

A Basic Proposal Outline:

a. Title Page. The proposal title and the student's name, printed on a separate cover page.

b. Summary. A synopsis of the proposed project, including the rationale for the proposed research, a statement of specific aims and objectives, the experimental approaches to be used, and the potential significance of the research. Suggested length: one-half page.

c. Specific Aims. Provide a clear, concise point-by-point summary of the aims of the research proposed. Suggested length: one-half to one page.

d. Background and Significance. Explain background information necessary to understand the proposed project and its significance in relation to long-term research objectives. This section should include a critical evaluation of existing knowledge and should identify forward progress that the project is intended to provide. Suggested length: six pages. Reference this section thoroughly with a focus on primary literature rather than review articles.

e. Preliminary Data. Succinctly describe preliminary experiments that justify the rationale and/or demonstrate the feasibility of the proposed research. Include figures with legends. Suggested length: two to four pages

f. Experimental Design and Methods. Discuss IN DETAIL the experimental design and procedures that will be used to accomplish the specific aims of the project. Describe the protocols to be used and provide a tentative sequence or timetable for the investigation. Include the means by which data will be analyzed and interpreted. Describe any new methodology and its advantage(s) over existing methodologies. Discuss potential technical difficulties and/or limitations, limitations in interpretation of the results, and alternative approaches that could be used to achieve the aims. Suggested length: eight pages.

g. References. List all references cited in the text, including all authors and the full title of the publication.