

The Concept Paper

Chapter 1

Objectives

- Overview of dissertation
- Review of chapter 1 sections
- Particular focus on topic selection
- At the end of this presentation students should be able to write their Concept Paper's Chapter 1

What is an Applied Dissertation?

According to the

Applied Dissertation Procedures Manual....

- “...should follow the scientific method and should contribute to the literature in your concentration area”.
- “...entails a series of independent writing and research activities ...”

Remember ...

- Mullins & Kiley (2002, p. 386)

“...All you need to do is to demonstrate your capacity for independent, critical thinking. That’s all you need to do. A PhD is three years of solid work, not a Nobel Prize.”

Topic Selection Considerations

- Personal interest
- Organizational support
- Ethical issues
- Relevance of the study
- Contribution to the field
- Time constraints
- Breath/scope
- Economic Factors

Sources of Topic Selection

- *ERIC, PsycINFO, Medline*
- Journals, books and dissertations in your field
- Conferences, workshops, presentations
- Recommendations about future research
- Courses
- Workplace
- Expert consultations
- Online library services

Concept Paper

- First of three dissertation benchmarks
- Is worth 2 credits
- Typically 10-12 pages (excluding title page and references)
- Presents student's proposed research agenda
- Represents the first 3 chapters of the dissertation

MOI Capstone Assignment

Chapter 1

The Topic: This is a brief description of the proposed area of study. Include at least two sentences.

The Research Problem

This is an area of conflict, concern, or controversy (a gap between what is wanted and what is observed). Include the most relevant reference that supports the claim.

Background and Justification

The evidence and relevance from the literature and published or archival data showing the problem exists. Include at least two references. You should also have a theoretical basis for the study.

Deficiencies in the Evidence

Include a brief discussion that details the area of need (in relation to the problem) and the deficiency or lack of evidence in the literature.

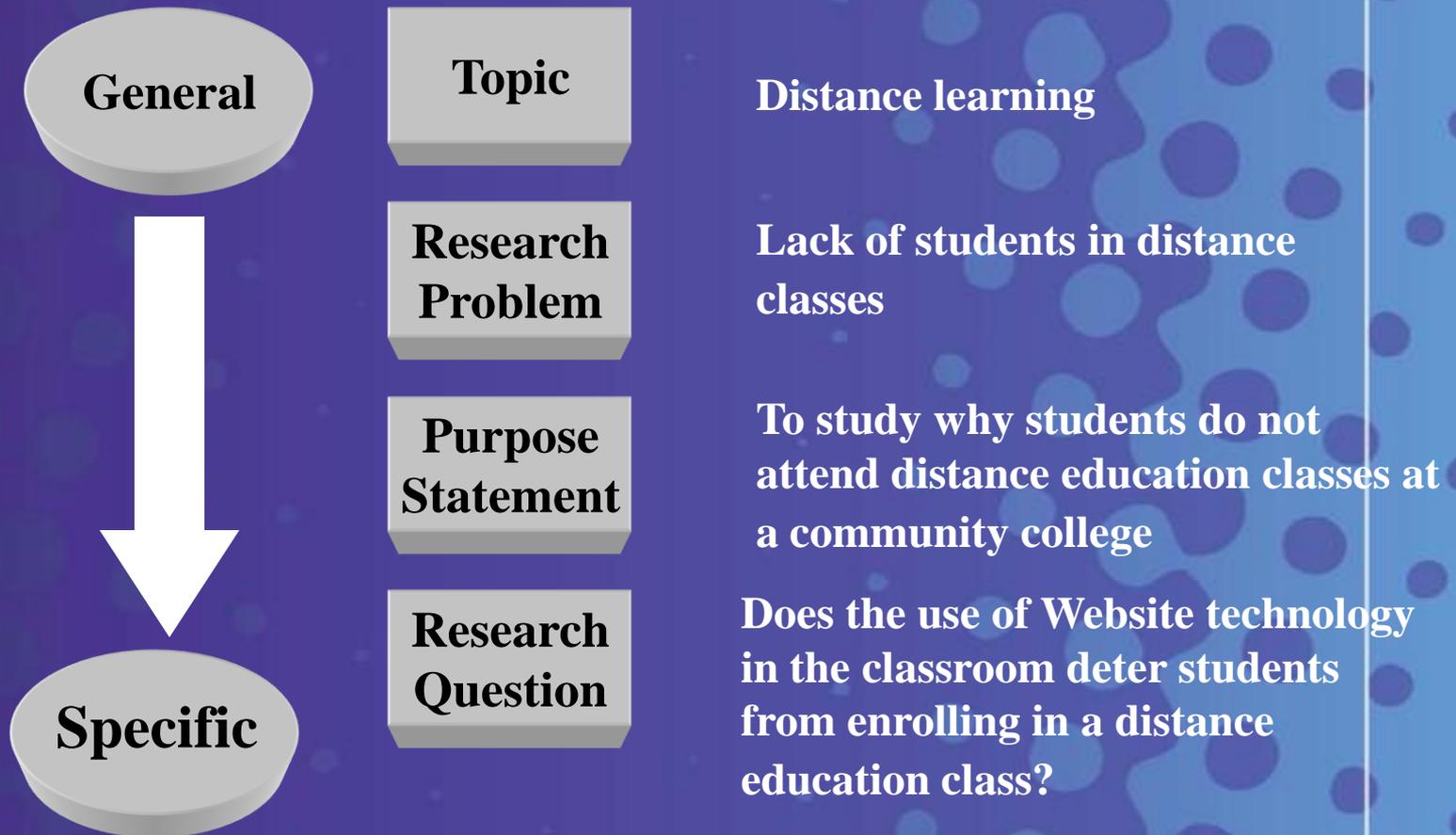
Audience

Discuss who is affected and who benefits.

What Is a *Research Problem*?

A research problem is an educational issue or concern that an investigator presents and justifies in a research study.

Differences between the Topic, Problem, Purpose, and Questions



Determining Whether a Problem Should Be Researched

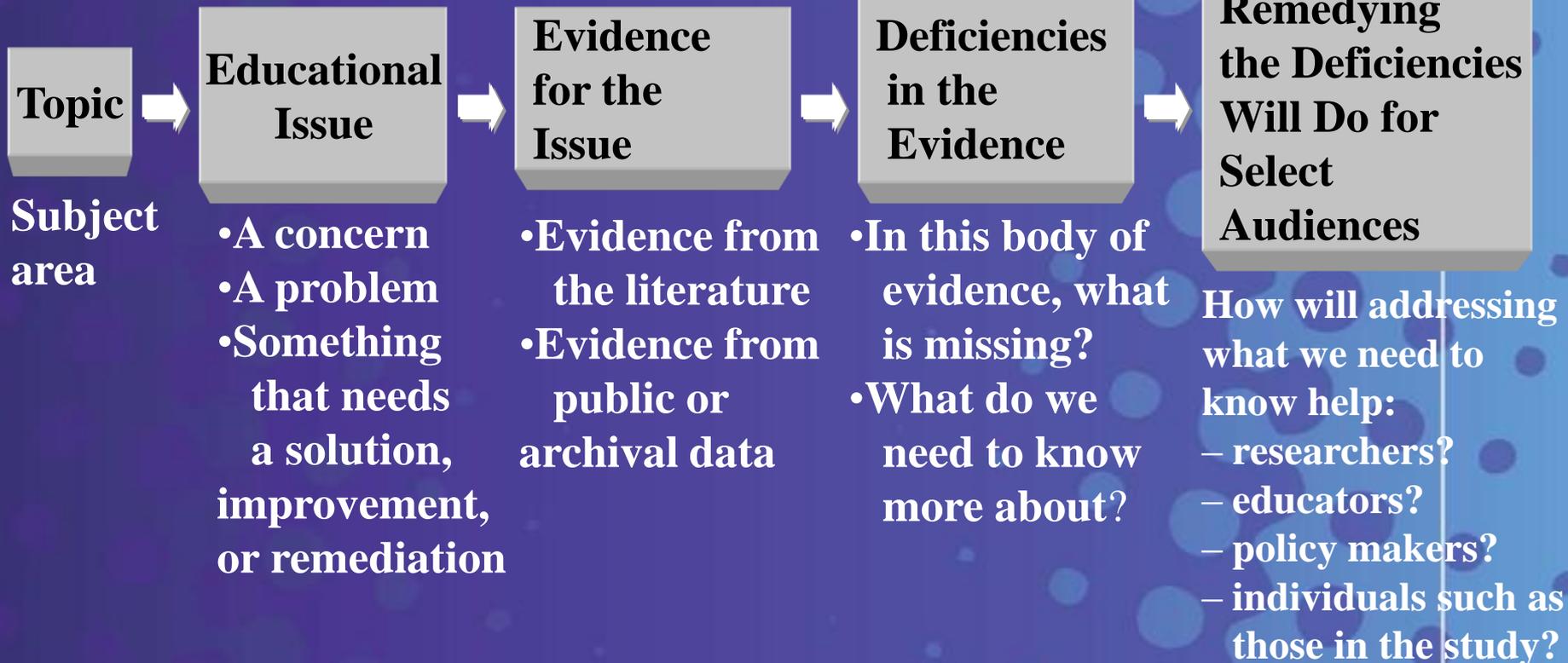
- Do you have the authority to study the problem?
 - Do you have access to the research site?
 - Do you have the time, resources, and skills to carry out the research?
- Should you study the problem?
 - Does it advance knowledge?
 - Does it contribute to practice?

Determining Whether a Problem Should Be Researched (cont'd)

- Will your study fill a gap or void in the existing literature?
- Will your study replicate a past study, yet examine different participants and different research sites?
- Will your study extend past research or examine the topic more thoroughly?
- Will your study give voice to people not heard, silenced, or rejected in society?
- Will your study inform practice?

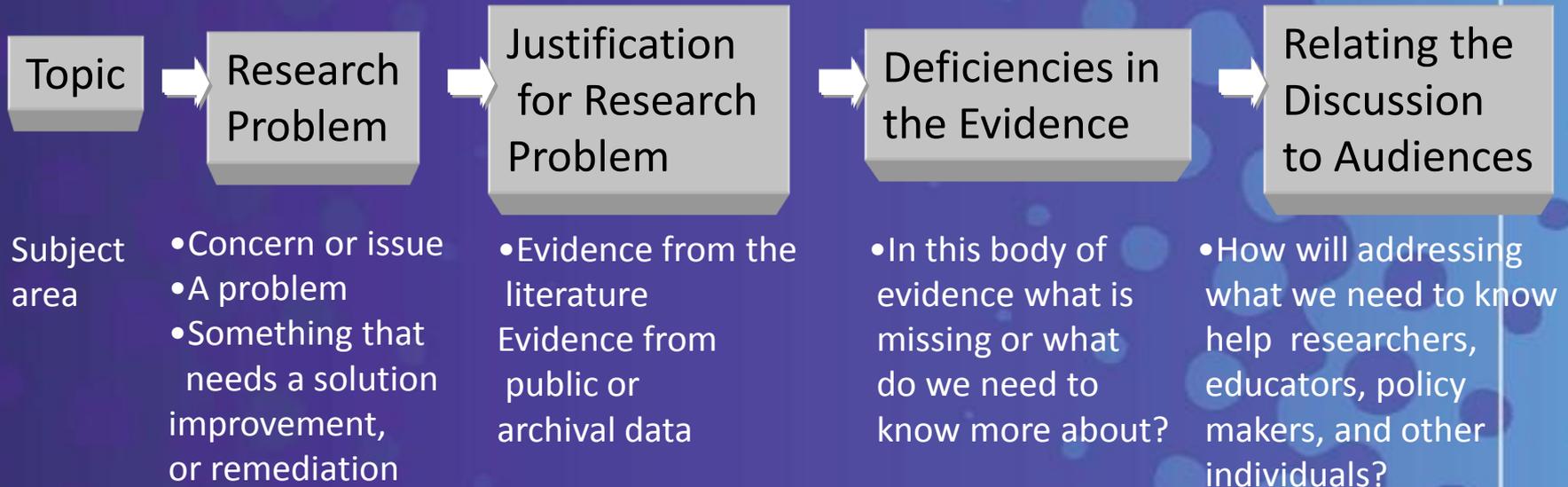
Five Elements of a “Problem Statement”

FLOW OF IDEAS



Example of the Flow of Ideas in the Problem Statement

Flow of Ideas



Example of the Flow of Ideas in the Problem Statement

Flow of Ideas



An Example:

Topic

Research
Problem

Justification
for Research
Problem

Deficiencies in
the Evidence

Relating the
Discussion
to Audiences

Ethical
issues
in
colleges

Ethical
violations
among
football
recruiters

- Gap in the literature
- Reports of violations

Description
identifying
and
characterizing
violations

- Assessing violations
- Helps recruiters develop better ethical standards
- Helps athletes understand ethical issues