

# Research Proposal

## **Literature Review**

SOC 201 - Research Methods

Group Review #2: March 14, 2018

Literature reviews provide the reader with a comprehensive overview of the current state of knowledge on a particular topic and they allow the author to signal their command of the major theoretical and methodological contributions to a particular topic. They also allow space for the author to relate their study to the ongoing theoretical debates in their field of inquiry. For the in-class group meeting have the first draft of your literature review completed (600-1000 words) along with a bibliography of sources used (a quality literature review will include at least five peer-reviewed journal articles).

Remember that a literature review is a piece of discursive prose, not a list describing or summarizing one piece of literature after another. Your ultimate goal is to synthesize the material into a cohesive portrayal of where the research is at this point in time and how your study relates to the ongoing research in the field.

## **Elements of a Literature Review**

### **Introduction**

The introduction of a literature review serves the same purpose as an introduction in any other type of paper or essay. The introduction should include a statement of the problem, a brief explanation of the significance of your topic of study, and a short discussion of how your study relates to ongoing research in the field. This sets the theoretical framework for your paper.

### **Body**

The body of your literature review should summarize the findings of studies that have been conducted on your topic. For each study you should briefly explain its purpose, procedure for data collection and major findings. This is the section where you will discuss the strengths and weaknesses of particular studies. Remember that a literature review should not be a listing of articles or researchers but rather a flowing article incorporating both prose and citations such as “Simpson and Bremmer (2009) argue minimum wage...”

## Discussion

The discussion should be similar to a conclusion portion of an essay paper. It serves as a summary of the body of your literature review and should highlight the most important findings (in your opinion). There needs to be a sense of completion to the whole piece in this section. Your analysis should help you to draw conclusions. In this section you would discuss any consensus or disagreement on the topic. It can also include any strengths and weaknesses in general of the research area. If you believe there is more to research you may include that here.

## Reference Page

The reference page contains a list of the sources of information you used and cited in your paper. Only include those cited in the text but be sure to include every citation. Feel free to use any of the standard citation formats including but not limited to APA, Chicago Style, IEEE, etc. In general, your literature review should show a sense of direction and contain a definite central idea supported with evidence. The writing should be logical and the ideas should be linked together in a logical sequence. The ideas need to be put together in a way that is clear to the writer and to the reader.

## Required Reading

Please read the information provided by the following link for a better understanding of the components of a literature review. **<http://guides.library.ucsc.edu/write-a-literature-review>**

## ELEMENTS

	<b>Score</b>		
<b>Introduction:</b> The introduction includes a statement of the problem, briefly explains the significance of your topic study and acts as a way to introduce the reader to your definitions and background.	1	2	3
<b>Body:</b> The body of the literature review summarizes the findings of studies that have been conducted on the topic. For at least 10 out of 15 studies you have briefly explained the purpose, procedure for data collection and major findings.	1	2	3
<b>General:</b> In general, the paper shows a sense of direction and contains a definite central idea supported with evidence. The writing is logical and the ideas are linked together in a logical sequence. The ideas are put together in a way that is clear to the writer and to the reader. The paper is not just a listing of articles or researchers but rather a flowing narrative incorporating both prose and citations.	1	2	3
<b>Discussion:</b> The discussion summarizes the body of your literature review and highlights the most important findings (in your opinion). There is a sense of completion to the whole piece in this section. Conclusions are drawn based on your analysis.	1	2	3
<b>Implications:</b> You discuss any consensus or disagreement on the topic. The discussion includes any strengths and weaknesses in general of the research area. You discuss implications of the findings and/or areas for further research.	1	2	3