

Preparing Your Proposal

Tips & Advice

Follow these steps:

- Talk to your professor about your project idea and get his feedback.
- Give your project an interesting and descriptive title.
- Write up a one sentence proposal description.
- Write up a general outline of your project; what will you do and how?
- Prepare a proposal abstract of 100-150 words. See below for helpful hints on writing your abstract.
- Create a timeline with milestones for you to reach at each step. This will help you to keep on track! (**Milestone** = a step in your research process that you must reach, and the time that you should reach it, to complete your major goal by the deadline)
- Show all of the above to your professor before the deadline to leave time for rewriting.
- Rewrite and show your professor your revised materials.
- Proofread meticulously! The proposal represents you and gives the proposal reader a sense of who you are and what you hope to do, so you don't want it to be riddled with errors, or awkward and hard to read. Ask for help with the final edit from your professor.

The Proposal Abstract

The proposal abstract should do the following in 100-150 words:

- Briefly describe the general content of your project.
- Explain what you hope the audience will gain from your presentation.

Important points to remember:

- The proposal reader must be able to understand what your project is about and how you plan to accomplish it.
- Research papers will have 8-10 pages of content (plus PowerPoint / poster).
- Physical observation and models: reports will be 4-5 pages of content plus your observational data or model.
- In writing up your proposal, be clear and focused but, at the same time, preserve your own voice so the project comes across as uniquely your own.

Find more information on abstracts here: <http://leo.stcloudstate.edu/bizwrite/abstracts.html>

At this stage, you will be writing a descriptive abstract.

Research Proposal Outline

Your proposal should have the following elements, in order:

- Proper coversheet
- Proposal page
 - Title
 - Description
 - Abstract
 - Outline
 - Timeline

Grading Rubric

Proposal (25 Points)

- Do you have a proper Title and Description?
- Is the Abstract complete and coherent?
- Is the Abstract on topic?
- Is the Outline complete?
- Is the Timeline complete?
- Is the project “do-able”?
- Does it represent good science?

As a reminder:

Report Guidelines:

- Research papers will have 8-10 pages of content, physical observation reports and models will be 4-5 pages of written content; content is exclusive of any applicable data, drawings, a coversheet, citations, or bibliography.
- Standard 8.5 by 11 inch paper will be used with one inch margins.
- Content will be in a standard 12 pitch font and lines will be double spaced.
- The *Chicago Manual of Style* format will be used.
- You need at least eight citations; no more than four citations may be from strictly online sources. Use scientific journals, periodicals, and books.