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**University of Southern Mississippi**

**Eagle Scholars Program for Undergraduate Research (Eagle SPUR)**

**NARRATIVE GUIDELINES FOR PROPOSAL APPLICATION**

(adapted from Proposal Guidelines at George Mason University)

This application is for a competitive grant. Therefore, you should always use complete sentences and a professional tone. Your audience is the Eagle Scholars Program for Undergraduate Research (Eagle SPUR) Proposal Review Subcommittee, an interdisciplinary group with faculty representatives from across campus. Be sure to explain concepts and define acronyms clearly that will not be familiar to a general collegiate audience. The process of completing this application increases your written communication skills and general understanding of the research process.

Both the student proposal application form and the faculty support form may be downloaded at the CUR website ([www.usm.edu/research/cur](http://www.usm.edu/research/cur)). The student proposal is submitted on-line (directions may be found on the website). The faculty form, however, should be emailed directly to CUR at cur@usm.edu. All materials are due by posted deadline.

In preparing your proposal, use Times New Roman type in 12 pt font. All text for each section must fit within the box space provided on the form. Additional text will not be considered.

**Short Cover Letter**

In this section, the applicant should write a short personal statement addressed to the review

committee summarizing the proposed project and your personal goals and expectations. Be specific about how this project fits into your broader educational and professional goals. Using personal pronouns may be very appropriate here. Please include a statement about the origination of the project idea, such as “This project is part of the ongoing research in my professor’s group (or some other research setting)” or “I came up with this idea when…” Also be sure to mention whether the project will receive course credit. Answer the question: *Why are you interested in this project?*

**Timeline**

Here you will provide in this section a description of how you will invest the semester to complete the project. Consult with your faculty mentor regarding the different sections of the project and provide the review committee with a plan of work including detailed timetables for the semester. Be clear what work you will perform during the semester you receive funding. If the work will not span the entire semester of funding, you must outline how your 150 hours will be accomplished, including how your schedule will accommodate the time commitment required. Answer the question: *How will you schedule your time?*

**Introduction**

This paragraph should clearly define the scholarly question and provide a discipline-specific context and rationale for the project. The applicant should identify how this work will add to the “big picture” by contributing to the knowledge of the discipline. How will this original project address a knowledge-gap in your field? The applicant should cite appropriate research and/or creative literature using in-text citations. Creative and/or performance based projects may describe the work of others as exemplars. Answer the questions: *What is your project and why is it significant?*

**Process**

In this section, you should describe the creative process, research design, and/or methods you will employ to complete the project. A description of materials and equipment necessary to complete the project should be included. If you need resources not available at Southern Miss (e.g., a unique instrument or manuscript) to complete the project, you should obtain access to those resources before submitting your proposal and include a statement to that effect in this section. Answer the question: *What will you do to answer your question or complete your creative activity?*

**Expected Outcomes**

Describe the anticipated outcomes, products and/or results of the project. It should be clear to the review committee how these results will contribute to the scholarly and/or creative community. Identify where the project outcomes may be shared, e.g., the annual Southern Miss Undergraduate Research Symposium, a professional conference, a submitted publication, a juried show and/or performance, etc. Answer the questions: *What will you produce? How will your results/creative activity be disseminated in your field?*

**Budget**

The total award can be up to $1000. The student should submit an itemized budget for materials, supplies, research related travel and/or student stipend along with a short justification for each entry. In this section, you should indicate how the funding will be used to support your project. For stipends, you **must** justify why you need this type of support; for example, you may indicate that these funds will be compensation for your time and/or travel related to the project. For materials and supplies, preliminary prices and sources should be included (check with your mentor about what is allowable under university policies). It is expected that you will have investigated the possibility of sharing equipment/computer software/books commonly available on campus; otherwise you must explain their inclusion in your budget. Also, any travel expenses being requested must be outlined using the CUR Student Travel Budget Estimation form. If you are receiving additional funding for the project from other sources, such as The Honors College or McNair Program, be sure to indicate that too.

**All funds that are not used for the project will be returned to the Drapeau Center for Undergraduate Research.**

**Bibliography**

This section should include a bibliography of all citations mentioned in your text. You may also include other sources that were not cited but that are relevant to your project, thereby demonstrating an appreciation of the general background literature. You may use the bibliographic formatting style that is standard in your discipline.

**Proposal Submission**

All materials, both the student application and the mentor application, should be emailed to JO Ann Johnson at cur@usm.edu. Proposals must be received by 5 pm on the posted deadline; late proposals will not be accepted.

**Questions? Please contact CUR**

Email: cur@usm.edu

Phone: 601-266-5997