

# Research Opportunities

## Graduate Psychology & Counseling Request for Proposals

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Students are always asking about getting involved with faculty in research. One option for getting involved with projects in this department is to respond to a request for a research proposal from a faculty member. You will send the proposal directly to the faculty member. The faculty member may then (based on your proposal) choose to mentor you in further developing your project and carrying out the project with them. You will read the articles provided to get an idea of the breath of the topic and go on to read more, so that you can write a proper proposal. You may use this proposal to fulfill a requirement in any class to which it applies.

**Q. How do I go about knowing the interest of the faculty members?**

A. The School of Graduate Psychology & Counseling has set up a web page that displays faculty research areas.

**Q. Do I have to use the reference articles in the RFP in my paper? What if I find better articles?**

A. The RFP includes a basic reading list to get you started. You will almost certainly find articles that are more directly focused on the research question that you develop.

**Q. Isn't the research question already in the RFP?**

A. In general, the RFP will point you in a general direction. You will need to develop a strong research question and hypothesis from your review of the literature.

**Q. If I complete a response to a Request for Proposals, does the faculty member have to work with me?**

A. Individual faculty may only mentor a limited number of research students, and so your submission of a proposal that extends original research in their area is a good way to begin to form a research relationship. As with any response to an RFP, there is no guarantee that submitting a proposal to a faculty will automatically lead to a mentoring relationship; however, an excellent proposal can be very convincing – so strive for excellence!

**Q. How will the faculty member know that I am working on a response?**

A. The faculty member will find out when you submit your proposal to them. You may want to let the faculty member know that you are working on a response to their RFP by sending them a short letter of intent – they may want to encourage your work or have suggestions about your ideas.

**Q. Are there any benefits to responding to a Request for Proposals?**

A. In addition to getting head start in reviewing the literature, responding to a Request for Proposals is a skill that will help you in grant writing, as well as in developing research questions within a broader research agenda. It is also easier to find a research mentor, because you will have some knowledge about what topics faculty are interested in. Finally, your personal involvement in developing the research question, hypotheses, methods, and gathering and interpreting pilot data will greatly improve (not guarantee) the likelihood that a future research mentor may be able to access research assistant scholarships to support you in your research.

**Q. What if I have a great idea that doesn't fit any of the Requests for Proposals?**

A. The faculty are interested in any quality research ideas that students develop. If you have a great research question that you want to work on under the mentorship of a faculty member, use the published RFPs to identify the faculty whose interests are closest to yours, and then submit your completed paper to them with a cover letter.