UC San Diego Faculty Mentor Program **Research Paper Guidelines**





Research papers are due by the last day of Spring Quarter at midnight. Papers are generally around 10-pages long.

Every discipline has a different format for a research paper. You should follow the format that is standard for your field and that your faculty mentor prefers. The program guidelines that follow are a general overview intended to help you get started with your paper. Check with your mentor first – in some cases, it may make more sense to write up a research report or literature review if the research is still in progress.

These papers are not published by the FMP, but just to be safe, if your research is proprietary or otherwise private, be sure to mark that in the heading of your paper.

Part I: Introduction

You can adapt what you wrote in your literature review. You want to include the context of your research, your research question/hypothesis, an overview of your results (if any), and the purpose/goal of the research.

Part II: Literature Review

Again, this can be adapted and expanded from your literature review. It is an overview of the research that has come before.

Part III: Methodology / Theoretical Framework

This describes the way in which you did your research. For projects in the Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences that did not use an experimental design, you can talk about your theoretical framework, the theoretical framework that you chose, why you chose to include certain texts/events/etc.

- A. Provide a full description of your general research design, as well as the specific methods and procedures used in your research project. The methodology should be sufficiently detailed so that it can be replicated. If you are following a methodological approach developed by others, cite the relevant studies. Provide diagrams, charts, and illustrations as appropriate for your discipline. List the instrumentation you used and provide a diagram of the experimental setup.
- B. Describe your theoretical approach or type of analysis, if applicable (feminist, Marxist, Freudian, etc.). Discuss the types of sources used (primary or secondary texts, interviews, surveys, personal notes, etc.).
- C. Explain the details of your methods. For example: how you made measurements; the concentrations and amounts you used; how you selected your research subjects; psychological tests used; a copy of your survey

- questionnaire; an explanation of statistics used; a definition of your focus in terms of historical period or framework; etc.
- D. Explain any limitations that your study has in terms of the reliability and applicability of the results.

Part IV: Results

Explain your findings. If you use graphs, charts, tables, etc., be sure to clearly label them and explain what they main. Do not include any graphs or charts that you do not discuss in the body of the paper.

If your experiment is not finished, you will talk about preliminary results instead.

If you are in the Arts & Humanities, this will be where you do your analysis. Unlike the sciences, this section of the paper will likely be much longer than methodology.

Part V: Discussion/Conclusion

- This is the section of the paper in which you consider what it all means and discuss the implications of your findings.
- Briefly review the most important aspects of your data.
- Discuss your results and relate it to previous research done in the field.
- Discuss the significance/applications of your research.
- Discuss future research that might be done on your topic.

Bibliography/Works Cited/References

- On a new page, list the articles or books that you have cited in your paper.
- Generally this is done in alphabetical order by the last name of the author. However, each field has different format requirements. If your mentor has not already told you the style to use, the best thing to do is look at research articles you have been assigned to read.