



Research Option -- Proposal Content and Requirements

Each student is required to prepare (and have approved by their unit) a proposal outlining the research project being conducted for their research thesis. (The proposal will be the final product of the LCC 4701 Undergraduate Research Proposal Writing Course.) While a specific format and length is not required, the proposal, at a minimum, should contain the following information:

1) Literature Review

The literature review should show that the student understands the research area, and situate the research to be conducted within that area. It should be written in narrative form providing linkages between the information and decisions made in the current research. It should not be simply a listing of references.

While a minimum amount of references are not required, students should place the research within a historical context in the discipline and compare and contrast other methods and approaches, providing references for each. Most proposals of good quality contain at least 10 references, many contain 20+ for comprehensive coverage of the topic.

2) Description of Research Problem and its Importance

The student should, simply, describe the work to be performed. The student should discuss its importance to the field and expected outcomes.

3) Work Plan & Schedule

The research project should cover at least 2 semesters worth of work (6 hours). The work plan and schedule should outline the goals and objectives of the research in a fairly detailed manner, presented with proposed deadlines and targets. Students should note in the preparation of their schedule, that a first draft of the thesis will be due during mid-term of the final LCC 4702 thesis writing course. A majority of the data and analysis should be completed at that point.

A suggested format to the description is as follows:

1. *Low Target*
At least this much must be completed, or the project will be deemed incomplete, and the research option not granted.
2. *Ideal Target*
This is the amount of work the student and advisor believe is feasible in the time available.
3. *High Target*
These are more ambitious goals.

Additional Information:

- Additional sections and information over and above the three items mentioned above will be accepted (and are welcomed). Proposals that do not contain the above three sections will not be approved.

- Proposals will normally be completed at the end of the *first term* of research. They *must* be completed before the start of the final term of research and should reflect the entire research project's contents and goals. An approved proposal and completion of LCC 4701 is required for admission to the LCC 4702 thesis writing course.
- Research proposals must be approved by a the undergraduate coordinator (or other point of contact approved by the unit) and the student's faculty mentor.
- Information on any co-mentors (i.e., graduate students, post-docs, research scientists or additional faculty) should be mentioned somewhere in the proposal.
- The proposal should also mention the location of the work, particularly if it is to be completed away from campus.
- We also strongly suggest that students include in their plans opportunities to present their work in either poster or oral form. This can occur either in the unit, at the annual UROP spring symposium, or at professional conferences.

Example proposals are also available online at:

http://undergradresearch.gatech.edu/research_option/index.php