

## C7935 DISSERTATION COUNSELING

Fall 2009 09/08-12/19

Course Syllabus	
<b>Course Title:</b> Dissertation I C 7935 BLA	<b>On Campus Meetings:</b> TBA
<b>Instructor:</b> Romana A. Norton, Ph.D.	<b>Office Hours:</b> By Appointment
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### Argosy Communication:

If you choose to use an email address other than the assigned Argosy email, please be advised that you do so at your own risk. Any difficulty receiving Argosy emails will be your responsibility.

**Required Texts** The required reading for the course is an Argosy University prepared Student Guide to the Dissertation Process (September, 2008) that will be distributed to students in electronic form on **Ecollege** at the beginning of the course. There may be additional reading material required throughout the semester. As the instructor, I recognize that students in Dissertation 1 are at different levels of readiness, with different levels of knowledge and experience of the academic process and research skills necessary to complete a dissertation. Therefore, specific reading recommendations may be given to individual students to guide them in acquiring the specific information that will be most useful to them. There are several **Required** texts in addition to the dissertation guide, although recommended readings are provided and listed below. The texts that are highlighted in bold type are books that I particularly recommend.

### **Required Texts:**

Cone & Foster (2006). Dissertations and thesis from start to finish, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. ISBN: 1-59147-362-4

Pan, M. L. (2008). Preparing Literature Reviews: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. ISBN: 1-884585-27-2

(2009). Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. American Psychological Association, 6<sup>th</sup> ed. ISBN: 1433805626

### **Recommended Readings:**

*(Many texts are available in the library; or you can order from MBS)*

Surviving Your Dissertation: A Comprehensive Guide to Content and Process,  
2nd. Ed.

Kjell Erik Rudestam & Rae R. Newton

Sage Publications, Inc., 2001

ISBN0-7619-1961 ©) ISBN 0-7619-1962-7 (p)

**\*Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches,**  
**2nd ed.**

**John W. Creswell**

**Sage Publications, 2003 (paper, \$34.95)**

**ISBN: 0-7619-2442-6**

Qualitative Research in Psychology

Paul Camic 2003

ISBN# 1557989796

**\*Doing a Literature Review: Releasing the Social Science Research**  
**Imagination**

**Chris Hart**

**Sage Publications, 2000**

**ISBN: 0-7619-5975-0**

Writing Literature Reviews: A Guide for Students of the Social and Behavioral  
Sciences, 2nd ed.

Jose L. Galvan

P.O. Box 250430

Glendale, CA 91225

ISBN: 1-884585-50-7

### **Methods of Instruction**

The course is delivered as a Directed Study. Ecollege, Email, on-campus meetings, and learning activities will comprise the main approaches to teaching and learning. There will be recommended reading assignments visits to the library, and other activities that are directly linked to students' learning needs.

You will be required to complete a few assignments on Ecollege and dialogue with your cohort. Please familiarize yourself with the Ecollege platform.

**PLEASE NOTE THAT I AM SCHEDULING 2 ON-CAMPUS MEETINGS. The first will be Wednesday, September 23rd between 10:30-2:30 p.m. The second will be held on Wednesday, November 18<sup>th</sup> between 10:30-2:30 p.m. There are also 2 TELECONFERENCES, Wednesday October 14<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 and December 2<sup>nd</sup> at 7:00. IF SEVERAL PEOPLE IN THE CLASS HAVE PRIOR COMMITMENTS ON THESE DAYS I WILL MAKE EVERY ATTEMPT TO ACCOMMODATE OTHER DATES AND TIMES.**

BE PREPARED TO BRING YOUR WORK TO CLASS MEETINGS. *You will be required to present your work at the class meetings.*

**Timetable of what you need to work on to develop your proposal**

Week	Topic	Activity
1 - Sept 9	Getting Started	<p><b>Write a 500 word summary</b> of your selected dissertation topic and the method(s) that you intend to use. <b>Summarize 10 relevant, peer-reviewed articles.</b> Prepare a brief <b>PowerPoint presentation of your topic to share with the class.</b> <b>Due Sept 23</b></p> <p><i>Read chapters from Dissertation and Thesis and Preparing Literature Reviews (TBA)</i></p> <p><i>Ecollege: Familiarize yourself with the Ecollege platform. Introduce yourself to your classmates and respond to them.</i></p>
2 - Sept 16	Introduction to the Dissertation Process	<p>Read Dissertation Guide - <b>if needed, submit questions by email.</b></p> <p><b>Develop a dissertation writing schedule for the semester. Post to the discussion board.</b></p> <p><b>Search</b> for research articles on your topic and review Dissertations in <i>Dissertation Abstracts</i> using the Argosy Online Library. See the "Webliography" on Ecollege for sites of interest.</p>
3 - Sept 23	<p><b>ON CAMPUS MEETING #1</b></p> <p>Introduction to the Prospectus and the Proposal</p>	<p><b>Dissertation Topic Summary, article summaries, and PowerPoint Presentation due.</b></p> <p>Review summaries and discuss topics. Overview of the Dissertation process, Dissertation Chapter 1, committee selection, library orientation, APA style.</p> <p>Continue to search for research articles, summarize and organize your</p>

		literature search. These will form the basis of your literature review (chapter 2).
4 - Sept 30	Chapter I: Writing the Introduction	Write your problem statement and purpose statement.  Continue to search for research articles, summarize and organize your literature search.
5 - Oct 5	Chapter I: Writing the Introduction (continued)	Expand problem statement into a proposal outline for the Introduction. Write preliminary research question(s) and/or hypotheses.
6 - Oct 12	Chapter I: Writing the Introduction (continued)	<b>Submit Chapter 1 draft.</b>  <b>Read chapters from Preparing Literature Reviews (TBA) in preparation for first teleconference</b>
7 - Oct 14  7:00 PST	<b>TELECONFERENCE #1</b>	Review and Discuss Chapter 1 Drafts.  Overview of Literature Reviews and brief introduction to Methodology Section.  <b>Read chapters from Preparing Literature Reviews, APA style (TBA).</b>
8 - Oct 19	Chapter 2 - Literature Review	Continue to search for research articles, summarize and organize your literature search. These will form the basis of your literature review (chapter 2).  Began to synthesize relevant literature
9 - Oct 26	Chapter 2 Literature Review (continued)	Write a <b>synthesis</b> of the relevant literature.  Develop a <b>critical discussion</b> of the relevant literature.
10 - Nov 2	Chapter 2 Literature Review	Continue writing a <b>synthesis</b> of the

	(continued)  Introduction to Research Methodology	relevant literature.  Develop a <b>critical discussion</b> of the relevant literature.  <b>Read chapters and articles on research methodology (TBA), Review the methodology sections of relevant articles and Dissertations.</b>  <b>Literature Review Synthesis Due November 9<sup>th</sup></b>
11 - Nov 9	Chapter 3 - Methodology	Describe the <b>research design, sampling &amp; recruitment</b> , and type of <b>analysis</b> of your proposed study.  <b>Review and develop</b> the research design, sampling & recruitment, and type of analysis of your proposed study.  <b>Literature Review Synthesis Due</b>  <b>Write a draft of your methodology section and prepare a PowerPoint for Nov 18 meeting.</b>
12 - Nov 18	<b>ON CAMPUS MEETING #2</b>  Chapter 3 - Research Methodology (continued) (Subjects, Participants, & IRB)  Research Prospectus Draft	Review and discuss draft methodology sections. Identify any <b>ethical considerations</b> in your study. Is the study <b>feasible</b> ?  <b>Discuss Research Prospectus Draft due December 2nd.</b>  <b>Methodology Section Draft and PowerPoint due.</b>
13 - Nov 23	Chapter 2 - Research Methodology (continued)	Write the limitations and delimitations.  Make any required changes to Chapters 1,2, 3.
14 - Dec 2  7:00 PST	<b>TELECONFERENCE #2</b>	<b>Questions and Feedback</b>  <b>Submit Research Prospectus Draft</b>
15 - Dec 7	Edit and finalize the research prospectus	Ensure that the proposal meets the <b>Dissertation Guide framework</b> and all

		references are cited correctly using APA style.
<b>16 - Dec 16</b>	Submit Research Prospectus	<b>Final Drafts Due by 5:00 PST.</b>

<b>On Campus Meetings</b>	<b>Work to bring</b>	<b>Final Proposal</b>
Wednesday September 23 <sup>rd</sup> 10:30 - 2:30 Room TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Dissertation topic summary (500) words</i></li> <li>• <i>PowerPoint Presentation</i></li> <li>• <i>Draft summary of 10 research articles</i></li> </ul>	Wednesday, December 16 <sup>th</sup> by 5:00 PST.
Wednesday, November 18 <sup>th</sup> 10:30 - 2:30 Room TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Methodology Section and PowerPoint Presentation</i></li> </ul>	
<b>Teleconferences</b>	<b>Work to bring</b>	
Wednesday, October 14 <sup>th</sup> 7:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Read chapters on Literature Reviews, Methodology</i></li> </ul>	
Wednesday, December 2 <sup>nd</sup> 7:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Research Prospectus Draft</i></li> </ul>	

### Course Description

This course is designed to guide students to begin their dissertation process by preparing their dissertation prospectus, or a “preliminary dissertation proposal” that meets the course requirements. In a group format, students are given learning support, guidelines, and specific strategies to do the following:

- Become familiar with the steps needed to complete a dissertation.
- Determine a workable topic.
- Identify the most appropriate research methods for the dissertation research hypothesis/question(s).
- Learn to do a thorough literature search.
- Understand and be able to complete the necessary sections of the proposal.
- Identify suitable committee members and invite them to either be a Chair/Reader.
- Develop a time-line and other strategies to complete the dissertation.
- Improve writing skills, including utilizing APA format.

- Anticipate and deal with personal psychological issues that can arise during the process.
- Meet other requirements of the dissertation process.

This course is designed to be highly responsive to the individual needs of the students enrolled in Dissertation I. There may also be students who are in Dissertation II, who wish to participate in this class for additional information and support. Their presence and recent experience with Dissertation I contributes to helping new students familiarize themselves with the process and reinforces the learning for both the Dissertation I and the Dissertation II students. **Although a schedule of topics is given in this syllabus, these may vary at the discretion of the instructor and the needs of the students.**

### **Course Requirements**

Students will receive a “pass or fail” designation for this class. Throughout the class, students will need to complete and turn in various written assignments that pertain to sections of the dissertation proposal. This will allow students to write, receive feedback from the instructor and other students, and revise sections of the proposal, as they become familiar with the requirements and develop their own interests.

### **Final Date to Drop the Class:**

To receive a “W” grade a student must officially drop this class by the date listed below that corresponds to this course’s term and length. Students may not withdraw from this course after this date. If a student chooses to discontinue course work after the final drop date, the student may receive an “F” grade for the course.

Fall Session I (7.5 week courses): October 11, 2009

Fall Session II (7.5 week courses): December 2, 2009

Fall Full Term (15 week courses): November 14, 2009

### **Course Attendance:**

Class participation is extremely important, including keeping up with homework assignments, which are considered as part of class participation.

Students are expected to participate in all on-campus meetings and email unless the instructor has given prior permission for absence. **Failure to attend the on campus meetings and teleconferences will result in an F in the course.**

## Program Outcomes: Doctor of Education in Counseling Psychology

### Program Outcome One: Professional Practice

#### Competency 1: Assessment and Skills

**Formulate assessments of psychological functioning and apply therapeutic intervention strategies when working with individuals, couples, families, and groups, toward the development of optimal mental health.**

#### Competency 2: Theory

**Synthesize and apply psychological and developmental theories to therapeutic intervention strategies.**

#### Competency 3: Writing

**Employ appropriate media and technology when presenting information orally and in writing, so that the presentation is concise, organized, well supported, professional, and appropriate to the audience.**

### Program Outcome Two: Research

**Competency 1: Analyze research, translate research findings, and conduct research for improvement of counseling psychology services using statistics and evaluation methods.**

### Program Outcome Three: Interpersonal Effectiveness and Professional Development

**Competency 1: Students will develop positive relationship skills that promote personal and professional development via effective communication, encouragement, empathy, respect for others, self-awareness, and other-awareness.**

- a. **Apply active listening communication skills in interpersonal scenarios to establish empathetic relationships.**
- b. **Analyze the importance of effective nonverbal communication skills in interpersonal relationships.**
- c. **Solicit and utilize feedback to build and maintain interpersonal relationships.**

**Competency 2: Participate in professional development activities in the discipline of counseling psychology to reflect lifelong learning.**

### Program Outcome Four: Ethics

**Competency 1: Using the American Counseling Association's Standards of Practice**

**/or the American Psychological Association’s Ethical Code, as well as, and local state law as it applies to the behavior of mental health professionals, identify ethical dilemmas, interpret the standards of practice to apply ethical decision-making strategies while engaging in professional activities.**

Program Outcome Five: Diversity

Competency 1: Multicultural Skills

**Develop assessment, counseling, and consultation services by applying counseling and multicultural theories and research to diverse populations, and modifying counseling interventions as needed to work effectively with diverse clients.**

Competency 2: Multicultural Awareness

**Reflect and integrate personal values, beliefs and biases in working with clients as well as in interpersonal relationships with others.**

Competency 3: Multicultural Knowledge

**Synthesize the complexity and multidimensionality of cultural/diversity issues in the field of counseling psychology while working with clients as well as interpersonal relationships with others.**

### **Dissertation Prospectus versus Dissertation Proposal**

You will be completing a *dissertation prospectus* during this course. The quality of the prospectus that is submitted at the end of the course is the primary determinant for passing the class. It is understood that a prospectus may not be the final dissertation proposal but covers all of the areas and requirements of a basic proposal. Think of a prospectus as a “preliminary proposal.” For example, a prospectus may not represent a full and complete literature search but demonstrates a sufficient review of the literature to indicate that a student has become informed about research related to the proposed dissertation. The methodology description may be lacking in some details but is sufficient to provide an understanding of the plan and parameters of the project. The preliminary proposal may also not represent the student’s final choice of topic for the dissertation but it needs to be a clearly written, researched, well-presented version of a dissertation proposal that includes all of the sections required. Requirements will be clarified throughout the course. For more information on a prospectus see the definition and tips provided by Anne Bliss, Ph.D., at the University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado, located at the bottom of this document.

Preliminary Dissertation Proposals for this class will need to include:

- Chapter One: Introduction, Problem Statement, Purpose Statement, Significance of the Study
- Chapter Two: Literature Search: A descriptive outline of the areas that will be surveyed as part of the Literature Search
- Chapter Three: Methodology: Introduction, Participants, Procedures and Instrumentation, Limitations, Delimitations

**Prospectuses are due on Monday, November 10th by 12.00PM and must be submitted electronically as a Word document attached to an email sent to: [rnorton@argosy.edu](mailto:rnorton@argosy.edu) and to the Ecollege Dropbox.**

### **Student Performance Evaluation Criteria and Procedures**

#### **Percentage Criteria:**

- 60% Final Prospectus
- 40% Class Participation

These percentages are used to form a point system. Students can earn a maximum of 80 points for the proposal and a total of 20 points on class participation, which includes doing written assignments. All students must achieve a minimum of 70 points to pass the class.

#### **Criteria for Class Participation**

The following is a guide to the criteria used to assign students points for class participation.

##### 20-19 points

Student actively participated in discussions in all discussion; nearly all comments were thought provoking and incorporated material from reading material. Student completed assignments in a timely fashion. Homework assignments were presented well, demonstrating sufficient skills in meeting the requirements, and making improvements over the semester.

##### 18-17 points

Student actively participated in all discussions; most of the comments were thought provoking and incorporated reading material. Homework assignments demonstrated sufficient skills in meeting the requirements and were completed on time and showed improvement over the semester.

##### 16-15 points

Student participated in discussions in more than 70% of class sessions; comments/questions demonstrate a surface level understanding of course topics. Homework assignments did not demonstrate full understanding or application of course information and/or did not show much improvement over the semester.. Not all homework assignments were completed on time.

14-13 points

Student participated in less than 70% of class sessions; comments/questions did not demonstrate an understanding of course topics. Homework assignments showed deficiencies in content, did not show improvement, and/or were not completed on time.

Below 13 points, no credit

Student did not participate in class discussions, was absent, did not complete homework assignments or submitted sub-standard work.

### **Final Dissertation Proposal or Completed "Prospectus"**

The following outlines the point system for the Dissertation Proposal or Preliminary Proposal. Eighty points represent the highest score. Late papers may not be accepted or points will be deducted, depending on circumstances and instructor's discretion.

80-72 points

Paper shows original thought, incorporates all the proposal guidelines and requirements; provides excellent coverage of the material; contains a thorough literature review (even if it is not the completed version needed for the final dissertation proposal); is well written, and is in appropriate APA format, including required number of references.

71-69 points

Paper is well thought out; uses the required number of references; contains a well covered literature review; is organized, provides excellent coverage of material but has missed a minor aspect of APA format or is not as well written in a way that slightly interferes with comprehension of minor points of the paper. For example, paper lacks a good summary and ends abruptly.

63-56 points

Paper is well thought out, but is missing one component of APA format OR coverage of material is only adequate. Range of points depends on the degree to which writing style promotes—or interferes with—the reader's comprehension; the degree to which APA format has been missed; and/or the degree to which the coverage of the material is adequate.

55 - 48 points

Insufficient number of references provided and/or limited coverage and/or disorganized, difficult to understand paper.

47-O points

Paper is disorganized AND coverage is not adequate AND does not conform to APA format. Zero points if paper is not submitted.  
Evidence of plagiarism will result in zero points for the proposal and the student will not pass the class and face academic review (see below).

Students are graded on projects that offer opportunities to demonstrate their meeting of course objectives, ability to work together with each other as professionals, oral and written success, and reflection on and awareness of the personal impact of being a supervisor. Grading rubrics outlining specific outcomes expectations will be provided for each assignment.

#### General Guidelines for Evaluation of Written Assignments:

1. Organization: All written work needs to demonstrate clear logical thinking in the organization of sentences and paragraphs and developing arguments.
2. Conciseness: You must show evidence of a logical and meaningful consistency in the structure of your responses to assignments, having a clear flow from beginning to middle to end.
3. Content: Evidence of having developed the response from significant concepts and insights gained from the readings, drawing upon theories and standards of practice.
4. Relevance: Maintenance of pointed and clear relationships in response to the assignment, staying focused on the point of the assignment, and avoiding educational jargon and/or unnecessary wordage.
5. Clarity: Depth and breadth of argument – using reasoning, insight, and overall understanding of underlying concepts and principles.
6. APA format: Read and study the APA Manual, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition. Pay particular attention to the sections that deal with constructing references, headings, how to write and phrase ideas, making tables, etc. This manual is the guide to the creation of all documents at Argosy University and although the university may modify some of the rules to fit local needs or wishes, you must become very familiar with its usage. Remember the APA Manual is also a guide that addresses style issues and goes beyond structure and format.
  - a. The following outlines specifics for the papers: one-inch margins around; a cover sheet in APA form and style, and a page of references.
  - b. Page numbers should start on the second page; the first page (e.g., the cover sheet) should be suppressed. The page numbers should appear on the top right margin without regard to the 1-inch margin rule.

- c. Be sure to adhere to the paper length requirement and due dates stated in each learning activity.

**Please note: Should you require writing assistance please see me for additional information.**

### **Library**

*All resources in Argosy University's online collection are available through the Internet. The campus librarian will provide students with links, user IDs, and passwords.*

Library Resources: Argosy University's core online collection features nearly 21,000 full-text journals and 23,000 electronic books and other content covering all academic subject areas including Business & Economics, Career & General Education, Computers, Engineering & Applied Science, Humanities, Science, Medicine & Allied Health, and Social & Behavior Sciences. Many titles are directly accessible through the Online Public Access Catalog at <http://library.argosy.edu>. Detailed descriptions of online resources are located at <http://library.argosy.edu/misc/onlinedblist.html>.

In addition to online resources, Argosy University's onsite collections contain a wealth of subject-specific research materials searchable in the Online Public Access Catalog. Catalog searching is easily limited to individual campus collections. Alternatively, students can search combined collections of all Argosy University Libraries. Students are encouraged to seek research and reference assistance from campus librarians.

Information Literacy: Argosy University's Information Literacy Tutorial was developed to teach students fundamental and transferable research skills. The tutorial consists of five modules where students learn to select sources appropriate for academic-level research, search periodical indexes and search engines, and evaluate and cite information. In the tutorial, students study concepts and practice them through interactions. At the conclusion of each module, they can test their comprehension and receive immediate feedback. Each module takes less than 20 minutes to complete. Please view the tutorial at <http://library.argosy.edu/infolit/>

### **Academic Policies**

Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism: In an effort to foster a spirit of honesty and integrity during the learning process, Argosy University requires that the submission of all course assignments represent the original work produced by that student. All sources must be documented through normal scholarly references/citations and all work must be submitted using the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition (2001)*. Washington DC: American Psychological Association (APA) format. Please refer to Appendix A in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition* for thesis and paper format. Students are encouraged to purchase this manual

(required in some courses) and become familiar with its content as well as consult the Argosy University catalog for further information regarding academic dishonesty and plagiarism.

Scholarly writing: The faculty at Argosy University is dedicated to providing a learning environment that supports scholarly and ethical writing, free from academic dishonesty and plagiarism. This includes the proper and appropriate referencing of all sources. You may be asked to submit your course assignments through “Turnitin,” ([www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com)), an online resource established to help educators develop writing/research skills and detect potential cases of academic dishonesty. Turnitin compares submitted papers to billions of pages of content and provides a comparison report to your instructor. This comparison detects papers that share common information and duplicative language.

### **Americans with Disabilities Act Policy**

It is the policy of Argosy University to make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If a student with disabilities needs accommodations, the student must notify the Director of Student Services. Procedures for documenting student disability and the development of reasonable accommodations will be provided to the student upon request.

Students will be notified by the Director of Student Services when each request for accommodation is approved or denied in writing via a designated form. To receive accommodation in class, it is the student’s responsibility to present the form (at his or her discretion) to the instructor. In an effort to protect student privacy, the Department of Student Services will not discuss the accommodation needs of any student with instructors. Faculty may not make accommodations for individuals who have not been approved in this manner.

### **The Argosy University Statement Regarding Diversity**

Argosy University prepares students to serve populations with diverse social, ethnic, economic, and educational experiences. Both the academic and training curricula are designed to provide an environment in which students can develop the skills and attitudes essential to working with people from a wide range of backgrounds.

<http://www.colorado.edu/pwr/writingtips/20.html>



## Writing Tip #20: Writing Your Research Prospectus

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### *What is a prospectus?*

A prospectus is a proposal to undertake a research project. A prospectus is a statement that briefly describes the questions, materials, and methods a researcher will use in his or her research. A prospectus indicates that the research project fits the required parameters.

### *What are the parts of the prospectus?*

1. A prospectus contains a clear, concise introduction to the topic of the research.
2. A prospectus states the main research question(s) that the researcher wishes to answer.
3. A prospectus summarizes the basic arguments that surround the research topic.
4. A prospectus lists the basic research materials; these may be listed according to title and author, or they may include annotations. If experts in the topic are to be consulted, their names are also included. (NOTE: The list of basic research materials may not be a complete list of all materials that are finally used in the research, but should indicate the research direction and the types of materials the researcher plans to examine and study.)
5. The prospectus usually does not include the researcher's thesis, except as the basis for the research questions. If the researcher believes a certain thing to be true, but has no substantive evidence to support that belief, then the researcher's belief drives the questions that must be answered in order to demonstrate the correctness of the belief. In certain types of research, especially scientific research, the investigator must state a hypothesis, what the researcher will attempt to prove or disprove, in the prospectus. The hypothesis gives the researcher's supposition or unproved theory as the basis for the investigation.

### *To whom is a prospectus written?*

The audience for the prospectus is the reader who will determine whether or not the research project should be undertaken. This reader may be a professor, a research

committee, a graduate degree committee, a funding agency, or the management of the company or agency for whom the researcher will conduct the study.

***In what style should a prospectus be written?***

A formal style generally is preferred. Since the prospectus can not present the researcher's conclusion, i.e., the research has yet to be done, write the prospectus in the third person. More importantly, use active voice verbs and a writer's voice that demonstrates confidence that the research has merit. A prospectus that "sounds" dubious or not well considered typically indicates that the research project is dubious and not well considered.

***How long should a prospectus be?***

A prospectus needs to cover the basic points to assure the reader that the researcher plans a substantive project. Beyond that minimum, the length of the prospectus should be proportionate to that of the project. The research assignment may specify an optimal or maximum length.