

USUHS

Graduate Program in Neuroscience

Thesis Research Proposal

(revised 12/13/07)

A research plan describing the proposed dissertation research project shall be formulated and written by each neuroscience graduate student with the advice of the thesis advisor. The intent of the written dissertation research plan is to present a focused and scholarly presentation of a research problem and plan of experiments. The relatively early presentation of the plan in the research training of the student is intended to promote critical and analytical thinking, focused research effort, and extensive interaction with the thesis advisory committee throughout the research. The research plan will be prepared and presented to the thesis advisory committee within 1 year subsequent to advancement to candidacy. Exceptions to this timetable must be approved (in advance) by the student's thesis committee and the Neuroscience Program executive committee.

The format of the dissertation research plan will be that of a research proposal component of an Individual National Research Service Award application (NIH pre-doctoral fellowship). The written dissertation research plan will be distributed to the thesis advisory committee for review prior to an oral presentation and discussion of the plan. A majority of the committee must approve the plan with or without modifications. Substantive modifications will be incorporated into a revised proposal. A copy of the approved proposal and written notification of its approval by the committee will be provided to the director of the Graduate Program in Neuroscience. Subsequent to the approval of the written thesis research plan and with the approval of the thesis committee, the student's research plan may be altered to reflect new information and/or unexpected experimental results.

The written dissertation research plan will consist of an Abstract, Research Plan, and Literature Cited. Since these proposal sections follow the format of the NIH pre-doctoral fellowship, you should use the instructions for form PHS 416-1 (<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/416/phs416.htm>) to write the applicable sections.

Abstract: One page

(corresponds with Research Proposal Description PHS 416-1 item 19)

Research Plan: Ten page limit

(corresponds with PHS 416-1 Research Training Plan instructions section 7 parts A-D)

The Research Plan should be divided into four sections with the following recommended page limits: **Specific Aims (A)**; **Background and Significance (B)**; **Preliminary Studies** (if applicable, C); **Research Design and Methods (D)**. The ten page limit includes all tables and figures, but does not include the list of literature cited.

Literature Cited: No page limit.

(corresponds with PHS 416-1 Research Training Plan instructions section 7 part G)

Appendix: optional

(corresponds with PHS 416-1 Research Training Plan instructions section 8)