Week 8: Writing III - Preparing research proposals:
A discussion of commonly made mistakes and case studies of successful proposals.
The purposes of the background and significance, preliminary results, design of the research plan.

Instructor’s Outline

Discussion on How to start writing a proposal, what things to consider:
John Caradonna’s powerpoint presentation titled “The ‘Thinking About It’ Stage.

Group Discussion of Proposal Guidelines:
1) Background/Significance
   a) What is the question?
   b) Why does it matter?

2) Statement of objectives/hypothesis (avoidances) avoid at ALL cost!
   a) Quoting the literature that was never read
   b) Equations you can’t derive or reactions or mechanisms that you don’t know or understand

3) References: READ EVERY paper you cite!!!
   a) Know all the science that is presented!
   b) “Truth in Advertising” your research

4) Research Plan
   a) What will I do?

5) Methodology
   a) Immersion in your research
   b) Try out your ideas
   c) Experience your proposal

6) Time line
   a) Strategic planning
   b) Don’t just add

7) Write a draft
   a) Have your advisor read it
   b) Get feedback from students (don’t work in a vacuum)

Discuss Advisors Role
Discuss DAC Role
Discuss Orals Process
Give Link to GAC website and calendar deadlines
Give out the Rules and Regulations Governing the Oral Presentation Guidelines

Break for Snack at 3PM

**Small Group (3) Discussion of example proposals:**
(break students into three small groups based on discipline: organic, Bio/inorganic, Phy/Theor) Discuss the example proposal in their field of interest.

**Student’s Reading Assignments:**
Chapter 12, starting at page 149, in your book "Graduate research. A Guide for Students in the Sciences"
http://www.bu.edu/chemistry/grad/requirements/
Oral Exams
One of the sample oral presentation proposals