Course Syllabus — 2018 Fall Quarter NSF GRFP Shortcourse
Writing Graduate Research Fellowships: BIOS 271

Course Description: The National Science Foundation (NSF) supports a nationally competitive Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP) that provides 3 years of funding for graduate study. In this course, we will focus on grantsmanship and writing to a set of review criteria with a focus on the NSF GRFP application. Students draft a 2-page research proposal and 3-page personal, relevant background and future goals statement. Small group peer review sessions will allow students to practice providing and receiving effective feedback to improve the clarity of their writing.

Instructors:
Ský Brubaker, PhD  skyb@stanford.edu
Jennifer Wilson, PhD  wilsonjl@stanford.edu
Crystal Botham, PhD  cbotham@stanford.edu

Meeting time: Wednesdays Aug 1, Aug 8, Aug 15, Aug 22; 2:00-4:00 pm; LKSC 308

Office hours: Aug 2; Shriram 213; 3:15-4:15 pm
Aug 16; Shriram 213; 3:15-4:15 pm
Aug 23; Shriram 213; 3:15-4:15 pm

Goals: The primary goal of this course is to provide grantsmanship training using the NSF GRFP as a model application. Ancillary goals include:
- Familiarity with the general structure of grant applications
- Understanding of the review process
- Practice drafting, revising, and editing grant proposal documents
- Understanding effective communication skills
- Practice providing and receiving critical feedback on scientific writing
- Improved clarity in scientific writing

Structure: We will switch between lectures and peer review sessions to provide insight as well as feedback for your application. Lectures during week 1 and 3 will present relevant information for the Research Statement and the Personal Statement. We will follow the lectures with personal perspectives from both graduate students, who have written the grant, and faculty members, who have mentored successful applicants. We will have time for a question and answer session with our guest speakers. During week 2 and 4, students bring drafts of their Research Statement (week 2) and Personal Statement (week 4) and the class time will be activity-based allowing students to give and receive direct feedback on proposal documents.

Attendance and preparation: With only 4 classes, weekly attendance and participation is critical. Your attendance is necessary to receive feedback on your writing from peers. In addition, your peers are depending on you to provide feedback on their writing. If you must miss a class, email Sky or Jennifer.

Grading: Pass/No Pass based on attendance and preparation
Course Outline
Class 1 (Aug 1st): Research Statement Lecture
- Introductions
- GFRP general information and basic requirements
- Lecture on Research Statement
- Graduate student and faculty perspectives, with Q&A

Class 2 (Aug 8th): Research Statement Review
- General practices for peer review
- Peer review of Research Statement

Class 3 (Aug 15th): Personal Statement Lecture
- Lecture on Personal Statement
- Graduate student and faculty perspectives, with Q&A

Class 4 (Aug 22th): Personal Statement Review
- Course feedback online survey
- Peer review of Personal Statement

Additional, optional resources:
https://www.nsfgrfp.org/
https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2016/nsf16588/nsf16588.htm#review
http://grfpessayinsights.missouri.edu

The Grant Application Writer’s Workbook NSF by Stephen W. Russell and David C. Morrison;
Available to purchase here: http://www.grantcentral.com or check-out at Lane Course Reserves in
Lane Medical Library for up to 28 days and renewed up to three times.

Confidentiality and Nondisclosure Rules: To participate in the course, students are prohibited from:
- Sharing applications, proposals, or meeting materials with anyone who has not been officially
designated to participate in the peer review process, including but not limited to colleagues, lab
members, fellows, or students.
- Disclosing, in any manner, information about the discussions, evaluations, or documents to anyone
who has not been officially designated to participate in the peer review process, including but not
limited to a colleague, lab member, fellow, or student.
- Using information contained in an application or proposal for his/her personal benefit or making such
information available for the personal benefit of any other individual or organization.