

Department of Earth Sciences Research Proposal Format Guidelines

Students will complete and submit a 10-15 page of text research proposal. This proposal will ultimately be expanded and become a working draft of your final paper the following semester. The literature review will serve as a basis for the Introduction and Materials and Methods sections and should be readily adaptable for the final project. This proposal should include the following elements:

1. A clear and concise summary
2. A statement of the Intellectual Merit for the proposed research (Why does this research need to be done? What are the broad-scale research questions that are driving the research?)
3. A clearly stated hypothesis and predictions based on the hypothesis
4. An Introduction to the research topic that includes a broad-based literature review with proper references (using GSA format)
5. Suggested field location (s), sample collection strategies, materials needed, and a brief description of possible Analytical Methods to be used (as applicable)
6. Preliminary Results (if applicable)
7. Well-annotated figures including location maps, images of any proposed field sites, diagrams summarizing previous data, etc.
8. A proposed timeline for Fall and (if appropriate, summer as well) and budget justification (not to exceed \$500 without a secondary application to the Earth Sciences department chair)

The proposal should have the following components with the headings listed below:

1. Cover page with the title of the proposed project and student name
2. A Project Summary (less than 250 words)
3. The Hypothesis Statement and Predictions
4. Introduction
5. Methods and Materials
6. Preliminary Results
7. Project Timeline for Fall (and if appropriate, summer as well)
8. Project Budget

Department of Earth Sciences Thesis Format Guidelines

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

Type Specifications

Most important in typing a thesis is consistency of format and adherence to the specific instructions given in this guide. The text should be double-spaced.

Use a standard typeface (e.g., Arial, Times, Calibri) of 12-point size. Limit the use of italic (script) print to foreign words, genus and species names, book and journal titles, and special emphasis. If you wish, you may use larger size type for the title of the thesis and for chapter headings, as long as it is not larger than 18- point. Boldface type may also be used on the title page and for headings, as well as in the text, for special symbols or for emphasis.

Reduced type may be used within tables, figures, and appendices. It is permissible to use color in the document.

If your thesis has multiple chapters, begin each chapter on a new page. Do the same with each element of the front matter (list of tables, acknowledgments, etc.), the reference section, and each appendix. Try to avoid typing a heading near the bottom of a page unless there is room for at least two lines of text following the heading. Instead, you should simply leave a little extra space on that page and begin the heading on the next page. If you wish to use a “display” page (a page that shows only the chapter title) at the beginning of chapters or appendices, be sure to do so consistently and to count the display page when numbering the pages.

Margins

Use a 1” margin on top, bottom and right sides, with a 1.5" margin on the left side for binding purposes.

Page Numbers

Every page in the document, including those with tables and figures, must be counted. Use lower case Roman numerals for the front matter (see below) and Arabic numbers for the text. **The text (or body) of the thesis must begin on page 1.** Do not number a page with “a” or “b” or skip numbers; do not embellish page numbers with punctuation (dashes, periods, etc.); and do not type the word “page” before the page number. Running headers or footers are not permitted.

The title page does not show a page number, although it is actually page i. The Abstract begins page ii.

Page numbers may be placed in the upper right-hand corner, lower right-hand corner, or centered at the top or bottom of the page. Page numbers should not be placed on the left side of the page. Allow a reasonable distance (0.5" footer) between the page number and any text; in no instance may the page number overlap the text.