe how you will generate empirical material to answer your research question. What kind of data will you generate, and what is your strategy for generating them?

Justify your choices: Why did you choose this methodology and not another? Why are the chosen methods appropriate for generating the data you need to answer your research question? Could you have chosen differently? What would be the consequences?

Present which paradigm you are working within. Remember: we do not “use” a paradigm the same way as we “use” a method; paradigms are more a bundle of philosophical assumptions that guide how we understand knowledge and what is good research that will give us the answers we look for.

**5. Analysis.** Describe in brief how you will analyse your data.

**6. Ethical considerations.** How will you protect your informants’ privacy? How will you ensure informed consent from those who participate in your study? Do your case, field site, or methods raise particular ethical concerns? How will you address them?

**8. References.** Alphabetic listing of all the literature referred to. For information about correct citing and referencing, see link to the website “Search and Write” ([sokogskriv.no](http://sokogskriv.no)).