

UNIVERSITY OF DENVER
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY
Guidelines for Graduate Student Research
Proposals Submitted to GRAF

The Graduate Affairs Committee (GRAF) oversees a small budget to assist students with expenses related to conducting their research. Research proposals submitted to GRAF should follow the guidelines below. Preparation of research proposals and submission to the GRAF committee is intended to give students training in preparation for future submissions of grant proposals. Consequently, if the committee finds that the proposal is lacking in information required to assess its scientific merit or if the proposal does not meet the guidelines, the student may be asked to revise and resubmit.

A. Length and Format of Research Plan: The length of the proposal should be five to ten pages (typed and double-spaced). The format should include the following subsections.

1. **Purpose of the Study:** Refer to key literature in the area, but do not try to present a comprehensive literature review. Emphasize the rationale, purpose, and design of the study. Indicate whether you are requesting support for dissertation, Master's, or other research. All masters and dissertation projects must have already been approved by the prospectus committee before applying for support. (Because students in Developmental may not have a prospectus committee for masters research, they will only need approval of their advisor.)

2. **Method:** Present a relatively detailed description of the subject population, instruments, measures, and data collection procedures.

3. **Data Analysis:** Although it often is not possible to anticipate precisely what data analyses you will conduct, present the most reasonable data analysis plan you can.

4. **Significance of the Research:** In a paragraph, tell why the proposed research is interesting and important. What theoretical or applied implications might one draw from the results? In what new directions might this research take you?

5. **References** (pages for references are not included in the 5-10 page limit)

B. Approvals

1. **Prospectus:** GRAF requires that all masters and dissertation projects submitted for GRAF funding have already been approved by the prospectus committee before applying for support. It is necessary to have this because on occasion GRAF funded aspects of projects that turned out to be dropped. Because we have such a limited budget, we need to ensure that what we fund are actual expenses for a project that will actually happen. Please have your advisor indicate that your project has been approved.

2. **Ethics:** Funds cannot be awarded for projects until they have been approved by the IRB. State whether the status of your Ethics proposal is: Approved (give the date) or Submitted. If only submitted, the award of your funds will be held up until you document notice of approval.

C. Budget. Submit an itemized budget. You may list all your expenses, but you should recognize that no one has ever received more than \$500.00, and the average award has been about \$200.00. Use the conventional categories: Personnel, supplies, subject payment, equipment, and other (where relevant). Be specific, e.g., hourly wage for undergraduate assistant to run subjects, cost of specific supplies or equipment, rate of payment to subjects, etc.

We realize that the cost of your research may exceed \$500. However, GRAF will not review your proposal unless you submit a budget of \$500 or less. So, prioritize your expenses! If as an addendum, you wish to present your complete budget, you can; but GRAF needs to work from a budget of \$500 or less.

Be sure to justify your budget. The justification for your budget will be judged along with the proposal's scientific merit.

Requests for equipment will not be granted if the equipment already is available in the Department.

If you receive a GRAF award, you do not receive a check for the award amount. Instead you submit receipts for your expenses to Laurel, who then reimburses you from your GRAF account. Therefore, you must save receipts! And you must have receipts for all subject payments. In some cases, you may get an advance for subject payments (see Laurel for details); you must still, however, submit subject payment receipts.

D. Past, GRAF Support: List all past GRAF support you have received for research or travel. List the research project or trip, the amount, and the date of award.

E. Advisor Approval & Support: List amount of support that your advisor is giving you for this research. Have your advisor send an email to Paula stating 1) whether they approve of the proposal and 2) certifying that the amount of support stated is correct (even if the amount is zero). List realistic **potential** non-GRAF sources of support for this project (e.g., GSTF).

E. Advice. Ask your faculty adviser to comment on your proposal **before** you submit it to GRAF.