

# TECH 4943 Senior Project Planning Seminar

## Guidelines for the Project Proposal

**FORMAT** The MLA Handbook 6<sup>th</sup> edition will be used to evaluate form and style with the following **exceptions** and clarifications.

**Page numbers:** The first page after the table of contents will be PAGE 1. This will be the page where your project summary begins. Pages before this will be lower case roman numerals (i, ii, iii, etc. or shall be omitted altogether). Follow the MLA convention for page number headers on pages 1 and following.

**Cover Page:** Use the cover page guidelines below.

**First Page:** Top Margin is 2 inches to the top of the “Project Summary” heading

**Font:** Only Times New Roman or Courier style fonts are acceptable.

**Works Cited URLs:** Shorten URLs to a useful length. See instructor if unsure.

**COVER PAGE** Each student will design a cover page which contains the following:

Project Title

Student’s Name

Date Submitted

Course Number and Course Name

Department of Engineering Technology

The University of Memphis

Cover page will be center justified, maximum letter height of 14 point. Long titles (greater than 25 characters) must conform to inverted pyramid style.

**TABLE OF CONTENTS** Include a table of contents after the cover page.

**PROJECT SUMMARY** (250 to 350 words) The summary is an informative abstract of the proposal that briefly outlines the most important points. It may contain a brief description of the problem, proposed solution and benefit. You need to convince your reader that this project has value.

**INTRODUCTION** (600 to 900 words) Provide background information on the project.

If the nature of the project is one in which you are proposing a solution to a problem for a company be sure to set the stage by including the industry in general, company if applicable, and department if applicable. Continue with an explanation of the problem or situation that is being addressed in the thesis. How has the situation developed and why is it significant? How important is the solution to this problem? Describe the how the existing technology works. Describe how the new technology works and why it is better. **Conclude with a bullet list of the specific objectives for this thesis. These objectives must be measurable and/or observable.**

*or*

If the project is one in which you are proposing a new design for a product or service be sure to set the stage by including similar projects/products already available on the market and how your design will be different or better. Continue with an explanation of the value of your design. Describe the how the existing technology works. Describe how the new technology works and why it is better. **Conclude with a bullet list of the specific objectives for this thesis. These objectives must be measurable and/or observable.**

*or*

If the project is one in which you are repairing equipment for the department and developing a lab exercise be sure to mention the course in which the lab will be performed, discuss the objectives for the lab exercise, explain how the equipment should work, and how these learning objectives are used in industry. **Conclude with a bullet list of the specific objectives for this thesis. These objectives must be measurable and/or observable.**

**PLAN OF THE WORK** (300 to 500 words) Document the plan to be implemented in achieving the specific objectives listed in the Introduction. This section must convince the reader that you know exactly what needs to be done and how long it will take.

This documentation will take three forms. The first item is a Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) that lists every task that will have to be completed and how long it will take in hours. Your project must have a minimum of 15 technical tasks required for completion. Points will be deducted if there are fewer than 15 technical tasks.

Task	Time to Complete in Hours
Total Man-hours	#

Table 1 Work Breakdown Structure

The second item is a Gantt or PERT Chart produced using appropriate software. Regardless of the format there needs to be a detailed explanation using the Work Breakdown Structure approach and define the exact tasks and sub-tasks that must be completed (when the task is scheduled to start and when it is expected to finish), the deliverables and their associated due dates, the predecessors and if working as a team a description of who is responsible for each task. A typical project will require approximately 80 hours of technical work and 40 hours of documentation.

Teams of two or more also need to stipulate who is responsible for each task. The project will require an additional 50 hours per team member. (i.e. a two person team will require a total of 170 hours of work.)

The third item is a diagram that describes the major elements of the project and how they are related. Examples include a system block diagram, an initial schematic diagram for a circuit, flowchart for a program, process flow diagram, etc

**QUALIFICATIONS** (200 to 500 words) Normally this section would include an explanation of your qualifications, work experience, education, and certification, to complete this project. Since this is an academic exercise this section will be used to demonstrate the integrative and capstone nature of the project. Consequently, in this section list each course you have taken at the University that provided you with the skills and knowledge to complete this project. Next to each course specify the topic(s) that was covered in that course and how it will apply to the project. Work or military related experience should also be included, but in narrative form.

Courses	Topics Covered	Skills Application

Table 2 Summary of Relevant Educational Background

**FACILITIES, EQUIPMENT and MATERIALS** (300 to 500 words) Describe the equipment, computer hardware/software, and human resources needed to complete the project. Specify the parts and equipment that will be used, and people who will assist in implementation.

Part Name	Part Number	Company	Quantity	Price	Availability Shipping Time/Cost	Cost to Student	Supplied by U of M or Company

Table 3 Summary of Cost Expenditures

Name	Position	Company	Task

Table 4 Summary of Human Resource Requirements

**EVALUATION** (200 to 300 words) What measure(s) will you and I employ to evaluate your success at reaching the objectives of the project? How will you document your success? Each project must be demonstrated in person to the instructor of record or his/her designee. The success must also be documented on paper to be included in the final written project report.

Objective	Measure of Success	Documentation of Success
This should match the bullet list in the introduction.	How will you determine if that objective has been met?	What evidence will be provided in the final technical report?

Table 5 Summary of Criteria Defining Success

**LIMITATIONS** (200 to 500 words) These include both limitations on the scope of your project, (i.e. you are building a better wheel, not a better car) and, on the limitations of the equipment, software, computers, capital, and expertise available to you. Give this section serious consideration. Consider all the things that are project related that can go wrong. Do not include the potential problems for you personally such as illness, accident, job relocation, etc. (Remember equipment can break, assigned duties at work can change, and a faculty member can take ill...) What is your back-up plan?

**CONCLUSION** (200 to 500 words) Summarize your project proposal.

**APPENDICES** (Optional) This section contains supplementary material that is too lengthy to include in the main body of the proposal or that is of interest to only a few readers.

**WORKS CITED** – Use the MLA format for documenting references. There must be at least **five** references. They must be less than five years old. You may include Journal articles, web postings, reference books, textbooks, and interviews. *You may not use web postings and/or interviews exclusively.* Computer projects require references less than **two** years old except where related to a specific piece of hardware. You will be graded on format, quantity and quality of the references. Points will be deducted if references are cited that do not relate to the project. See the MLA handbook regarding alphabetization.

**GRADED WORK** You must include your graded “mini proposal” in the back of your notebook.

Notes:

- a) **IMPORTANT:** You must introduce and conclude any major diagram or table. Any section of the paper that only includes a diagram will not be evaluated for credit (you will get zero points for that section, no matter how nice the diagram is). Diagrams and tables are **EXCLUDED** from the word count.
- b) The inclusion of photographs, diagrams, screen captures, etc. is encouraged. But, if used, each figure must have a number, caption, and the source cited. Also, figures appearing in the body of the paper **MUST** be referenced by the text and discussed in detail (at least 1 paragraph). Figures not referenced by the text can be included in the appendices only.
- c) One of the grading criteria includes a demonstration of the use of technology. This includes the ability to use word processing software efficiently, (use of proper formatting including tabs, page breaks, section breaks, headers/footers, page numbers etc.) This includes the proper insertion of files that contain photos, diagrams etc.
- d) Grading criteria includes but is not limited to, spelling, grammar and readability.
- e) Avoid colloquialisms, contractions. Do not use first or second person. Avoid repetition.

The complete proposal document is to be included in a single MS Word file. You will submit a hardcopy of your proposal as well as send me your Word file by email.

