

Format and Timetable for a Comprehensive Examination Research Proposal in the Interdisciplinary Graduate Program in Human Toxicology (IDGP in Human Toxicology)

Title Page: Include the Title of the proposal, your Name, the Name of your Major Professor, the Names of the Members of your Doctoral Advisory Committee, and the Date of Comprehensive Examination.

Abstract: The abstract is a very important section since it serves as an accurate and succinct description of the entire proposal. It must include a description of the specific aims, central hypothesis, long-term goals of the work, a concise description of the research design to be employed, and the methods to be used to accomplish the specific aims. APPROXIMATELY ONE-HALF PAGE (Single Spaced).

Research Plan

Specific Aims: State concisely and realistically what the research described in this proposal is intended to accomplish and what hypothesis is to be tested. Provide a brief explanation of each specific aim to be completed in order to test the hypothesis. APPROXIMATELY ONE PAGE (Single Spaced).

Research Strategy: APPROXIMATELY TWELVE PAGES (Single Spaced) for this section

Background and Significance: Briefly describe the background to the present proposal, critically evaluate existing knowledge, and specifically identify the gaps in present scientific knowledge that the project is intended to fill. State concisely the importance of the research in the proposal by relating the specific aims to longer term objectives.

Approach: Discuss the experimental design and procedures to be used to accomplish the specific aims of the project. It is usually best to organize this section in relation to the specific aims and specific studies or sub aims proposed under each aim. Include clearly identified preliminary data that you have obtained to support the aims and experimental design. Identify any steps or procedures that may be problematic and suggest what alternative methods you might utilize if these problems occur. Be sure to indicate a tentative sequence of the investigation. Point out any procedures, situations, or materials that may be hazardous to personnel and describe the precautions that will be utilized.

Literature Cited: USE PAGES AS NECESSARY

Choose the format for literature used by a prominent journal in toxicology, Chem Res Toxicol, Tox Sci or TAP. Format your references accordingly, and provide complete citations. Each citation must include the names of all authors, the full title of the article or chapter, the name of the journal or book, volume number, page numbers, and year of publication. The reference style should be consistent in its format.

Timetable: Once the student and the Graduate Advisory Committee have agreed on an Hypothesis and Specific Aims, the major professor gives the go-ahead for the student to write the proposal, which the student has **4 weeks** to complete. The student then distributes the proposal to the Doctoral Advisory committee **at least 2 weeks prior** to the scheduled Comprehensive Examination.

NB: Forms for the Doctoral Plan of Study, Appointment of the Doctoral Advisory Committee and Scheduling the Comprehensive Examination, may be found on the Graduate College's website (search "forms"). These forms must be completed, signed by the major professor and the Director of the IDGP in Human Toxicology or the DGS, and sent to the Graduate College at least 2 weeks prior to the scheduled comprehensive examination.

General Comments: Include sufficient information in the proposal to facilitate an effective review by the reader without extensive reference to other sources. Be specific and avoid redundancies. Reviewers often consider a concise and clearly thought out proposal as indicative of an investigator's approach to a research objective and ability to carry out the research effectively. If you need help with grammar, I recommend a book by William Strunk, Jr. and E.B. White entitled The Elements of Style.