

Research Proposal & Seminar Preparation Checklist

Planning & Collaboration

- ☐ Meet with your advisor to outline the research proposal and seminar timeline.
- ☐ Discuss the scope, aims, and feasibility of your proposed research.
- ☐ Schedule regular check-ins with your advisor for feedback on both the written proposal and seminar content.

Writing the Proposal

- ☐ Draft the NIH-style proposal following the program's formatting and content guidelines.
- ☐ Ensure the proposal includes: Title/Abstract/Integrity Statement, Specific Aims, Background & Significance, Preliminary Studies, and Research Design & Methods.
- ☐ Use a reference management tool (e.g., EndNote, Mendeley) for citations.
- ☐ Submit the final proposal to your committee and Graduate Program Director **at least 2 weeks before the seminar.**

Preparing the Seminar

- ☐ Develop a clear, engaging presentation that mirrors the structure of your proposal.
- ☐ Emphasize the hypothesis, rationale, significance, and experimental design.
- ☐ Include visuals (figures & tables) that are legible from a distance in the audience and well-integrated.
- ☐ Prepare to explain your methods, expected results, potential pitfalls, and alternative strategies.

Practice & Feedback

- ☐ Rehearse your seminar with your advisor, lab group and even those outside your field of expertise.
- ☐ Ask for feedback on clarity, pacing, and scientific depth.
- ☐ Prepare for questions from the committee, especially on rationale, feasibility, and broader impact.

Day of the Seminar

- ☐ Dress professionally.
- ☐ Arrive early to test your presentation setup.
- ☐ Bring backup copies of your slides (USB, email, cloud).
- ☐ Stay calm, confident, and open to feedback during the Q&A.