**Independent Investigative Inquiry (III)**

**Discovery Project Proposal Form**

Students who choose Discovery can expect to learn and develop the skills of designing a research question, and the methods involved in answering that question through data collection and analysis.

Your Project Proposal should be brief; in addition to the Cover Sheet, Project Timeline, Human and Animal Subjects Form, and Faculty Mentor Statement, it should be 3-4 pages, double spaced, 12-point font, and clearly describe what you plan to do. You are welcome to use images or graphs to help convey your plan. Key items to include in your Project Proposal are:

1. Background & Hypothesis
2. Study Design & Methods, to include:
   1. *Population (inclusion/exclusion criteria; recruitment procedures)*
   2. *Sample Size (ideal vs. achievable)*
   3. *Variables and how they will be measured (outcomes; exposures; potential confounders)*
   4. *Procedures for data acquisition (attach data sheets, questionnaires, etc.)*
   5. *Methods for data analysis*
3. Expected Significance of Results
4. Clearly define your role in the project
5. Preliminary Literature Search (5-10 references that address your research question)

You will work with a **Faculty Mentor** who may be any UWSOM faculty member with an Affiliate, Clinical, or Regular faculty appointment, including those at the Instructor level. Fellows and residents are **not** eligible to be a mentor or co-mentor. Your Faculty Mentor must be experienced with the topic and methods used in the study. Their role is to help you plan your study, meet with you regularly (weekly at minimum) during the execution of the project, review your poster for the Medical Student III Poster Session, and provide an evaluation of your work.

If your Faculty Mentor doesnot have a UWSOM faculty appointment, you will need a **Faculty Co-mentor** who does have a UWSOM faculty appointment. In this case, a Faculty Co-mentor is needed in order to provide assistance through UWSOM in case issues arise, and to be able to submit an evaluation of your work. If you have a Faculty Co-mentor, you will still work primarily with your Faculty Mentor and check in with your Faculty Co-mentor throughout the summer as needed. More detail on Faculty Mentors can be found here: [*Information for* *Faculty Mentors*](https://sites.uw.edu/somcurr2/iii-scholarship-requirement/information-for-faculty-mentors/).

If you undertake a project as part of a **funded program** here at UW or externally, the project may be used to fulfill the III requirement. However, you are still required to submit a III proposal for this work. If you plan to do such a program, please contact the Triple I Team (somiii@uw.edu) first so we can make sure this can meet the Triple I requirement.

Projects that will be conducted at an **international** site, and not through GHIP, will need to be reviewed by the Director of Medical Student Scholarship in the Fall prior to project proposal submission. If the Project Proposal is approved, the student **must** attend the mandatory UW Study Abroad Safety Pre-orientation. Depending on the project’s program, students may also be required to attend site-specific or on-site orientations as well.

**PROPOSAL SUBMISSION**

Completed proposals should be saved in **PDF** **format** and **must be submitted by March 22, 2025** through the Triple I Canvas site. A committee of reviewers will either approve the proposal or ask that the proposal be revised. Students can expect to receive notification of the committee’s decision by end of April.

**PROPOSAL EVALUATION**

Project proposals are evaluated using the following eight criteria:

1. Student clearly describes the purpose of the project and a well-defined, testable hypothesis or question that is suitable for a 8-week summer project and the student’s level of research experience.
2. Student demonstrates understanding of why studying this question or hypothesis is important, and clearly describes what needs to be done to complete the project.
3. Methods to be used for data collection and data analysis are clearly described and appropriate for the goal of the research. Also, the student’s role in the analysis of data and interpretation of results is clearly described.
4. Student demonstrates understanding of how the results of the project will contribute to the knowledge in this field.
5. Student clearly defines their “independent role” that allows them to make “an intellectual contribution to the project.” This is especially important for students who will be doing a sub-project within a larger project. The proposal must clearly define the student’s discrete project for which they are personally responsible and should be independent from other post-graduate researchers including post-graduate fellows, clinical fellows, or residents.
6. Timeline is sufficiently detailed to convince the reviewer that the project will be completed within 8 weeks to ensure meeting the poster presentation requirement in the Fall.
7. If applicable, the proposal describes specific plans for obtaining Human Subjects or Animal Use and Care Committee approval in advance of the project start date. Please note that projects which require approval from multiple IRBs (including international projects and those conducted at the VA, which will also require UW IRB approval) should **explicitly state** how this will be accomplished. Students are highly encouraged to obtain a free consultation with the UW IRB medical student specialist. Regardless of research location, all UWSOM medical students are considered an “entity of the University of Washington” and must follow UW IRB regulations if participating on any patient-related research projects.
8. Faculty Mentor provides a statement describing the student’s expected role in the project, their plan to provide appropriate and regular supervision throughout the 8 weeks (weekly at minimum), and their signature indicating their commitment to helping the student have a successful scholarly experience.

**FINAL PRODUCT**

Discovery students are required to present a **poster** at the Medical Student Poster Session held in the Fall of their second year. Your **Faculty Mentor** must review your poster prior printing it for the Poster Session, and complete a Faculty Mentor evaluation form of your work, also in the Fall.

Please see [How to Write Your Discovery Project Proposal](https://education.uwmedicine.org/curriculum/medical-student-scholarship/starthere/scholarship-of-discovery/discovery-project-proposal/) for additional information. For other questions, please contact us at [somiii@uw.edu](mailto:somcurr@uw.edu).

**Independent Investigative Inquiry (III)**

**Discovery Project Proposal Coversheet**

Please submit completed Project Proposals in **PDF format** by **March 22, 2025** through the Triple I Canvas site. Students can expect to receive notification of the committee’s decision by beginning of May.

**Questions?** Please contact us at [somiii@uw.edu](mailto:somiii@uw.edu)

## Project Information

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Title |  |
| Location |  |
| Category (Laboratory-based, Clinical research, Health Services, QI, etc) |  |

### Student Information

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name |  |
| UW Email Address |  |
| Phone |  |
| First-year Site |  |

## Faculty Mentor Information

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name & Degrees (e.g. M.D.) |  |
| Faculty Title |  |
| Do you hold a UWSOM Faculty appointment (yes, no) |  |
| Department & Institution |  |
| UW Box Number (if applicable) |  |
| Street Address, City, State, Zip |  |
| Email Address and Phone |  |

## Faculty Co-Mentor Information

## (Complete this section only if your Faculty Mentor does not hold a UWSOM Faculty Appointment)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name & Degrees (e.g., M.D.) |  |
| Faculty Title |  |
| Department & Institution |  |
| UW Box Number (if applicable) |  |
| Street Address, City, State, Zip |  |
| Email Address and Phone |  |

**Project Description**

Be as explicit as possible in your description. Please refer to the above instructions which outline the criteria by which applications are reviewed. Be sure to include the following in your outline of the project, not to exceed the available space (approximately 3 pages).

1. **Background &** **Hypothesis**
2. **Study Design & Methods, to include:**
   1. *Population (inclusion/exclusion criteria; recruitment procedures)*
   2. *Sample Size (ideal vs. achievable)*
   3. *Variables and how they will be measured (outcomes; exposures; potential confounders)*
   4. *Procedures for data acquisition (attach data sheets, questionnaires, etc.)*
   5. *Methods for data analysis*
3. **Expected Significance of Results**
4. **Clearly define your role in the project**
5. **Preliminary Literature Search (5-10 references that address your research question)**

**Project Description (continued)**

**Project Description (continued)**

**Project Timeline**

Your project timeline should allow you to complete the project before the second year begins in September.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Tasks to be completed** |
| Week 1 |  |
| Week 2 |  |
| Week 3 |  |
| Week 4 |  |
| Week 5 |  |
| Week 6 |  |
| Week 7 |  |
| Week 8 |  |

**Human and Animal Subjects**

If your project involves human subjects, your Project Proposal must address how you will obtain any required Institutional Review Board (IRB) approvals in advance of the project start date. Similarly, if the project involves animal use, this will require approval from the Animal Care and Use Committee (ACUC). You must have any required approvals granted prior to starting your project.

Students, with the assistance of their Faculty Mentors, are responsible for determining IRB requirements. Your Faculty Mentor should be well versed in what approval has already been granted and what approval is required for you to engage in the project. If you are unsure what approval is required, you can contact the UW Human Subjects Division (HSD) at [hsdinfo@uw.edu](mailto:hsdinfo@uw.edu).

**It is the responsibility of the Faculty Mentor to assist students with submission of UW and other pertinent IRB or IACUC applications as early as possible** and **no later than April 1, 2025**, regardless of where research is taking place.

## Yes No

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Does the project require IRB review or a determination of exemption? |  |  |
| **If yes, has the project been approved by an Institutional Review Board or has a Determination of Exemption by HSD?**  \_\_\_\_ **Yes**, this project has been granted IRB approval or received a determination of exemption under study # \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.  \_\_\_\_ **No**, this project has not yet been approved. The following plan for obtaining required IRB approvals is in place: | | |
| **Are experiments with vertebrate animals involved?** |  |  |
| **If yes, has the animal protocol been approved by the appropriate Animal Use and Care Committee?**  \_\_\_\_ **Yes**, this project has been granted IACUC approval under study # \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.  \_\_\_\_ **No**, this project has not yet been approved. The following plan for approval is in place: | | |

**Faculty Mentor Statement**

# Students are asked to work with a faculty member who may be any UWSOM faculty member with an Affiliate, Clinical, or Regular faculty appointment, including those at the Instructor level. Fellows and residents do **not** hold Faculty appointments, and are **not** eligible to be a research mentor or co-mentor. If the Faculty Mentor **does not** have a UWSOM faculty appointment, the student will need a **Faculty Co-mentor** who **does** have a UWSOM faculty appointment. The Faculty Mentor must be experienced and familiar with the project topic and methods used in the study. The Faculty Mentor’s role is to help the student plan the study, regularly meet with the student (weekly at minimum) during the execution of the project, review and sign-off on the final poster, and submit an evaluation of the student’s work.

# **In the space below, please provide a brief paragraph on:** 1) your willingness to mentor the student, 2) the role the student will play in the project and how you will ensure this is an independent project 3) your evaluation of the student’s ability to carry out the work, and 4) your agreement with the project proposal and timeline above. The application will be considered incomplete if this information is not included.

**Signatures**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Signature of Student |  |
| **Signature of Faculty Mentor** |  |
| **Signature of Faculty Co-Mentor**  (if applicable) |  |
| **Date** |  |

**QUESTIONS? Please contact:**

[somiii@uw.edu](mailto:somiii@uw.edu)