

Research Proposal

Schedule of Assignments for Research Proposal

1. Friday Sept 23 working title and one paragraph summary due.
2. Friday Sept 30 References due (5%).
3. Friday Sept 7 Hypotheses due (5%).
4. Friday Oct 14 Outline due (5%).
5. Friday Oct 28 peer-review draft due (20%).
6. Friday Nov 4 reviews of peer-review drafts due (5%).
7. Friday Nov 18 final draft due (25%).
8. Wed Dec 7 and Fri Dec 9 oral presentations (10%).

Assignment

Pose a research question that interests you related to your thesis work and write a 10 to 15 page proposal (including figures, but not references or the one page project summary) that introduces your ideas, poses testable hypotheses, provides research objectives, and a work plan. The purpose of this exercise is for you to explore an area of interest, learn to conduct library research and write a formal research proposal that is logically constructed and poses testable hypotheses. You should use 10 to 20 primary literature sources (peer-reviewed journals) and include 1 to 5 figures to illustrate your points. References must be properly cited. The paper counts for 25% of your class grade.

Oral Presentation

These will be done in the style of the Geological Society of America (GSA) and American Geophysical Union (AGU) national meetings for geologists. Time limits will be strictly enforced as they are at the meetings with 12 minute talks (after 10 minutes you are warned and you have 2 minutes to summarize) and 3 minutes for questions. Each student will be expected to write down or ask one question for each talk. Organize your talk along the following lines:

- 1) Tell the audience what your project is about and where you aim to go with it.
- 2) Introduce the subject by posing your research question in the context of what is already known.
- 3) Describe your research plan in sufficient detail. Which means, show us that you understand your area of research and why we should care about it (i.e. sell your proposal).
- 4) Present your research plan focusing on no more than three key ideas. Bring each idea to closure with your work plan which is often presented in a table.

Criteria for Success: Discuss the implications of your research proposal. The proposal will be considered successful if:

1. The talk does not exceed the allotted time of twelve minutes.
2. The subject is well introduced with the objectives and testable hypotheses clearly stated.
3. The implications for the discipline or application are clearly stated.
4. The talk and all key ideas are brought to closure successfully (i.e. the audience is not left hanging or thinking "so what?").
5. Powerpoint presentation is clearly legible from the rear of the room by the most myopic and are free of unnecessary detail or excessive content including unruly color schemes or backgrounds.

6. The talk is presented in a clear voice, audible from the back of the room and relatively free from, uh, vocal faults.
7. The speaker is clearly enthusiastic about his or her topic.
8. Questions are addressed without evasion, and answers demonstrate deep understanding of the research topic and key issues that relate to it.

Style Points: Given for clear and concise slides, clear speaking, well defined objectives and hypotheses, good response to questions, etc. Use of graphs and diagrams without overwhelming text shows understanding and generates questions at the end of the talk.

Grading of Peer-Reviewed Draft

Authors number _____

Reviewers Number _____

Proposal topic

Graded on a scale from 1 to 5 (5 = best):

- 1) A well organized proposal.
- 2) A well introduced, clear, concise research question with the objectives and hypotheses clearly stated.
- 3) Implications for the discipline or application are clearly stated.
- 4) Figures are clear and free from unnecessary detail.
- 5) Figure captions are descriptive and help the reader understand the paper by illustrating important points.
- 6) Do any points need clarification?
- 7) Are the objectives and hypotheses well formed?
- 8) The proposal was brought to closure successfully (not left hanging or asking so what?)

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Total

Comments and unanswered questions:

Grading of Oral Presentations

Speaker name

Paper topic

Graded on a scale from 1 to 5 (5 = best):

- 1) The presentation did not exceed allotted time?
- 2) Was the topic well introduced with clear and concise objectives and hypotheses?
- 3) Were the implications for the discipline or application clearly stated?
- 4) Was the presentation clearly legible and free from unnecessary detail?
- 5) Was the talk presented in a clear voice, audible for all, free from vocal faults?
- 6) Was the speaker enthusiastic about the subject?
- 7) Did the answers to questions demonstrate an understanding of the topic and research?
- 8) Was the presentation was brought to closure successfully? (not left hanging or asking so what?)

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Total

Comments and unanswered questions: