

Dissertation Outline Example

- I. Preliminary Pages
 - A. Title Page
 - B. Committee Approval and Recommendation Page
 - C. Dedication
 - D. Acknowledgements
 - E. Abstract
 - F. Detailed Table of Contents
 - G. List of Tables
 - H. List of Figures
- II. Chapter 1: Introduction
 - A. Problem description and context
 - B. Delimitations
 - C. Limitations
 - D. Assumptions
 - E. Project Objectives
 - F. Justification/ Need for the Project
 - 1. Why it is important to address the problem
 - 2. Contributions to knowledge and practice
 - G. Definition of Terms
- III. Chapter 2: Review of the Literature
 - A. Analysis, Synthesis and Evaluation of Literature Related to the Topic
 - B. Analysis, Synthesis and Evaluation of Literature Related to the Method
- IV. Chapter 3: Implementation
 - A. Description of the Project
 - B. Organizational Context
 - C. Project Design Methodology
 - D. Participants (if used)
 - E. Project Assessment, Validation or Analysis
 - 1. Theory(ies) of effectiveness
 - 2. Assessment method
 - a. Description
 - b. Justification
 - c. Reliability
 - d. Validity
 - 3. Procedures
 - 4. Coding and Analysis
 - F. Design Validity
 - G. Ethical Issues (for example)
 - 1. Planning: What safeguards are incorporated into the design of the study to protect the rights of human subjects/organization?
 - 2. Subject Risk: What steps are taken to minimize or eliminate risk to the subjects/organization?
 - 3. Researcher Responsibility: How will the subjects/organization be notified that the study is for research purposes and that they have the choice of not participating?
 - 4. Notification: How will the subject/organization consent form be thoroughly reviewed?

5. Deception: If deception or concealment is necessary to the methods of this study, how has the researcher determined that such methods are necessary, that alternate methods are not available that do not use concealment or deception, or insure

- V. *Chapter 4: Evaluation of Completed Project
 - A. Results Presented
 - B. Discussion in the Context of the Research Question(s)
- VI. *Chapter 5: Discussion
- VII. A. Discussion of the implications of the findings—their meaning and significance
 - B. Recommendations for Practice
 - C. Limitations of the Study—unresolved problems and weaknesses
 - D. Recommendations for Future Research
- VII. References
- VIII. Appendices
 - Saint Mary's University's Research Methods Approval Form
 - Approved External Institutional Review Board Letters'
 - Consent Forms, (if appropriate)
 - Timetable for the project completion
 - Data collection instruments
 - Data analysis tools
 - A matrix of relationships between questions and hypotheses
 - Examples of observation notes or interview transcripts from pilot studies or completed parts of the study

As with all academic work, the following critical concerns are expected to be addressed within the body of the document:

- Reality vs. Perception
- Communication
- Values
- Assumptions
- Societal Consequences
- Role of the Researcher

* = For a proposal, leave out chapters 4 and 5.