

## Syllabus

### GLY6932 – Special Topics – Demystifying the Proposal Writing Process (3-credits)

Mondays Periods 6-8 (12.50 – 3.50 pm)

Professor: Dr. Robert Hatfield

Contact: Office WM220; [rhatfield1@ufl.edu](mailto:rhatfield1@ufl.edu)

Office Hours: By arrangement. Please feel free to contact me to arrange office hours outside of class periods.

**Course Premise:** All graduate students, whether they stay in academia or not, will likely need to write strong proposals and/or make compelling arguments throughout their careers. This course will largely use NSF-style proposal organization as a model for rigorous and well thought out proposal development and submission. However, we will also touch on other styles of proposals for general and mission-directed agencies like NASA, NOAA, and DOE, as appropriate for the students in the course and we can build the student written proposals around these models as needed.

In this course, students will learn how to develop a full federal agency proposal, complete with all required and auxiliary documents for submission targeted to a specific solicitation. We will introduce and use the NSF Research.gov demo site (which is a mirror of the Research.gov site) to develop and compile full NSF proposals as would be done through the real NSF Research.gov proposal management system.

Students will begin by reviewing *real* proposals written by UF faculty members and participate in a simulated funding panel. Using this experience as a springboard, each student shall develop their own proposal, with the help of his or her faculty advisor, that in some way addresses his or her thesis research. These proposals will also be reviewed and evaluated by a simulated NSF panel made up of the students and instructor. The culminating assignment will be an oral presentation of the proposal (AGU-style) and will be open to faculty and all other students as a showcase of the research breadth of our graduate student cohort.

The goal of this course is that by the end of the semester students will have written an NSF-style (or other style as appropriate to the student) proposal which can be (but doesn't have to be) the basis of a real submission to target graduate student funding and/or open up avenues for post-doc conversations, post-graduation. Whether or not your proposal is "funded" by your peers, or ends up being submitted to a real call, it will serve as a useful road map as you proceed with your research.

This course is intended for advanced (second year or beyond) graduate students and is best suited for students who have already written their prospectus. This course will help develop those ideas, frame their questions and hypotheses, and discuss how best to test them with data and data collection methods. This course may also be audited by postdoctoral researchers, with the agreement of the instructor.

This course averages out to a three-credit course but in-class activities during the 2 Mock NSF Panels may extend beyond the designated class time depending on class size. The week-by-week class schedule will deal with important aspects of the proposal writing process each week, but time will also be put

aside during class to address specific questions and concerns from the group as we move through the process.

**Prerequisites:** Commitment from your faculty advisor to provide a “real” past proposal (including and ad-hoc and panel reviews) for review by the students. Commitment from your faculty advisor to support you in developing a suitable proposal.

A note for faculty advisors on the nature of these commitments. It will be stressed that all proposals shared with the class are considered confidential and we will have class discussions about the sensitive nature of proposals and intellectual merit. The commitment to assist in developing proposals is not intended to be a specific time burden, but if students have specific and/or technical ideas for their research proposals, you are in the best position to be able to answer those questions as the students work through this process.

### **Class Schedule:**

Week 1: 08/28/23: Orientation to the class. Introduction to NSF structure and how to find and identify a program/solicitation to submit a proposal to. Discussion of the different types of proposals (EAGER, RAPID, Full, Post-doctoral etc) you can submit. How to manage time when writing a proposal. Assignment 1 handed out.

Week 2: 09/04/23: No Class. Labor Day. Assignment of roles for Mock NSF Panel 1 distributed by email.

Week 3: 09/11/23: Overview of the entire submission process from drafting, internal review, submission, ad-hoc reviews, panel review, and decisions. Overview of the key NSF Review Criteria: Intellectual Merit & Broader Impacts.

Week 4: 09/18/23: Mock NSF Panel 1 (could go longer than the posted class time – please contact me privately if you foresee any issues with extending the class period).

Week 5: 09/25/23: No formal Class. Review what was good and what wasn't in preparation for the discussion next week. Start to think about your own proposal ideas. Maybe meet with your advisor to discuss them.

Week 6: 10/02/23: Constructing your project description. Using the experience of the panel review we will brainstorm as a group on what the successful elements of real proposals are with the aim of developing a skeleton that your project description can be scaffolded around. Ordering of proposals, what goes in to your 15-pages and in what order?

Week 7: 10/09/23: 5–10-minute presentation. Present a 4-5 slide overview of your proposed project. It should begin with a cover page detailing the proposal title, the specific program solicitation, the proposal duration, and basic info like what personnel will be supported. Slides 2-5 will each deal with the project overview, the intellectual merit, and the broader impacts. This is the basis for your project summary. Each presentation will be followed by 5-10 mins of questions/feedback from the class. The project summary is to be submitted by the end of the week (10/13/23).

Week 8: 10/16/23: The importance of hypotheses testing in proposal development. How to formulate hypotheses and how to go about testing them with experimental design. We will spend some time discussing the importance of a strong introduction. How do you grab your audience and convince them to fund you and your science?

Week 9: 10/23/23: Overview of the different required and optional proposal elements. Introduction to the PAAPG, SciENV, and the Research.gov demo site as tools to build your full proposal.

Week 10: 10/30/23: Budgets and Budget Justifications. How to plan a proposal budget. What can be charged to a federal Grant? What can't? In class activity creating a proposal budget and budget justification. Questions for faculty members (hopefully we can get 2-3 other faculty members together for a 1hr discussion [period 8] on their experience of writing a successful grant proposal).

Week 11: 11/06/23: All those other things. What makes a complete proposal? Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources, Data Management Plan, Post-Doctoral Mentoring Plan, Current and Pending Support, Collaborators and other Affiliations, Biosketch.

Week 12: 11/13/23: Q & A as needed during class time to offer support advice during the proposal writing process. Use any additional time to work on proposal development.

**Full, complete proposal due by the end of this week (11-17-23).**

Week 13: 11/20/23: Debrief/Discussion. How was the proposal writing process? What was hard/challenging? What was easy? What would you do differently next time? Assignment of roles for Mock NSF Panel 2.

Week 14: 11/27/23: Mock NSF Panel 2 (could go longer than the posted class time – please contact me privately if you foresee any issues with extending the class period).

Week 15: 12/04/23: Student Presentations. 15-min AGU style oral presentation. Given the number of students this could take several hours, but each student would provide a 12 min talk on their proposed research project with time for questions and change over.

### **Assignments:**

Assignment 0: Due 9/1/23: Submit a pdf of a complete proposal (including all auxiliary documents) written by your advisor or other academic mentor via Canvas. Please contact me if you are having difficulty with obtaining a proposal.

Assignment 1: Due 9/6/23: Identify a program at NSF (or other federal agency) to which you would like to submit to. Search the recent awards that have been funded through the program using the simple award search. Identify submission deadlines. Identify the program budget, and typical number of awards made each cycle and the amount of each award. Put together a PowerPoint slide or two and we will use these mini presentations as the start point for a class discussion on 9/11.

Assignment 2: Mock Panel. Serve as a proposal lead, reader, or scribe on a selection of faculty written proposals. Roles and responsibilities to be defined and distributed in class prior to the panel.

Assignment 3: Brief Presentation/overview of your proposal due on 10/09/23, project summary by the end of the same week 10/13/23.

Assignment 4: Submit complete proposal with all required elements.

Assignment 5: Mock Panel. Serve as a proposal lead, reader, or scribe on a selection of student written proposals. Roles and responsibilities to be defined in class prior to the panel.

Assignment 6: 15-min AGU style presentation of your research proposal.

### **Deadlines, Key Dates, and Grade Weighting:**

**September 1<sup>st</sup>:** Assignment 0: Submit mentors' proposal via Canvas. *No grade but is a prerequisite.*

**September 11<sup>th</sup>:** Assignment 1 and participation in class discussion. *Worth 10 % of the grade.*

**September 18<sup>th</sup>:** Assignment 2: Mock Panel 1. *Preparation and participation worth 15 % of the grade.*

**October 9<sup>th</sup>:** Assignment 3a: 5-minute, 4-slide presentation. *Worth 5% of the grade.*

**October 13<sup>th</sup>:** Assignment 3b: Project Summary due. *Worth 10% of the grade.*

**November 17<sup>th</sup>:** Assignment 4: Final proposal due with all required elements. *Worth 25% of the grade.*

**November 27<sup>th</sup>:** Assignment 5: Mock Panel 2. *Preparation and participation worth 15 % of the grade.*

**December 4<sup>th</sup>:** Assignment 6: Presentations. *Worth 20 % of the grade.*

*Assignments 0, 3b, and 4 to be submitted via Canvas.*

### **Attendance Policy:**

Students are expected to attend class and participate in class discussions. Attendance and participation in class is formally evaluated via assignments 1, 2, 3a, 5, and 6 which are wholly or partly completed in class and together are worth 65 % of the final grade.

### **Grading Scale:**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Range:</b>	
A	100 %	to 94.0 %
A-	< 94.0 %	to 90.0 %
B+	< 90.0 %	to 87.0 %
B	< 87.0 %	to 84.0 %
B-	< 84.0 %	to 80.0 %
C+	< 80.0 %	to 77.0 %
C	< 77.0 %	to 74.0 %
C-	< 74.0 %	to 70.0 %
D+	< 70.0 %	to 67.0 %
D	< 67.0 %	to 64.0 %
D-	< 64.0 %	to 61.0 %
F	< 61.0 %	to 0.0 %

### **Required Course Materials and Canvas Site:**

There is no required textbook for this course. All required reading materials will be distributed by the instructor and hosted on Canvas (<https://elearning.ufl.edu/>). Assignments 0, 3b, and 4 will be submitted via Canvas; all other assignments do not have to be formally submitted, but will be used in class for discussion/presentation. Post-Docs auditing the course should contact the instructor with their UFID so they can be added to the Canvas Site.

### **Online Course Evaluation:**

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <http://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <http://ufl.bluera.com/ufl>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to at <http://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results>.

### **The University's Honesty Policy:**

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Conduct Code (<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. If you have any questions or concerns, please talk to me about them.

### **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:**

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center by visiting <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started>. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

### **Attendance and make-up exams:**

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at: <http://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendancepolicies>.

### **Campus Resources: Health and Wellness:**

U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu), 352-392-1575, or visit U Matter, We Care (<https://umatter.ufl.edu>) website to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

Counseling and Wellness Center: Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website (<https://counseling.ufl.edu/>) or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as noncrisis services.

Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need or visit the Student Health Care Center website (<https://shcc.ufl.edu/>).

University Police Department: Visit UF Police Department website (<https://police.ufl.edu/>) or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website (<https://ufhealth.org/emergency-room-trauma-center>).

GatorWell Health Promotion Services: For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the GatorWell website (<https://gatorwell.ufsa.ufl.edu/>) or call 352-273-4450.

### **Academic Resources:**

E-learning technical support: Contact the UF Computing Help Desk (<http://helpdesk.ufl.edu/>) at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at [helpdesk@ufl.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ufl.edu).

Career Connections Center (<https://career.ufl.edu/>): Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.

Library Support (<https://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>): Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center (<https://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>): Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352-392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

Writing Studio (<https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>): 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

Student Complaints On-Campus: Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage (<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>) for more information.