To be successful in biomedical sciences you simply must develop excellent writing skills. It really does not matter what type of career you pursue after the PhD. Faculty make judgments about your skills and aptitude for research based on what you write. Writing papers and research proposals is an essential part of research. The process of putting your thinking and plans down on ‘paper’ is a powerful way to find out if you are going in the right direction. From a very practical perspective, many of you must write a dissertation proposal that in some cases will also serve as a qualifying exam. The importance of writing well can make getting started an intimidating hurdle. And those of you who have oral exams can benefit from these sessions: they will instill habits of scientific thinking that can help you prepare successfully. That’s why the fall CLIMB activity is designed to give you a “leg up” in becoming an effective scientific writer/thinker and preparing research proposals. We are proposing 1-hour sessions where we focus on the specifics of writing this document using the NIH style of research proposals as the template.

The sessions are designed to work from the ground up – from the smallest unit (the sentence) to the large scale structure of the document. Each session will consist of a 20-30 minute presentation and then one exercise where you break into competing teams. The teams will present their written products to the rest of the group which will serve as the Peer Review Panel to rate them. The best team result will win a prize (likely to be modest but with huge prestige!). At the end of each session, we will review a checklist you can use later on to test your own writing.

Our workshops will run on Tuesdays at both campuses, so that you can attend at the location that’s most convenient for your schedule. The topics for this fall are part of a series, which will continue into the winter and spring quarters.

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| Tue, 10/26 | 5-6:30 PM | CH: Ward 8-182 EV: Pancoe 2401 | **Session 1 – An Overview of NIH-style Research and Fellowship Proposals; plus Constructing Readable Sentences**  
Reviewing key principles of good sentence construction. |
| Tue, 11/2  | 5-6:30 PM | CH: Ward 8-182 EV: Pancoe 2401 | **Session 2 – Creating Coherent Paragraphs**  
Organizing paragraphs as a pyramid with topic sentences; creating a logical chain from sentence to sentence. |
| Tue, 11/9  | 5-6:30 PM | CH: Ward 8-182 EV: Pancoe 2401 | **Session 3 – Constructing Research Questions and Hypotheses**  
This session will focus on research questions and hypotheses. Until these are very clear in your mind there really isn’t anything else to write! |
| Tue, 11/16 | 5-6:30 PM | CH: Ward 8-182 EV: Pancoe 2401 | **Session 4 – The Specific Aims, Part 1: Writing the Introductory Paragraphs**  
The focus here is on the opening paragraphs and the CCQH pattern. Setting the Context; framing the Complication; articulating your research Question; explaining your Hypothesis. |
| Tue, 11/23 | 5-6:30 PM | CH: Ward 8-182 EV: Pancoe 2401 | **Session 5 – Specific Aims, Part 2: Writing Specific AIMS**  
Creating separable Aims; establishing the logical flow within each Aim by summarizing the hypothesis of each Aim and the methods used to test it. |
| Tue, 11/30 | 5-6:30 PM | CH: Ward 8-182 EV: Pancoe 2401 | **Session 6 – Writing the Background and Significance – now called Significance**  
Succinctly summarizing what is already known about the topic; the logic that leads to your proposed research; establishing WHY it is important to do the research, what impact it will have in the field or larger scientific and/or clinical objectives. |

Finally, over the course of the year, we will be producing a number of 3-6 minute videos that will explain the principles these sessions address as a permanent source of instruction for future CLIMB students (which will be posted on the CLIMB website). Your participation here will help us test these ideas for final production.