

THESIS PROPOSAL GUIDE

Master of Science in Biology

Students in the MS program are required to prepare a thesis proposal by the end of their second semester (See the Graduate Catalog). The thesis proposal requirement is considered to have been met when the proposal is signed by the student's thesis committee and turned in to the graduate committee chair. The following is provided as a guide and set of minimum standards for the thesis proposal. Individual thesis committees may require more of their students, so long as it is still completed by the deadlines set by the program.

General Guidelines

- Preliminary data is not required for the Master's thesis proposal. Some students and mentors may choose to include it.
- It is understood that in the course of your research, the approaches used and even project aims may change from those initially proposed.
- The proposal should have a hypothesis to be tested.

Content of the Proposal

Cover page

The cover page will have the proposal title, student's name, and places for thesis committee members to sign. A template is provided on the next page.

The title should clearly state the nature of the proposed research and be as brief as possible. The final title of the thesis may be different.

Abstract

Summarize the project aims and rationale in 300 words or less. (This section should be written last.)

Background and Significance (2-3 pages minimum)

Review the scientific literature that explains the rationale of the project.

You should demonstrate that you have read enough scientific literature to understand the topic.

This is an area to also point out what is not yet known about the area.

Aims

State the hypothesis to be tested.

State the specific aims of the project.

Research Plan

Describe the experimental approaches to be used.

Include a time frame for achievement of the project aims.

Give possible results and how they will be interpreted.

If applicable, preliminary data should go in this section.

Literature Cited

List all source material which has been cited in the text.

Use the citation style of a journal in your field of research.

Thesis Proposal:

title

Ima Student

Approved by Thesis Committee:

Xxx Xxxx, Ph.D. chair	Date
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Yyy Yyyy, Ph.D.	Date
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Zzz Zzzz, Ph.D.	Date
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