

## **FBA Master's Thesis Proposal Guideline**

This document contains some general principles for preparing the MBA thesis proposal. Students should bear in mind that there is no standardized format to follow when preparing a research proposal, and it depends on specific methodological choices, individual preferences and traditions of the discipline.

The thesis proposal is limited to 10 pages, excluding the cover page and tables and/or figures to be placed at the end in the Appendix. It should be typed in Times New Roman, 12point font, with 1.5 line spacing (except for the reference which follows journal formats). Bear in mind that a good proposal should contain the following elements:

- Cover page
- Abstract
- Introduction
- Literature review
- Research questions
- Research design
- References

### *I. Cover page*

The cover page should include the following elements;

- Research title
- Your full name
- Name of institution
- Degree sought
- Name of supervisor
- Date of submission
- Date of entering the program (optional)

### *II. Abstract (no more than 200 words)*

The abstract should clearly identify the research problem(s)/question(s), background information and the relevant research methodology. Emphasis should be put on the expected significance of research findings.

### *III. Introduction (within one page)*

The introduction is to provide readers with the background information for the research. Its purpose is to establish the issue(s) or concern(s) or motivations leading to the research question(s) and objective(s), so that readers can understand the significance and rationale underlying the study. For example, you can frame your introduction and present the need of research in one of the following ways:

- 1) The concept is 'immature' due to a lack of theory and previous research;
- 2) The available theory may be inaccurate, inappropriate, incorrect, or biased;
- 3) A need exists to explore and describe the phenomena and to develop theory;
- 4) The nature of the phenomena may not be suited to a previous research method or conceptual model;
- 5) A need exists to solve the company-specific problem(s) through an action research; 6) Replication of an existing empirical study on a theoretical model.

#### *IV. Literature review (preferably one page, and no more than two pages)*

The literature review should not only be a presentation or description of available theories. It should also contain findings from related studies conducted by other researchers. Most important of all, from these descriptions, you must be able to critically demonstrate congruencies as well as discrepancies and to argue on them. The literature review is especially important because it is from this you develop your **theoretical framework/conceptual model** out of which **hypotheses/propositions** are generated to be tested (for quantitative study) and to answer your main **research questions** (for qualitative study). Despite this, the literature review section should be kept short, and therefore does not need to be exhaustive.

#### *V. Research Questions*

Research questions, theoretical framework/conceptual model related to your study, hypotheses to be tested, or propositions should be discussed in this section.

#### *VI. Research Design / Methodology (within two pages)*

In this section, you should explain the overall research design (e.g. quantitative or qualitative) and the related justifications or underlying assumptions. Then a detailed description of the research methodology including data collection procedures (questionnaire design, interview guide, measurement of variables, sampling process, etc...) and analytical methods (specific statistical tests, qualitative analysis tools, verification techniques, etc...) is required.

#### *VII. References*

The reference section should list out all the references cited in the thesis proposal.