

## RESEARCH PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

Following the completion of cumulative exams, the student must present and defend an original research proposal in front of a faculty committee selected by the graduate committee, which excludes the student's research advisor. A written paper shall be handed out to the committee one week before the oral presentation. The format of the written proposal should be similar to the project description of an NIH postdoctoral fellowship application. The proposal can be in any area of chemistry, but should be on a topic which is not closely related to research ongoing at Emory or conducted at any institution which you attended prior to coming to Emory. The oral presentation should be limited to about one dozen transparencies which clearly define the proposed problem and how one would accomplish the proposed research. This requirement should be completed by the end of the fourth year (see divisional requirements for exact deadlines).

The following is closely based on the instructions to applicants for NIH postdoctoral fellowships, and is intended as a helpful set of guidelines for preparing an excellent proposal, at least with regard to the format.

**Item 30b. Research Training Proposal.** This section should be well formulated and presented in sufficient detail that it can be evaluated for both its research training potential and scientific merit. It is to be **written by the applicant**.

Include sufficient information to permit an effective review without reviewers having to refer to the literature or any previous application. Brevity and clarity in the presentation are considered indicative of an applicant's approach and ability to conduct a superior project. Sections (1) through (3) of this item are **not to exceed 10 pages including all tables and figures**. Follow the format below:

1. **Specific Aims.** State the specific purposes of the research proposal and the hypotheses to be tested. (1/2 - 1 page suggested)
2. **Background and Significance.** Sketch briefly the background to the proposal. State concisely the importance of the research described in this application by relating the specific aims to broad, long-term objectives. (1 - 2 pages suggested)
3. **Research Design and Methods** (remainder of proposal) Provide an outline of:
  - \* Research design and the procedures to be used to accomplish the specific aims;
  - \* Tentative sequence for the investigation;
  - \* Procedures by which the data will be analyzed; and
  - \* Any procedures, situations, or materials that may be hazardous to personnel and the precautions to be exercised.

Potential experimental difficulties should be discussed together with alternative approaches that could achieve the desired aims.

4. Provide **literature citations** at the end of the research proposal. Each citation must include names of all authors, titles, book or journal, volume number, page numbers, and year of publication.

*The organic division faculty recently agreed to formulate smaller faculty committees for research proposals. RP Committees are the same as your research committee, except the research advisor is replaced by another organic division faculty member. Hopefully it will be easier to schedule proposal defenses when you need to schedule only three people!*

## RESEARCH PROPOSAL

Student Name:

Date of Proposal:

Title of Research Proposal:

Committee Members and Evaluation (please circle S=Satisfactory, or U=Unsatisfactory)

1. \_\_\_\_\_ S U \_\_\_\_\_  
(name) (signature)

2. \_\_\_\_\_ S U \_\_\_\_\_  
(name) (signature)

3. \_\_\_\_\_ S U \_\_\_\_\_  
(name) (signature)

Please attach a copy of the research proposal and any required addenda.  
Return to Ann Dasher, Room A310.

