

Blank Draft Pre-Proposal Outline

The purpose of this form is to provide the initial information that the coordinator needs to assist you in the proposal process. Please provide the information in the format described below. If you have any questions, please contact the STAR Coordinator, Josh Falk at falkj@si.edu or 443-482-2296.

Name:

Date:

Email Address:

Phone Number:

Title

This is going to be in the form of a question. What is going to be the title of your study? This should be very specific and your experiment should answer the question. For example, if you are interested in studying crab limb loss, your title could be “Is there a difference in frequency of limb loss between males and females of the Maryland blue crab, *Callinectes sapidus*, located in the Rhode River and Mid-Portion of the Chesapeake Bay?” After reading this title, the reader knows very specifically what the study and data are going to tell. **Writing a good question is the most critical decision of the research process** and should be drafted and reviewed several times before submitting a formal proposal. After receiving the pre-proposal, Ms. Erb will help you draft a specific question for your project.

Statement of Problem

This is a broad statement indicating the goals of your project.

Relevance of the project

This is where you address how this is useful or how it fits into the bigger picture of the project. You should talk about any previous related research you have read about and how your project was inspired by that work.

Research Objective

A research objective is a clear statement of the specific purposes of the study. For example: “The purpose of this study is to determine the distribution of phytoplankton within the Rhode River.”

Hypothesis

This is a tentative prediction or outcome of your research. **AVOID USING PERSONAL PRONOUNS WHEN WRITING THIS STATEMENT.** If you have questions about that see Ms. Erb.

Research Methods or Procedures

This section is a step-by-step set of directions of what you are going to do during your study. I suggest a numbered statement for each step. If you read the statement and don't know how to get the information, you need to do more research and determine how you will get that information. It should be specific. It should include possible locations,

materials, testing kits or procedures. This section may be broken down into a couple of sections. For instance if you have to build a collection device you could have an “Assembly of Device” section and a “Testing Procedures” section.

References

Please list alphabetically by author the resources that you used. It should be written in a citation form. There are examples listed below. If your source does not have an author, please contact Ms. Erb.

Books:

Author’s last name. First initial. Middle initial. Year of copyright. Title (In italics). City of Publication: Publisher.

For Example:

Warner. W. W. 1994. *Beautiful Swimmers: Watermen, Crabs, and the Chesapeake Bay*. Boston: Back Bay Books.

Sumich. J.L. 1996. *An Introduction to the Biology of Marine Life Sixth Edition*. Dubuque: Wm. C. Brown Publishers.

Articles:

Author’s last name. First Initial. Middle Initial. Year of Publication. Title of Article. Title of Journal or Magazine (In Italics) Volume number: Page Numbers.

For Example:

Alexander. L.M. 1993. Large marine ecosystems. *Marine Policy* 17: 186-198.

Gallegos. C.L. 1992. Phytoplankton photosynthesis, productivity, and species composition in a eutrophic estuary: comparison of bloom and non-bloom assemblages. *Marine Ecology Progress Series*. 81:237-267

Internet Sites

Author’s Last Name. First Initial. Middle Initial. Year Web Site was updated. Title of web site. Date of Retrieval. Web address.

For Example:

Van der Heijden, A. (2003) Student Training in Aquatic Research. May 26th, 2004. <http://www.serc.si.edu/education/STAR/>.