

## Type II: Guidelines for All Other SURF Proposals

### Proposal Contents

The effectiveness of your proposal will depend on your ability to explain the nature, context and scope of the project. The selection committee will also be looking for an indication that your project will be more than just a learning experience – what does it contribute to your field that we do not already know? Make sure that the proposal is in your words – not your professor’s words. Your proposal should include the following information:

- **Abstract:** A summary of your research question and your project design. Researchers typically write the abstract after they have finished writing the rest of the proposal. Include it as the first section on the first page of your proposal.
- **Research Question and Significance:** What is the question that you want to explore in your research and why is this an interesting and important question? In thinking about the significance, try to take the position of an educated newspaper reader. If she or he were to see an article about your research in the paper, how would you explain the importance of your project? Please be sure to put this information at the start of the paragraph; readers should be able to access.
- **Project Design and Feasibility:** How will you go about exploring your research question? What will be your methods and timetable? How will this research fit into your schedule? If you are not doing this as part of a course, how will you find the time necessary to do the research? This section allows you to use discipline-specific language to explain the details of your project.
- **Background:** What courses or work experiences have prepared you to undertake this project? Why is this important to you? What are your career aspirations? What is your background? Have you worked on this project before? Is this part of a Senior Thesis project? This is an important sections that allows the reader to know you better as a person.
- **Feedback and Evaluation:** Who will provide feedback on and evaluate your project and according to what schedule and what criteria?

- **Dissemination of Knowledge:** How will you share the results of your project? What form will your final report take? Please be sure to mention Meeting of the Minds.

**Proposal Format** Your proposal may be up to three pages in length. At the top of the first page put your name and project title. The next item should be your abstract. Print single sided sheets only (double sided copies will not duplicate and the committee will not receive your full proposal). We recommend at least a 12 point, serif font (such as Times or Palatino), justified left (right ragged). Illustrations may be used in the body of the proposal but should duplicate well on a copier. If you are using color graphs or illustrations, please submit four complete copies of your proposal for the selection committee. Do not include a cover sheet, title page, or any other attachments: they will be discarded. Instead, include any relevant information in the body of your proposal. Remember to spell check! You are asking for money and your proposal should be a reflection of your commitment to the project.

**Review a Draft** You are highly encouraged to work with your faculty advisor on your proposal and to meet with the Undergraduate Research Office Director at least once prior to submitting a SURF. To schedule an appointment, call x8-5702.