ONLINE-RESEARCH PROPOSAL WORKSHOP

TIPS ON WRITING
YOUR RESEARCH PROPOSAL

MARCH 2020
• At Weber State University, opportunities abound for students to pursue independent research. From independent study courses, to university grants, and WSUSA Summer Research Fellowship Programs, WSU is committed to high impact practices.

• The following Research Proposal Workshop was developed to provide you with the knowledge you need to write a successful proposal. We will discuss tips and go over the research grant proposal application.

• For further assistance, consult with your professors, email Dr. John Cavitt in the Office of Undergraduate Research or contact a member of the Undergraduate Research Committee.
PART I. FORMULATION

Early development can be key to the success of your proposal. Before you begin writing, think critically about your project.

• **Tip #1: Choose a good topic.**

  • Your faculty mentor should help you to narrow and clarify your topic, so that your proposal is specific, focused and more importantly, manageable. The best research topic, however, will be the one you're most excited about. If you aren't fascinated and galvanized by your research topic, your readers won't be excited either.
Tip #2: Do your preliminary research.

Read widely in your subject area before you begin writing. Become familiar with the field, its principal issues, and major contributors. An annotated bibliography is required, it should be included addenda to your proposal. Consider what contribution your research will make. By the time you sit down to write your proposal, you should know what you want to research, but you should not yet be trying to synthesize your research.
PART I. FORMULATION (CONTINUED)

• **Tip #3: Envision the final product.**

  • Your project should result in a concrete final product, such as a written investigative report, or a creative work. Although you cannot fully anticipate what final form your project will take, it is important to have a vision of what it might be. If your project is an activity of some kind, devise a method to document it so that the committee will have concrete evidence of your work.
PART II. COMPOSITION

Writing the proposal is often the most difficult component of a research project. Be prepared: give yourself enough time to write, rewrite, and revise.

• **Tip #4: Brainstorm, brainstorm, brainstorm!**
  
  • Talk to friends, family, and faculty to clarify your ideas. Free-write as a way of getting your ideas on paper. Get your ideas down first; then think about how to organize them!
PART II. COMPOSITION (CONTINUED)

• Tip #5: Study successful proposals.

• The Office of Undergraduate Research keeps copies of successful grant proposals. Browse through the files, and model your budget requests after those that are similar to yours.

• Sample Grants — Contact us at OUR@weber.edu if you need other examples.
PART II. COMPOSITION (CONTINUED)

• **Tip #6: Be specific.**

  • Research Scholarships will be scrutinized, so be certain to indicate the amount of time that your research will require. Include the number of hours each test will take. Again, refer to the Sample Grants for examples of approved proposals.
PART II. COMPOSITION (CONTINUED)

• **Tip #6: Be specific.** (continued)

  • Take time to consider your research methods and plan a budget. Don't just guess and say, “Materials: $500.” Get online quotes for a realistic estimate and make an itemized list of all required materials.

  • Approach your methodology and research timeline in the same way; if you need to make any adjustments later, you can. It is important, though, that you convince the committee that not only is your project doable – you've figured out how to do it.
Revision is critical. Don't expect to write one draft of your proposal and be awarded a grant. A good proposal will take several revisions; be sure to give yourself time.

• Tip #7: Be concise and organized.

• Clearly differentiate the various parts of the proposal. For instance, in your methodology section, talk only about your methodology. Leave out extraneous information.
PART III. REVISION (CONTINUED)

- Tip #8: Write to the audience.

- The awards committee consists of faculty from a variety of academic disciplines. Your proposal should not be so discipline-specific and jargon-laden that outside readers won't understand. On the other hand, don't dumb your language down so that you insult the educated reader. If necessary, the committee will ask a specialist for an opinion on the project's viability. As you revise, consult a variety of readers, both in your discipline and outside it.
PART III. REVISION (CONTINUED)

• You will have the opportunity to consult with one of the committee representatives (via email); we strongly recommend that you take advantage of this opportunity. Please be respectful of the committee member and give him/her enough time to review your proposal before the deadline. Your rep will be an advocate for your research during the review meeting, so be sure to bear that in mind as you receive feedback and suggestions on your proposal.

• Research Committee Representatives
PART IV. EDITING

Reread your proposal several times before submitting to the committee.

• **Tip #9: Avoid errors.**

  • Because errors are easily introduced during the revision process, be sure to reread your text carefully each time you make changes. There is no excuse for grammatical and spelling errors in a grant proposal. Use spell checker, by all means, but don't rely on it completely. There's no substitute for careful proofreading.
PART IV. EDITING (CONTINUED)

• **Tip #10: Make it professional.**

  • Take some time to format your proposal neatly, with headings and sub-headings where appropriate. A good layout is easier on the eyes of committee members who will be reading many proposals.

  • **Word of warning:** *don't go cutesy, with brightly colored paper and fancy fonts.*

  • Use present tense while writing your research proposal. Avoid using first person.
• There you have it: ten tips to help you write a successful grant proposal.

• But keep in mind -- even if you do everything right, there's still an element of luck. In the world of grant applications, your chances of success depend also on the number and quality of proposals in your subject area. If your proposal isn't accepted, don't view it as a personal attack on your research abilities or your topic. If your project is viable, look for funding from another source.
UPDated-Online Long-Term Grant Application
For Undergraduate Research, Scholarly, and Creative Endeavors

PROCESS

Proposals must be written by the students, not the faculty mentors. Using the format found below, prepare a proposal narrative (maximum of 4 double-spaced pages with 12 pt font and 1-inch margins). Assemble the following in order: Cover Sheet, Budget Worksheet, Proposal (Project Description, Project Materials and Budget Explanation), and a signed and completed Mentor Recommendation form.

RESEARCH PROPOSAL WORKSHOPS

The Office of Undergraduate Research offers a mandatory workshop on preparing a successful research proposal. All students are required to attend one of the workshops or view the workshop PowerPoint before submitting a grant to OUR requesting research funding. Please see the following for information: http://www.webster.edu/OUR/workshops.html

TIMELINE AND DEADLINES

Keep in mind that these are the final deadlines for each step. We highly encourage students to communicate online as early as possible with a Mentor. This should be done by email. OUR will accept an email from the mentor as proof of signature. All approval signature emails should be attached to the application as an addendum. For more clarification please see: https://www.webster.edu/OUR/long-term-grant.html

Be respectful of the Mentor and Research Committee Representative’s time. They need time to review and give feedback so that you have time to revise and submit a finished proposal by the deadline.

☐ 1 Week Before:
Contact an Undergraduate Research Committee Representative by email to approve your proposal. Attach the email as an addendum to your proposal. The Committee Representative’s signature email indicates that they have reviewed the proposal, provided feedback and checked for completeness. To find your representative see http://webster.edu/OUR/contact.html.

The Mentor’s Chair Signature Email is required at this point. Contact the chair or work with your Mentor to obtain the signature email. Attach the email as an addendum to your proposal.

☐ By Deadline:
Finalize revisions suggested by Mentor and Committee Representative. NO HARD COPY IS REQUIRED AT THIS TIME. Complete the online submission (https://our.webster.edu) by 5:00 PM on the deadline day posted on the OUR website. Students who fail to follow this deadline schedule will not be considered for funding. Remember to attach your signature emails in your final uploaded proposal pdf.

See http://www.webster.edu/OUR/calendar.html for submission deadlines.

☐ 2 Weeks Before:
Contact your Mentor to discuss your emailed proposal. The Mentor will send you an approval email in place of signing the application. This Email should be attached to your proposal. The Mentor’s signature email indicates that they have reviewed the proposal and offered guidance in its preparation.

☐ 1 – 2 Weeks after Deadline:
Undergraduate Research Committee will meet to consider proposals. Letters, stating whether a project was funded or not, will be mailed to the Mentor, who will advise the student.
Long Term Grant Application
Cover Sheet

Amount Requested: $2298.00

Project Information

Doe, Jane
Student Participant (Last, First)

Writing a Successful Research Proposal and Obtaining Funding
Project Title (10 words or less)

Cavitt, John
Faculty Mentor Name (last, first) 2912

Science
College (Weber State is the University, NOT college) Office of Undergraduate Research
Department

This project __DOES__X__ DOES NOT require review by the WSU Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects or the WSU Animal Care and Use Committee.

Student Signature ___________________________ Date _____________

Attach Mentor Email
Must be 10 business days before final deadline.

Campus Mail _____________ Phone Ext. _____________

Attach Research Committee Representative Email
Date Received by URC Rep. must be 5 business days before final deadline.

Attach Mentor Department Chair Email
Faculty Mentor Department Chair

Please check if attended Research Proposal Workshop:

[ ] Date Workshop attended/PPT Requested _____________

(Please fill in the date of attendance/PPT viewed)
# Long Term Grant Application

## Students Information Form

### Project Title


### Student Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Doe, Jane</th>
<th>W012345789</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Name (last, first)</td>
<td>Student ID#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>801-626-8541</td>
<td><a href="mailto:janedoe@mail.weber.edu">janedoe@mail.weber.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>Weber Email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>134</td>
<td>Fall 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Credits Completed</td>
<td>Anticipated Graduation (term/year*)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(*funds may NOT be spent after graduation)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Doe, John</th>
<th>W2345678901</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Name (last, first)</td>
<td>Student ID#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>801-626-8541</td>
<td><a href="mailto:johndoe@mail.weber.edu">johndoe@mail.weber.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>Weber Email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>127</td>
<td>Spring 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Credits Completed</td>
<td>Anticipated Graduation (term/year*)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(*funds may NOT be spent after graduation)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Student Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name (last, first)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>Weber Email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Credits Completed</td>
<td>Anticipated Graduation (term/year*)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(*funds may NOT be spent after graduation)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student Signature ____________________________  Date _____________

Student Signature ____________________________  Date _____________

Student Signature ____________________________  Date _____________

Please make additional copies of this form for additional students.
# Long Term Grant Application

## Budget Worksheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BUDGET ITEM</th>
<th>Department or College Funds</th>
<th>Outside Agency Funds</th>
<th>Personal Funds</th>
<th>Undergrad. Research Funds</th>
<th>GRAND TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Materials</td>
<td>Dept. will be donating all expendable necessary for data collection ($200)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Incentives for participants $25 x 20 ($500.00)</td>
<td>700.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment</td>
<td>Dept. will be donated the use of 2 research machines to analyze collected data</td>
<td></td>
<td>Software for data analysis ($375.00), Two electrodes for obtaining data from studies ($195.00)</td>
<td>570.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Scholarship (max request $2,500.00)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100+ hours of in-lab research at $10/hour ($1,000.00)</td>
<td>1000.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mileage to gather Data (.38 per mile)</td>
<td></td>
<td>300 miles round trip from research site x1 ($114.00)</td>
<td>300 miles round trip from research site x2 ($228.00)</td>
<td>342.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GRAND TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>$200.00</td>
<td>$114.00</td>
<td>$2298.00</td>
<td><strong>2612.00</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTES:**

- Maximum request not to exceed $3500 and may include a Research Scholarship.
- Equipment and left-over materials purchased with this grant will remain the property of WSU.
- You may not request money for gas purchases for travel. WSU reimburses travel expenses at a set mileage rate only.
- Grant money cannot be used retroactively on previously existing expenses. Requests for reimbursements will be denied. All purchases must be made after receiving funding and clearance from the OUR office.
LONG TERM GRANT APPLICATION
Body of Proposal

DIRECTIONS: The instructions within each section should be removed and replaced with your proposal text. Do not exceed 4 double-spaced pages. Supporting documents or materials should be included as addenda. Proposals should be written clearly and simply. Depending on your specific discipline, your proposal should contain a research question or purpose statement.

Project Description
(Approximately 2 pages)

Identify the project question, or purpose, goals, objectives and outcomes; incorporate three appropriate references that relate to the body of knowledge that is the focus of this project (your college subject librarian can assist you with this). Funded research projects must be sufficiently significant and challenging so that it will enhance the student’s intellectual and creative development as well as make a contribution to the chosen field of study. Service learning projects can be funded so long as there is a research component (e.g. community based research projects).

Describe your role and that of the faculty mentor in the project; describe where this project falls along this research continuum: Dependent ______ Independent ______ (student helping faculty do research) ______ (student doing own research)

Describe the previous training and experience (course work, creative activity, laboratory experience, work and/or life experience, etc.) that have prepared you to successfully complete this project.

Describe the product (e.g., a scholarly paper, exhibit or performance) that will result from this project, and indicate when this product will be publicly shared (presentation, publication, performance, etc.). Upon completion of your project you are required to present your results at the annual WSU Undergraduate Research Symposium.

Project Methods & Timeline
(Approximately 1 page)

Identify the specific steps you will follow with this project, and provide a completion date (month) when each step will be completed. Semester projects should be designed to be completed within the semester.

NOTE: If your project involves people (e.g., surveys, interviews) or protected animals, it MUST be reviewed and approved by the WSU Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects or the Animal Care and Use Committee; include the dates when your project will be or has been reviewed and approved (your faculty mentor will help with this).

Budget Explanation
(Approximately 1 page)

Identify the undergraduate research dollars requested for each category listed below, and describe in detail what the expenses in each category entail (revenue expenses and faculty mentor expenses will NOT be funded). Indicate the total budget requested for this project ($3500 maximum).

Grant budgets may include a Research Scholarship, provided that you engage in the equivalent of ten full-time weeks of research. The Research Scholarship can cover research work during the summer. If you are requesting a Research Scholarship, please list all significant time commitments (5+ hours per week) that you expect to maintain over the duration of your project including, for example, class and work schedules:

- Materials (left-over materials will remain the property of WSU)
- Equipment (equipment will remain the property of WSU)
- Research Scholarship
- Student travel to gather data for the project (reimbursed @ 38 cents/mile)
- Student travel to present the results of the project (provide evidence that you have been accepted to present)
LONG TERM GRANT APPLICATION
Additional Questions

1. What funding have you received from OUR in the past? Where has your previous project been disseminated?

2. Is this project part of a required course? If so, please indicate the support (monetary and in-kind) provided for this project by the academic department.

3. What additional sources of funding have been solicited? Is your department willing/able to fund any equipment they will be retaining?

4. Where do you plan to disseminate the results of this project?

5. If you are requesting a Research Scholarship, please list all significant time commitments (5+ hours per week) that you expect to maintain over the duration of your project including, for example, class and work schedules.
LONG TERM GRANT APPLICATION
Faculty Recommendation Form

Student Name (last, first):

Project Title:

Mentor Directions: After carefully reviewing the proposal and assessing both the viability of this project and the qualifications of the student requesting funding, answer the questions found below. Please expand the sections as necessary (do not attach separate letter). If the project involves the use of human subjects or protected animals, be sure the student secures IRB or ACUC approval. If the project receives funding, it is your responsibility to work closely with the student, monitor the ongoing progress of the project and budget, and evaluate the project’s results. Failure to do so will jeopardize funding for this project and any future projects.

1. How long and in what capacity have you known this student?

2. Briefly describe the proposed project. Is this part of a larger research project? Is this part of a course? If so, how is the project apart from the nature and scope of activities normally taken for the course (Please attach a copy of your course syllabus)?

3. Give an assessment of the project’s significance to the student’s discipline and of the project’s educational and/or professional benefit to the student.

4. Comment on the qualifications of the student to successfully complete this project, both in terms of the project’s scope and its time frame.

5. Comment on the justification and appropriateness of the project budget, including the necessity of a Research Scholarship (if requesting one).

6. Describe your role in the project.

7. Include anything else that you think will be helpful to the committee in evaluating this application.

This project _____ DOES _____ DOES NOT require review by the WSU Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects or the WSU Animal Care and Use Committee.

________________________________________  ________________
Project Mentor Signature                        Date

______________          ______________
Campus Mail Code            Phone Extension
FINAL PDF SHOULD INCLUDE:

- Cover Sheet
- Student Information Sheet
- Budget Worksheet
- Proposal Application-no more than 4 pages
- Additional Question
- Faculty Recommendation Form

Addendum Items:

- Bibliography
- Mentor Approval Email
- Undergraduate Research Committee Member Approval Email
- Mentor Chair Approval Email
- Budget Quote Information
- Other
THINGS TO REMEMBER

• Length of proposal should not exceed 4 double-spaced pages, in 12 pt font.
• We urge you to contact your mentor and committee member as soon as possible to allow enough time for approval.
• Remember that all approvals and signatures can be completed via email.
• All approval signature emails should be attached to the application as an addendum.
Please submit your electronic proposal to our online submission site

[Online Submission]

Login and choose “Research Grants”, “My Submissions” and “New”.

Research Grant Proposal Deadline is April 6, 2020
QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS

• Website: www.weber.edu/our
• Email: our@weber.edu
• Dr. Cavitt
  • Email: jcavitt@weber.edu
• Erin Kendall
  • Email: erinkendall@weber.edu
  • Text: 801-663-1655
• Sheri Eddington
  • Email: sherieddington@weber.edu