Tips for a Successful UROP Proposal

1. Be complete. Fill out all required fields. Make sure all details are accurate (especially e-mail). Answer all the questions. Submit it on time!

2. Give yourself time to discuss the proposal and project with your faculty sponsor. He/she is there to help ensure that you have a successful project. You should write a draft, have it reviewed by at least your faculty sponsor and make corrections. A second reader who is not completely familiar with your project can be very helpful.

3. Write clearly. Your audience is educated and intelligent but not necessarily someone who is familiar with your particular field. Don’t use jargon or abbreviations. Make sure your proposal includes complete sentences and accurate spelling and punctuation.

4. Read the directions carefully. There are a number of things that are required in your proposal such as a budget, a research question and methodology. Make sure your proposal is complete. If you have questions, ask! There are many people who are happy to help you with this.

5. Include references. No one’s research is dropping into a void. Make it clear that you know what has been done in your area in the past and where your research will fit in. If you have questions about this, your faculty sponsor is the best person to talk with about your area of research (or you wouldn’t have chosen him/her as your sponsor!).

6. Be sure that you have a research question that is answerable. It should be clear to all your readers what it is that you are researching. It should also be clear what methods you will be using to find the answer. Your reader should have a clear picture in his/her head of what your project entails and what activities you will be carrying out. Projects must have an analytical component.

7. What is the end goal of your project? What will you produce to demonstrate what you have accomplished (a poster, a paper)? Be sure to include this in your proposal.

Common Comments on Non-Approved Proposals
--research question is poorly defined
--no mention of relationship of project to faculty sponsor’s research/expertise
--no literature citations
--proposal is unclear in terms of methodology
--realistic timeframe not included
--importance of research not discussed
--faculty recommendation is not strong, lack of strong sponsor support for project
--outcome(s) of project unclear
--project doesn’t’ entail real research (might be administrative or data collection without analysis)