

**Research Project Proposal Instructions:**  
**Hypothesis-Driven or Hypothesis-Generating Research**  
Email to: [FRCT@som.umd.edu](mailto:FRCT@som.umd.edu)

You should demonstrate a firm understanding of your project and the procedures you plan to follow. Be clear, avoid jargon, and spell out abbreviations before using them the first time. **Use 1-inch margins, 11- or 12-point Arial font, and full justification.**

**Basic Information:**

Include on a cover page or on the first page of the proposal before the abstract.

- Student name
- Faculty mentor(s) name and department, and division if applicable
- Title of the research project

**Abstract:** 1 Page Maximum (Recommended 250-300 words)

Your abstract is a succinct and accurate description of your research. Be sure to include:

- Brief background statement
- Specific objectives, aims, and/or hypotheses
- Methods

**Research Plan:** 2 Pages Maximum, 1.5 spacing, **excluding** Literature Cited

Should include each of the following sections.

- A. Hypothesis and Specific Aims:** State concisely and realistically what the research project is intended to accomplish. What hypotheses are to be tested or what questions will be asked? If hypothesis-generating, what insights do you hope to gain or clarify?
- B. Background and Significance:** Briefly summarize the scientific background relevant to your project. Evaluate existing knowledge, identify gaps your research is meant to address, and explain how your specific aims were developed based on this background. Literature cited should be current and relevant, rather than exhaustive. Clearly state the significance of your research and its broader practical implications.
- C. Progress Report/Preliminary Studies:** Include preliminary work (optional) where relevant in this section (e.g. library research, methodological development, procurement of supplies, etc.). This information will help reviewers determine the feasibility of the proposed project.
- D. Methods:** Describe the study design and procedures you will use to achieve your specific aims. Outline key protocols and the tentative timeline for completing each phase. Your description should be as specific as possible while remaining concise. Focus on the aspects most relevant to your role and contributions to the research. Include details on the following, as applicable.
  - a. **Study Design** (e.g., experimental, observational, case-control, prospective cohort, randomized controlled trial)

- b. **Study Setting** (e.g., laboratory, clinical, community-based)
- c. **Subjects/Samples** (type, number, selection criteria, inclusion/exclusion criteria)
- d. **Sample Size & Feasibility** (estimate anticipated sample size and discuss feasibility of recruitment/enrollment, if applicable)
- e. **Interventions/Exposures** (if applicable)
- f. **Study Procedures** (data collection methods, measurements, tools)
- g. **Analysis Plan** (how data will be processed, statistical methods, interpretation)

**E. Student Role & Responsibilities:** Clearly describe ***your*** role in the proposed research. Outline the specific tasks and responsibilities you will take on and how your work contributes to the overall goals of the project. This section should reflect your direct involvement in both the planning and execution of the research.

**F. Anticipated Results & Potential Pitfalls:** Describe the expected outcomes of your research and their significance. Identify potential challenges or limitations and outline alternative strategies to address them if needed. Consider methodological constraints, data variability, or other factors that could impact your results.

**G. Literature Cited:** References should be cited in numerical order as they appear in the text, rather than alphabetically. Please follow [AMA citation guidelines](#).