

WRITING YOUR GRADUATE THESIS

BASIC ELEMENTS OF A THESIS

- **HYPOTHESIS:** what is the problem and what do you see as the solution?
- **Literature Review:** what have others learned about the problem?
- **Methodology:** What did you do towards finding a solution?
- **Results:** What did you observe?
- **Conclusion/Discussion:** What do you make of this?
- **Summary:** Can you repeat that in a nutshell?
- **References**
- **Appendices**

STAGES OF WRITING A THESIS

RESEARCH PHASE

- Set a schedule: What is your deadline?
- Know your method:
 - Qualitative? Quantitative? Ethnography? Statistics?
- Read widely
- Organize your papers
- Keep a Study Journal:
 - Meetings with advisor
 - Thoughts, ideas, feelings,
 - New knowledge, reactions, question
- Become familiar with your documentation guide (APA, MLA, etc.)
- Choose a topic and focus
- Always review your plans with your thesis advisor and keep him/her informed about your progress

PROPOSAL PHASE

- Read examples of other proposals
- Plan your proposal: Thesis, Title, Headings, and Key Terms
- Prepare “ Review of Literature” and “Methodology”
- Identify implications and assumptions
- Write and revise
- Find a good editor
- Review with your advisor present

THESIS WRITING PHASE

- Extend and modify the proposal
- Prepare the Table of Contents: headings and key terms
- Follow the order that works best for you
- Provide both captions and explanations for table and figures
- Edit the hard copy

FORMAT FOR THE CONCORDIA THESIS

- Consult the regulations and guidelines for thesis preparation at the School of Graduate Studies website site:
- Thesis Preparation and Thesis Examination Regulations
<http://www.concordia.ca/content/dam/concordia/office/sgs/docs/handbooks/thesispreparationguide.pdf>

A FEW TIPS FOR YOUR WRITING PHASE

- Provide an introduction that...
 - Summarizes the question (problem)
 - Explains why the study is worthwhile
 - Provides an overview of the main results
 - Outlines your thesis
- Provide a thorough discussion of your results
- Support claims
- Keep your conclusions concise, and maintain correct, clear and simple language.
- Use headings and sub-headings that clearly indicate content
- Include all references

SUGGESTED STYLE GUIDES

- K.L. Turabian, a Manual for Writers of term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations
- MLA Handbook for Writers of Research papers (2016)
- Publication Manual for Psychology (APA)
- Style guide for Chemists
- AIP Style Manual for Physicists
- A Manual for Authors of Mathematical Papers
- IEEE for Engineers