

McNair Scholars Summer Research Institute
Outline for Empirical Research Paper

Explanations

1. Empirical research requires IRB application and approval before any data may be collected. Please start and complete this process no later than March 1 of each year.
2. By working with mentors during the academic year, participants are encouraged to prepare as much of this paper in advance of the Summer Research Institute as possible so the summer can be focused on implementing the proposed research.
3. Participants who were granted permission in advance of the Institute to conduct non-empirical projects may not use this guide; instead, the “Outline for Non-Empirical Research” must be used.
4. The paper must be double-spaced and must conform to APA Manual, latest edition.
5. The content items are very similar to how you will be expected to organize your work in graduate school and for doctoral study. However, the actual content will be expanded upon significantly at the graduate and doctoral level. But for McNair purposes, your content will be cogent summaries.
6. This document is just a sample. The final identification of sections, which may exceed the contents herein, depends on the nature of the research and analysis and discussions with mentor. The final “look and feel” of your paper will reflect guidance from your mentor.
7. The page numbers are approximate and are intended to encourage successful completion of the paper during the Summer Research Institute.

OVER

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract (300 words)

no page number

Chapter I- Introduction (approximately 5 pages)

Problem Statement

Purpose of Study and Research Questions

Significance of Research

Summary of Analytic¹ Framework

Delimitations of Research

Definitions Related to Research

Summary and Organization of Remaining Chapters

Chapter II – Analysis and Discussion of the Literature and Presentation of Analytic Framework (approximately 5 pages)

Note: The specific headings for this section will emerge as the chapter is being developed.

Topic 1

Topic 2

Topic 3

Topic 4

Summary and Implications of the Literature²

Presentation and Discussion of the Analytic³ Framework

Chapter III – Research Design and Methodology (approximately 5 pages)

Purpose of Study and Research Questions

Data Collection and Data Sources

Data Analysis Strategies

Strategies for Minimizing Bias and Error

Ethical Considerations

Limitations of the Study

Chapter IV – Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations for Future Research (approximately 5 pages)

Findings

Conclusions

Recommendations for Future Research

References (approximately 25 sources⁴)

Appendices

Appendix A: Informed Consent

Appendix B: Research Summary

Appendix C: Interview Guide

¹ Depending on your study, you may use “Theoretical Framework” or “Conceptual Framework” as appropriate.

² Scholars may choose to have this section at the end of each section of the literature rather than at end of chapter.

³ Use the same term used in Chapter 1

⁴ Sources include refereed journals, books, secondary sources (magazines, newspapers, reports), documentary data and electronic sources (credible websites). Wikipedia and similar sites are not acceptable sources.