

## Grant Application

For this assignment, students should choose a real grant application (call for proposals). The most common error in preparing grant applications is failing to follow the directions and format for the specific grant a student is applying for.

Undergraduate research grants are the most common type you will find on campus. See : <http://www.uwlax.edu/URC/>

The narrative should contain the following sections:

1. Background/Statement of the Problem/Significance of the Project. Be succinct. Clearly support your statement with documentation and references, and include an up-to-date and pertinent review of the relevant literature.
2. Objectives. Define the specific, proposed outcome(s) and product(s) of the research. What will be known after the project has been completed? If the anticipated outcomes are quantifiable, explain how they will be measured.
3. Research Methods. Design and describe a work plan consistent with your academic discipline. This may include, but is not limited to, scientific research in the physical, biological or social sciences, use of population samples, experimental and control groups, or other methods of data gathering and statistical analysis. The work plan may include archival research, translations, ethnographic fieldwork, solitary thinking, or other forms of analysis and synthesis of ideas and concepts in the arts and humanities.
4. Final Products and Dissemination. Describe possible forms of the final product, e.g., publishable manuscript, conference paper, invention, software, exhibit, performance, etc. Be specific about the methods used to disseminate your results to a wide audience.

When writing a grant application, it is important to address each criterion directly in your case for support. A proposal which fails to meet them will be rejected regardless of the quality of its source.

### Major criteria

Here are the major criteria against which your proposal will be judged. Read through your case for support repeatedly, and ask whether the answers to the questions below are clear, even to a non-expert.

- Does the proposal address a well-formulated problem?
- Do you have a good idea on which to base your work? The proposal must explain the idea in sufficient detail to convince the reader that the idea has some substance, and should explain why there is reason to believe that it is indeed a good idea. It is absolutely not enough merely to identify a wish-list of desirable goals (a very common fault). There must be significant technical substance to the proposal.
- Does the proposal explain clearly what work will be done?
- Is there evidence that the proposers know about the work that others have done on the problem? This evidence may take the form of a short review as well as representative references.

## **Common Shortcomings**

- It is not clear what question/task is being addressed by the proposal.
- The proposal being addressed unclear or ill-formed.
- There is no evidence that the proposers will succeed.
- The proposers seem unaware of related research.
- The proposal is badly presented, or incomprehensible to all but an expert in the field.  
Remember that your proposal will be read by non-experts as well as (hopefully) experts.