M.S. GISci Thesis Prospectus Outline

A. Cover page (1 page)
   a. Title
   b. A thesis proposal submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master of Science in Geographic Information Science
   c. Approved By: Name, title and date lines. Three lines for the committee.
   d. Date at the bottom

B. Table of Contents (1 page)

C. Introduction (3-5 pages)
   a. What is the problem?
   b. Why is it important?
      i. Following NSF, emphasize the intellectual merit and
      ii. Discuss the practical relevance and “broader impacts”
   c. State the research hypothesis

D. Literature Review (2-3 pages, can be section within the Introduction or separate section)
   a. Full literature review
      i. Review papers, tools, theses, books, etc.
   b. The narrative should use peer-reviewed papers as the majority of the cited literature and should make the case for the problem, why it is important, and how your research will build upon past work.

E. Paper 1 (1-2 pages)
   a. Briefly describe what is going to be covered in the paper, including:
      i. testable hypothesis
      ii. ideas for methods to test the hypothesis
      iii. anticipated results.

F. Paper 2 (1-2 pages)
   a. Briefly describe what is going to be covered in the paper, including:
      i. testable hypothesis
      ii. ideas for methods to test the hypothesis
      iii. anticipated results.

G. Proposed Course of Study Plan (1-2 pages)
   a. List all classes you have taken and intend to take.
   b. Indicate your 9 credits of 6000 level, 6 credits of thesis, and 30 total credits including required core classes.

Notes: About 20 pages total, double-spaced, 1 inch margins, single sided
Publication goal:
• 2 Papers about 15-20 pages each
• Students to disseminate research by posting code on web pages, presenting at conferences etc.
• All students should present at a department or college colloquium
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The thesis should follow a similar outline to the prospectus, including the following chapters:

Chapter 1: Introduction and Background (largely taken from your proposal, expanded as appropriate).

Chapter 2: Literature review ((largely taken from your proposal, expanded as appropriate).

*Note: Because the Introduction and Background are typically grounded in a literature review, Chapters 1 & 2 can be combined or separate.

Chapter 3: Paper 1 (self contained research paper, including it’s own sections as required by the target journal)

Chapter 4: Paper 2 (self contained research paper, including it’s own sections as required by the target journal)

Chapter 5: Conclusions (note that this is not necessarily a “results” section, since the results are contained in the two paper-chapters.)

Appendices: Methods, results, etc., that are not appropriate for previous chapters

Note: It is preferable that you submit one of your papers to a journal prior to your defense.