

**UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE  
HELEN BADER SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WELFARE,  
DOCTORAL PROGRAM IN SOCIAL WORK**

**SW 991  
Proseminar in Grantwriting**

Semester/Year: Fall 2008  
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**Course Description**

This 1-credit skills proseminar is designed to familiarize students with key principles and techniques for constructing competitive behavioral research grant proposals for submission to various funding entities at the federal, state, and local levels. The course will assist students in the steps of identifying funding sources and submitting/revising applications for research grants. The course utilizes critical analysis of readings, examples, and experiential learning opportunities (i.e., developing components of a federal research grant proposal, collegial reviewing of other students' proposals). This course is appropriate for social work doctoral students as well as for graduate students in other professions and disciplines.

**Prerequisites**

Students enrolled in this course must have graduate standing or signed permission of the instructor.

**Specific Course Goals and Objectives**

The goals of the social work doctoral program include preparing students to make contributions to the profession as researchers, scholars, and educators, through acquisition and execution of funded research projects. Grantwriting is a skill-based endeavor, requiring knowledge of funding mechanisms, and use of strategies in conceptualizing and constructing projects, writing, and responding to reviews. Toward this end, the objectives of this course are to enable students to demonstrate the following:

1. Awareness of the different types of research funding mechanisms at the local, state, and federal levels;
2. Ability to identify and match sources of funding appropriate to the subject and scope of the project the student wishes to propose;
3. Awareness of the overall structure of a research grant proposal;
4. Ability to identify appropriate structural elements idiosyncratic to specific federal, state or local grant mechanisms;
5. Ability to construct a draft narrative of an NIH small grant (R03) proposal, demonstrating principles learned in the course;
6. Ability to assess potential community collaborators for collaboration in applied research projects; and
7. Ability to critically assess and provide feedback on proposals in an informed, respectful, and collegial manner.

### **Texts/Required Reading Sources**

- Gerin, W. (2006). Writing the NIH grant proposal: A step-by-step guide. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Friedland, A.J., & Folt, C.L. (2000). Writing successful science proposals. Binghamton, NY: Vail-Ballou Press.
- Wager, E., Godlee, F., & Jefferson, T. (2002). How to survive peer review. London: BMJ Books.

Articles available through E-Reserve using D2L (see below)

### **Recommended Texts:**

- Strunk, W. & White, E. B. (2000). The elements of style (4<sup>th</sup> ed). New York: Longman.
- Ogden, T.E. & Goldberg, I.A. (2002). Research proposals: A guide to success (3<sup>rd</sup> Ed.). San Diego, CA: Academic Press.

### **Learning Environment and Resources**

Many of the course materials are accessible to registered students through D2L at <http://www.uwm.edu/UWM/Student/elearning.html>. All students enrolled in social work courses have access to the computer lab located on the 10<sup>th</sup> floor of Enderis Hall and at other locations throughout campus. For specific locations/hours see <https://www3.uwm.edu/IMT/services/campus/ccls/>.

Campus policy information regarding participation by students with disabilities, accommodations for religious observances, academic conduct/misconduct, incomplete grading policies, complaint procedures, grade appeal procedures, sexual harassment and safety policies, final exam date requirements, and other standing policies/procedures is available on-line at: <http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/SyllabusLinks.pdf>.

### **Assignments/Grading**

Student grades in this course are based on the following criteria (full details attached):

Successful submission of the following sections of an R03 grant proposal:

Assignment #1: Specific Aims and Abstract (1 page + 1/3 page) (10%) + (5%)

Assignment #2: Background and Significance (2.5 pages) (15%)

Assignment #4: Research Design & Method (4 pages) (20%)

Assignment #6: Human Subjects section (10%)

Assignment #8: Preliminary Studies (5%)

Assignment #9: All sections with feedback integrated (20%)

Assignment #3: Provide written critique of/Feedback on colleague Specific Aims and Abstract (1/2 page each) (5%)

Assignment #5: Provide written critique of /Feedback on colleague Background & Significance (1/2 page) (5%)

Assignment #7: Provide written critique of/Feedback on colleague Research Design & Method (1/2 page) (5%)

Late assignments will be graded downward for every 24 hours past due (i.e., letter grade equivalents will be in 1/3 increments, such that an “A” becomes “A-,” “B+” becomes “B,” etc.). University policies regarding the course grade of “Incomplete” will be followed.

## **Class Schedule/Outline**

(each session meets 110 minutes, once **every other** week)

### **Session 1: Introduction, Elements of a Research Proposal, Matching to Mechanism**

*Project Conceptualization: Discussion of Areas of Interest*

*How to Determine Whether or Not an Idea is Fundable?*

*Funding Sources*

*Matching Projects to Funding Sources*

*Mechanisms*

*Requests for Applications/Proposals*

#### **Required Readings:**

- Friedland & Folt (2000). Chapter 1: Getting Started (pp. 5-17).

#### **Recommend Readings:**

- Ogden & Goldberg (2002). Chapter 1: The NIH and other sources of research support (pp. 3-20); Chapter 2: A Strong Proposal (pp. 21-29).

### **Session 2: Framing your Proposal**

*Introduction to General Proposal Structure:*

*Introduction*

*Rationale/Literature Review*

*Preliminary Findings*

*Research Design and Method*

*NIH Proposal Structure:*

*Specific Aims*

*Background & Significance*

*Preliminary Studies*

*Research Design & Method*

*Abstract*

*Specific Aims: More detail*

#### **Required Readings:**

- Friedland & Folt (2000). Chapter 4: Developing Your Conceptual Framework and Significance Statement (pp. 37-52); Chapter 7: Objectives and hypotheses: An exhaustive list is exhausting (pp. 81-90).
- Gerin (2006). Chapter 5: Writing the application, part I: The scientific content (pp. 61-105 ONLY).

#### **Recommended Readings:**

- Ogden & Goldberg (2002). Chapter 4: The R01 research grant (pp. 45-54); Chapter 5: The abstract and specific aims (pp. 55-68).

### **Session 3: Peer Review, Supporting Your Argument: Background and Significance**

*Why peer review?*

*Principles of reviewing: importance of both tone and content*

*Differences in review*

*Journal articles*  
*Conference abstracts*  
*Grant proposals*  
*Background and significance:*  
*Purpose*  
*Structure*  
*Inclusion of Theoretical/Conceptual Framework*  
*Tone*  
*Strategies for construction*

**Required Readings:**

- Friedland & Folt (2000). Chapter 8: Lay the foundation in the introduction (pp. 91-105).
- Gerin (2006). Chapter 5: Writing the application, part I: The scientific content (pp. 106-107 ONLY).
- Wager et al. (2002). Chapter 2: What is peer review? (pp. 3-11), Chapter 3: How to be a reviewer (pp. 13-21), Chapter 5: Professional peer review (pp. 37-42), Chapter 6: Informal peer review (pp. 43-47).

**Assignments Due:**

- Assignment #1: Specific Aims section of R03 grant (10%).

**Session 4: Experimental Design and Method**

*Subjects/Participants*  
*Selection*  
*Inclusion/Exclusion*  
*Recruitment*  
*Procedure*  
*Location(s)*  
*Assessment: Method, Measures*  
*Intervention*  
*Staffing*  
*Human Subjects*  
*Data Analysis*

**Required Readings:**

- Friedland & Folt (2000). Chapter 9: Experimental design and methods: What will you actually do? (pp. 106-123).

**Recommended Readings:**

- Ogden & Goldberg (2002). Chapter 8: Research design & methods (pp. 101-118).

**Assignments Due:**

- Assignment #2: Background and Significance section of R03 grant application (15%)
- Assignment #3: Collegial critique/feedback on colleague R03 Specific Aims section (5%)

## **Session 5: Human Subjects Research and Grant Proposals**

*Just-In-Time*

*Ethics and Accountability*

*Informed Consent and Assent*

*Inclusion of Women, Minorities, and Children*

*Targeted/Planned Enrollment*

*Certificates of Confidentiality*

*Data and Safety Monitoring*

*HIPAA*

### **Required Readings:**

- Gerin (2006). Chapter 6: Writing the application, part II: Human and animal concerns (pp. 113-150).
- Friedland & Folt (2002). Chapter 16: Ethics and research (pp. 158-162).

### **Recommended Readings:**

- Ogden & Goldberg (2002). Chapter 11: Human subjects (pp. 151-162).

### **Assignments Due:**

- Assignment #4: Research Design & Method section of R03 grant application (20%)
- Assignment #5: Collegial critique/feedback on colleague R03 Background and Significance section (5%).

## **Session 6: Preliminary Studies & Budget**

*Preliminary Studies:*

*Purpose*

*Pilot Studies*

*Research Team:*

*Description of Background and Qualifications*

*Choice of Collaborators*

*Involvement of Community Partners*

*Self-Promotion*

*Budget:*

*Conceptualization*

*Construction*

*Justification*

*Staffing:*

*FTEs*

*Calculation*

*Timelines*

### **Required Readings:**

- Friedland & Folt (2002). Chapter 11: The timeline is a reality check (pp. 128-132); Chapter 13: Preparing a budget (pp. 140-146).

**Recommended Readings:**

- Ogden & Goldberg (2002). Chapter 7: Preliminary studies (pp. 91-100); Chapter 9: The budget (pp. 119-138).

**Assignments Due:**

- Assignment #6: Human Subjects section of R03 grant (10%)
- Assignment # 7: Collegial critique/feedback on colleague R03 Research Design & Method section (5%)

**Session 7: Other Elements of Grant Proposals: Administration**

*Biosketches*

*Research Support*

*Resources*

*Consortia & Contracts*

*Consultants*

*Letters of Support*

*References*

**Required Readings:**

- Friedland & Folt (2002). Chapter 12: References in detail: How many and how recent? (pp. 133-139).

**(Strongly) Recommended Readings:**

- Ogden & Goldberg (2002). Chapter 10: Biographical sketch, research support and resources (pp. 139-150); Chapter 13: Consortia, contracts, consultants, and collaborators (pp. 169-174); Chapter 14: Literature cited and appendices (pp. 175-180).

**Assignments Due:**

- Assignment #8: Preliminary Studies section of R03 grant (5%).

**Session 8: Submission and Review: Process****Required Readings:**

- Gerin (2006). Chapter 8: Submitting the application (pp. 245-254); Chapter 9: The grant review and award process (pp. 255-272).
- Friedland & Folt (2002). Chapter 15: The three R's: Rethink, revise, and resubmit (pp. 152-157).

**Recommended Readings:**

- Ogden & Goldberg (2002). Chapter 3: Proposal review (pp. 29-44); Chapter 17: Proposal submission and supplementary materials (pp. 201-206); Chapter 15: Revision of an unfunded proposal (pp. 181-192).

**Assignments Due:**

- Assignment #9: Combined sections of revised proposal with integrated feedback (20%)

### **Additional Reading Resources:**

- Inouye, S.K. & Fiellin, D.A (2005). An evidence-based guide to writing grant proposals for clinical research. *Annals of Internal Medicine*, 142, 274-282.
- Cleary, M., Walter, G., & Hunt, G. (2006). The quest to fund research: playing research lotto. *Australasian Psychiatry*, 14, 323-326.
- Penrod, J. (2003). Getting funded: Writing a successful qualitative small-project-proposal. *Qualitative Health Research*, 13, 821-832.
- Sandelowski, M. & Barroso, J. (2003). Writing the proposal for a qualitative methodology research project. *Qualitative Health Research*, 13, 781-820.
- Najavits, L.M. (2003). How to design an effective treatment outcome study. *Journal of Gambling Studies*, 19, 317-337.
- Bordage, G. & Dawson, B. (2003). Experimental study design and grant writing in eight steps and 28 questions. *Medical Education*, 37, 376-385.

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**Assignment 1: Submission of Draft Specific Aims and Abstract of R03 Project**

Due date: in class, Session 3

**Learning Objectives:** The purpose of this assignment is for students to be able to 1) develop a summary of their project in abstract form, and 2) develop a one page Specific Aims section of their grant, including identification of research questions, rationale, objectives, and hypotheses.

**Specific Details:** This analysis should be single-spaced , with .5 inch margins in Arial 11 font, 1 page for Specific Aims and 1/3 page for abstract .

**Grading:** This assignment is worth 10% of the course grade; the grading scheme is based on the following criteria:

Specific Aims:

8 pts. – completeness (inclusion of appropriate rationale, study objectives and hypotheses, rudimentary method

2 pts – quality of presentation of your points, arguments, and analyses  
(10 Total possible points)

Abstract:

4 pts. – completeness (inclusion of appropriate elements)

1 pt. – quality of presentation of your points  
(5 Total possible points)

Letter grade equivalents:

Specific Aims:

10=A, 9=A-, 8=B+, 7=B, 6=B-, 5=C+, 4=C, 3=C-, 2=D, 1/0=F

Abstract:

5=A, 4=B, 3=C, 2=D, 1/0=F

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**Assignment 2: Submission of Draft Background and Significance section of R03 Project**

Due date: in class, Session 4

**Learning Objectives:** The purpose of this assignment is for students to be able to 1) conduct a preliminary literature review appropriate to their research question; 2) demonstrate inclusion of an appropriate theoretical/conceptual framework for their proposal; 3) demonstrate movement toward the ability to construct a “story” demonstrating the rationale of their choice of research question and research method.

**Specific Details:** This assignment should be single-spaced, with .5 inch margins in Arial 11 font, 2.5 pages for this section.

**Grading:** This assignment is worth 15% of the course grade; the grading scheme is based on the following criteria:

- 6 pts. – identification of literature appropriate to research question
  - 3 pts. – identification and inclusion of appropriate theoretical/conceptual framework for research question
  - 6 pts. – construction of sections moving towards cohesive conceptualization of research rationale
- (15 Total possible points)

Letter grade equivalents: 14-15=A, 13=A-, 12=B+, 10-11=B, 9=B-, 8=C+, 6-7=C, 5=C-, 4-5=D, 0-3=F

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**Assignment 3: Collegial Critique of Specific Aims and Abstract (1/2 page each)**

Due date: in class, Session 4

**Learning Objectives:** The purpose of this assignment is for students to be able to 1) provide critical review and analysis of research writing 2) in an informed, respectful, and collegial manner.

**Specific Details:** This assignment should be single-spaced, with .5 inch margins in Arial 11 font, ½ page for each section, maximum.

**Step One.** Assignment by instructor of a peer assignment for review.

**Step Two.** Review your colleague's work, and conduct a critical analysis of each piece.

Consider the following:

Specific Aims:

- Is the rationale for the study clearly stated?
- Is the method clearly outlined in the Aims?
- Are realistic and appropriate hypotheses present?
- Are implications of the study findings clearly stated?
- Is it professionally written?

Abstract:

- Is the abstract a concise summary of the study?
- Is it clearly and professionally written?

Also, consider the style with which you deliver your feedback. Feedback should be provided in clear, concise, and professional language. This assignment will be evaluated for tone in which feedback is given. How can you help the writer improve their product?

**Grading:** This assignment is worth 5% of the course grade; it represents one of three opportunities for review/feedback provision that total 15% of the course grade together. The grading scheme is based on the following criteria:

- 3 pts. – completeness and adequacy of analysis
  - 2 pts – quality/tone of presentation of your points, arguments, and analyses
- (5 Total possible points)

Letter grade equivalents: 5=A, 4=B, 3=C, 2=D, 1/0=F

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**Assignment 4: Submission of Draft Research Design and Method (4 pages)**

Due date: in class, Session 5

**Learning Objectives:** The purpose of this assignment is for students to be able to 1) identify elements of research method and design appropriate for their research question; 2) include discussion of how each element pertains to their project; and 3) construct a section written clearly and concisely, and demonstrating beginnings of command of basic grant writing skills

**Specific Details:** This analysis should be single-spaced, with .5 inch margins in Arial 11 font, 4 pages for this section.

**Grading:** This assignment is worth 20% of the course grade; the grading scheme is based on the following criteria:

- 6 pts. – identification of method appropriate to examine identified research question;
  - 6 pts. – inclusion of discussion of appropriate methodological elements (e.g., participants, recruitment, assessment, data analysis, etc.);
  - 6 pts. – construction of sections moving towards cohesive conceptualization of research method
  - 2 pts. – matching of method to proposed hypotheses/research question
- (20 Total possible points)

Letter grade equivalents: 18-20=A, 17=A-, 16=B+, 13-15=B, 12=B-, 11=C+, 8-10=C, 7=C-, 6=D, 0-5=F

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**Assignment 5: Collegial Critique of Background and Significance (1/2 page)**

Due date: in class, Session 5

**Learning Objectives:** The purpose of this assignment is for students to be able to 1) provide critical review and analysis of research writing 2) in an informed, respectful, and collegial manner.

**Specific Details:** This assignment should be single-spaced, with .5 inch margins in Arial 11 font, ½ page.

**Step One.** Assignment by instructor of a peer assignment for review.

**Step Two.** Review your colleague's work, and conduct a critical analysis. Consider the following:

- Does the “story” make sense: are the components presented in a logical order?
- Are all the components present, or are there ‘holes’ in the logic? If so, what are they? Are there a one or two, or many?
- Is there an appropriate theoretical/conceptual foundation provided?
- Is it clearly written?

Also, consider the style with which you deliver your feedback. Feedback should be provided in clear, concise, and professional language. This assignment will be evaluated for tone in which feedback is given. How can you help the writer improve their product?

**Grading:** This assignment is worth 5% of the course grade; it represents one of three opportunities for review/feedback provision that total 15% of the course grade together. The grading scheme is based on the following criteria:

- 3 pts. – completeness and adequacy of analysis
  - 2 pts – quality/tone of presentation of your points, arguments, and analyses
- (5 Total possible points)

Letter grade equivalents: 5=A, 4=B, 3=C, 2=D, 1/0=F

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**Assignment 6: Submission of Draft Human Subjects section (??? pages)**

Due date: in class, Session 6

**Learning Objectives:** The purpose of this assignment is for students to be able to 1) identify issues of the conduct of research with human subjects that are pertinent to their research question; 2) include discussion of how each issue pertains to their project; and 3) construct a section written clearly and concisely, and demonstrating beginnings of command of basic grant writing skills. Issues to be discussed include: Research risks and benefits; methods of minimizing risks; participants and methods of recruitment; inclusion of women, minorities, and children; confidentiality, and data safety and monitoring.

**Specific Details:** This analysis should be single-spaced, with .5 inch margins in Arial 11 font, unspecified pages for this section, dependent on study design.

**Grading:** This assignment is worth 10% of the course grade; the grading scheme is based on the following criteria:

- 5 pts. – identification of issues appropriate for student's study;
  - 5 pts. – construction of sections moving towards cohesive conceptualization of human subjects issues as pertinent to student's research
- (10 Total possible points)

Letter grade equivalents: 10=A, 9=A-, 8=B+, 7=B, 6=B-, 5=C+, 4=C, 3=C-, 2=D, 1/0=F

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**Assignment 7: Collegial Critique of Research Design and Method (1/2 page)**

Due date: in class, Session 6

**Learning Objectives:** The purpose of this assignment is for students to be able to 1) provide critical review and analysis of research writing 2) in an informed, respectful, and collegial manner.

**Specific Details:** This assignment should be single-spaced, with .5 inch margins in Arial 11 font, ½ page.

**Step One.** Assignment by instructor of a peer assignment for review.

**Step Two.** Review your colleague's work, and conduct a critical analysis. Consider the following:

- Is the method appropriate to examine the research question?
- Are the specified measures appropriate? Do they match up with the theoretical framework?
- Are the participants appropriate to test the hypotheses?
- Are the methods of recruitment reasonable?
- Is the location for research appropriate?
- Is what participants will experience clearly described, step by step?
- Is the section clearly written?

Also, consider the style with which you deliver your feedback. Feedback should be provided in clear, concise, and professional language. This assignment will be evaluated for tone in which feedback is given. How can you help the writer improve their product?

**Grading:** This assignment is worth 5% of the course grade; it represents one of three opportunities for review/feedback provision that total 15% of the course grade together. The grading scheme is based on the following criteria:

- 3 pts. – completeness and adequacy of analysis
  - 2 pts – quality/tone of presentation of your points, arguments, and analyses
- (5 Total possible points)

Letter grade equivalents: 5=A, 4=B, 3=C, 2=D, 1/0=F

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**Assignment 8: Submission of Draft Preliminary Studies section (1/2 page) for R03 Project**

Due date: in class, Session 7

**Learning Objectives:** The purpose of this assignment is for students to be able to 1) identify their strengths as they pertain to their ability to examine their identified research question, and 2) present this in written form with appropriate tone.

**Specific Details:** This analysis should be single-spaced , with .5 inch margins in Arial 11 font, 1/3 to 1/2 page in length.

**Grading:** This assignment is worth 5% of the course grade; the grading scheme is based on the following criteria:

4 pts. – identification and specification of strengths related to conduct of identified research project (inclusion of appropriate elements)

1 pt. – quality/tone of presentation of your points

(5 Total possible points)

Letter grade equivalents:     5=A, 4=B, 3=C, 2=D, 1/0=F

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**Assignment 9: Submission of Revised R03 Proposal (all sections)**

Due date: in class, Session 8

**Learning Objectives:** The purpose of this assignment is for students to be able to 1) develop a cohesive research proposal 2) while incorporating feedback from colleagues. The goal is to collaborate with colleagues, in order to allow students to create a strengthened proposal. Students should leave the course with a draft proposal narrative, in a form needing only little revision and supplementary materials for submission.

**Specific Details:** This product should be single-spaced, with .5 inch margins in Arial 11 font, approximately 8 pages for this section.

**Grading:** This assignment is worth 20% of the course grade; the grading scheme is based on the following criteria:

7 pts. – Provision of the following sections pertaining to the student’s research question:

- Specific Aims
- Background & Significance
- Preliminary Studies
- Research Design and Method
- Human Subjects

7 pts. – Incorporation of feedback from previous assignments into the above sections  
identification of method appropriate to examine identified research question;

6 pts. – quality/tone of presentation of your points, arguments, and analyses

(20 Total possible points)

Letter grade equivalents: 18-20=A, 17=A-, 16=B+, 13-15=B, 12=B-, 11=C+, 8-10=C, 7=C-, 6=D, 0-5=F