Week 5: Choosing a research problem:

*What is the question?* Has it been addressed in the past? *Why does it matter?* What do you hope to accomplish? *Is the scope of the proposed project realistic?* The scientific method: *What is hypothesis driven research? Is there any other kind?*

**Homework:**

The following are your reading assignments for next week. These readings focus on a very general question: ‘what should you consider in choosing a research problem in graduate work’?

After you have read all assignments, write short answers to the following questions (to be handed in at the start class next week).

1) **How useful did you find the reading assignments?**
2) **Were there any questions, considerations or topics raised that you had not thought of?**
3) **If so, were any particularly relevant to you?**

**Reading Assignments:**

“Graduate Research: a Guide for Students in the Sciences” R.V. Smith, 3rd Ed.
Sections from Chapter 3” Making Choices”
- Interdisciplinary versus disciplinary research p.25
- Research problem p.26

Section entitled “Choosing a Research Topic” from Chapter 4

Then answer the questions to the following Scenario from Chapter 4:

**Choosing a Research Topic**

Henry was fortunate in finding a respected faculty adviser in his field of psychology. He was so interested in his thesis research that after about a year he decided to broaden his topic. After another year, he adjusted it slightly to include another aspect of work suggested by his adviser. After 5 years, he saw that he had lost his focus; he could no longer describe the hypothesis that he was trying to test.

- Where did Henry—and his adviser—go wrong?
- What can he do now?