

## Composing a Thesis Proposal

The thesis proposal is a student's first step on the road of writing their final academic work – the Master's thesis. Before any research or work on the thesis can begin, it is necessary to gain approval for a proposed topic from the faculty's academic committee. This is done by submitting a thesis proposal for approval. This proposal is hypothetical and outlines what a student intends to do and why it would be worth doing. It should indicate a field of interest, a plan of action and the scope of the project with an industry partner.

It should contain the following elements:

- a proposed **title** for the thesis (that describes the work succinctly);
- a **rationale** for the choice of topic, showing why it is important and feasible within the discipline of automotive engineering;
- a **review** of any existing literature / background information related to the topic;
- an outline of the scope of the intended work;
- an outline of the intended **approach and methods**;
- an outline of the expected **contribution to knowledge** in the field (results);
- an intended **timeline** for when the work will be undertaken (early, main or late sitting).

Most proposals are rejected as the goals or methods are unclear. Following the standard academic convention of an IMRC structure, outlining the issue, methods, results and any conclusions in that order (see Figure 1), should help avoid this problem.

It should not be forgotten to use clear and unambiguous language, as proposals which are imprecise are usually rejected. Furthermore, proposals containing spelling mistakes or serious grammatical errors are often not even considered.

This document has been adapted from Dr. Margaret Procter's *The Academic Proposal*, which can be found at the University of Toronto's Writing Support website [www.writing.utoronto.ca](http://www.writing.utoronto.ca) (retrieved October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2014).

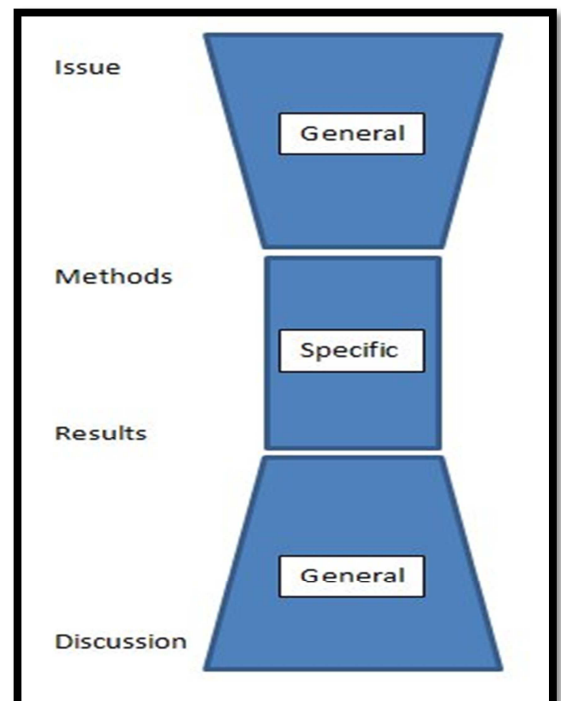


Figure 1: IMRC / IMRD structure