

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
STUDENT RESEARCH FUND GUIDELINES
School of Education
2009-2010

Description:

The Faculty/Student Research Fund is created to stimulate student research in the School of Education. Consideration is to be given to independent research, faculty and student collaborations, and dissertation or thesis related research proposals. Any registered student in the School of Education is eligible to apply for a grant of up to \$1,500 during a period not to exceed 12 months. Collaborative faculty and student projects may not exceed \$3,000. These grants are highly competitive, recognize superior scholarship, and are based on merit. The money for this program comes from the generous support of the School's alumni and friends. Approved copies of past successful grant proposals are available in the Dean's office.

Review Committee:

The committee consists of six to eight faculty members elected at large, and four graduate students. In the case of widely disparate reviews, the Faculty/Student Research Committee may submit the proposal to SOE Faculty who are experts in the field.

Proposals:

Proposals are evaluated not solely on whether the basic idea of the study seems to be a good one, but on the strength of the case that is made for the study in the proposal itself. Students should be aware that though they may have already made an effective case for the study in a much longer dissertation overview, the case must be made equally effectively in the 2-4 pages of the proposal, and that the reviewers may or may not have specific expertise in the students' areas of interest. The proposal should therefore be written so that its objectives, theoretical framework, and methodology are made intelligible to a well-informed non-specialist. Students are strongly encouraged to involve their advisor in proposal development and completion. The proposal should be well written and organized into the following topic areas, preferably in this order: 1) statement of the problem, 2) theoretical/conceptual framework, 3) methods, design and procedures, 4) data analysis, and 5) contribution to education or to knowledge of disciplines that inform School of Education Programs. The objectives of the study should be concise and clearly stated. A theoretical/conceptual review of relevant research to support the study should be included. Methods and/or techniques should be described in detail and be appropriate for addressing the problem. The proposal should include a summary of the anticipated conclusions and implications in light of the proposed findings and previous research. Lastly, the contribution to knowledge and educational importance of the study should be identified. The merits of the proposal will be judged on all five of these areas as well as the overall significance of the study and the degree to which the expenditures in the itemized budget sheet are justified.

Collaborative faculty and student projects are studies undertaken by one faculty and one or more students as colleagues. In the proposal, faculty and student roles and contributors to the research are to be delineated. Include prior collaborative experience together and role of each in the findings dissemination process. These proposals need to be submitted by a faculty member in accordance with the faculty guidelines.

Evaluation check sheets for the proposals contain the following categories: 1) Objectives clearly stated; 2) Adequate theoretical/conceptual base; 3) Appropriateness of the methods, techniques, or approach; 4) Reasonableness of the anticipated conclusions in light of the findings and previous work; 5) Educational importance of the study; 6) Budget is appropriate.

The review process will begin on **Monday, November 2, 2009 and Monday, March 1, 2010** for all proposals. Proposals are to be submitted on or before **4 pm** on these dates to Susan Sherlock, Dean's Office, 5605 WWPH. Questions regarding budgets should be referred to Michael Shriane (shriane@pitt.edu), 5812 WWPH (648-7085).

Although approval of the research by the IRB/Human Subjects Committee is not required prior to submission to the Faculty/Student Research Fund, **the project cannot be carried out until IRB approval has been received for research that involves human subjects**. This requires that all PI's and co-PI's have completed the Research Integrity and Human Subjects Certification (see Office of Research on the University of Pittsburgh website www.pitt.edu).

Materials to be included:

NOTE: All proposals undergo "blind" review by members of the committee. Accordingly, three of the four copies of the proposal to be submitted must not contain any information indicating the identity of either the student or the faculty advisor, anywhere in the document.

1. Four copies of a 2-4 page (8 1/2 x 11 paper), single-spaced summary of the project. The type-face must be comfortably readable, hence of normal, rather than miniature, size, no smaller than 12-point font. Proposals in smaller type or hard to read due to poor duplication will be returned and not be considered that term for funding.

If the proposal exceeds the page limit, it will be rejected without review. The summary should be organized to facilitate evaluation. The evaluation form is available upon request.

For one copy, the proposal should follow the format: upper left corner- title of paper, author, research advisor, department, **e-mail address** and phone number.

For the three remaining copies, only the title should appear. No identifying names (author's or advisor's) can appear on these three copies, either at the top or in the text.

2. Four copies of a Budget Sheet itemizing and justifying expenses (one attached to each copy of the proposal).
3. Send an electronic copy of your proposal and budget only as one complete file to Susan Sherlock, sk@pitt.edu by the deadline date.
4. Two copies of a cover letter on departmental letterhead listing all overview or doctoral committee members, signed by the research advisor. The letter should indicate the status of the student's project: independent research, thesis or dissertation. If these or dissertation related research, the letter should identify whether the overview has been successfully defended.
5. **If this proposal is related to another student or faculty proposal, then the relationship between the two should be specified in a cover letter to the committee chair. Proposals will be reviewed individually.**
6. **One business size self-addressed, stamped envelope addressed to the student researcher at his/her local mailing address.**
7. One 3 x 5 index card typed in the following format:
Researcher, last name, first name
Title of Project
Local mailing address, telephone number and e-mail address
Date of submission
Total amount of funds requested
Student's department

An adequate budget justification includes both a rationale for including each item in the budget as well as a justification for the cost of each item. Requests for funding personnel should specify the hourly rate of payment. Payments to individuals for services are to be debited directly to an award account. Awardee is not to pay with personal funds. Expenses are limited to data collection and analysis. A list of allowable expenses is attached. If equipment purchases are deemed necessary, they will become the property of the School at the completion of the project. Funds requested for equipment, in particular, should be justified in detail. The equipment must not be available elsewhere, it must be central to the project's research, and a time frame for long-term use must be indicated (i.e., if the equipment can be used in more than one research project, it should be noted). See example below

If the project will cost more than \$1,500, the project's real costs should be itemized with a request for the maximum amount allowable. Identify which elements (up to \$1,500) you are requesting from the Faculty/Student Research

Committee. (See Budget Example 2.) (If other funding is available to the project, or to a related one, the amount of overall funding available to this project must be specified, as well as the relation of this project to the larger funded project.)

Budget Example 1:

42 participant couples @ \$25/couple	\$1,050.00
21 videotapes @ \$3/tape	63.00
Translation services @ \$10/hr. x 11 hours	<u>110.00</u>
 Total	 \$1,223.00

As noted in the proposal, payment for participants should help to increase the participation rates among this small population of immigrant parents with a learning disabled child. The amount requested (\$25 per couple) seems appropriate for a 1 1/2-hour interview that will be videotaped and requires both parents to be present.

Funding for videotapes is requested to record the 42 participant couple interviews for study ratings, as specified in the proposal. Since approximately one quarter of these interviews will be conducted in Chinese, funds for a translator are included. The translator will be a graduate student enrolled at the University in this field whose native language is Chinese. The hourly rate approximates that of a graduate student researcher.

Budget Example 2:

This proposal is related to a funded project in Bosnia. That grant will pay for travel to Bosnia, but will not pay for data collection and analysis which is being requested from the Faculty/Student Research Committee

Budget	Paid by <u>x grant</u>	Requested <u>from SOE</u>
2 tape recorders @ \$39.95/each	\$ 79.90	
20 audiotapes @\$99/each		\$ 19.80
Transcription of tapes (100 hrs. @ \$5/hr.)		500.00
Graduate Student Assistants (150 hrs. @ \$7.50/hr.) (Review of literature/analysis of interviews)		1,125.00
Travel to Bosnia (price verified by University Travel)	1,650.00	
Room and Board (15 days @ \$60/day)	900.00	
Travel to sites in Bosnia (taxi/bus/train) (Daily travel to sites for interviews)		350.00
Telephone (to Bosnia and during data collection)		50.00
Copying of transcriptions (200 pages) plus instruments (750 pages @\$0.05/ea.)		<u>37.50</u>
Costs paid by X grant:	<u>\$2,629.90</u>	
Total funds requested from SOE:		\$1,500.00
 Total cost of project:	 \$4,712.20	

Criteria for Evaluation:

Rating will be based on specified criteria coincident with the topic areas (1-7) mentioned above. A copy of the rating sheet is available at <http://www.education.pitt.edu/research/soefunding.aspx>.

Reviewers will be asked to make a decision to accept or to reject the proposal. They will also be asked to recommend a budget funding level. Review sheets will be forwarded to the Dean's Office along with the committee's rating and recommendations.

The review committee will evaluate the projects and make a recommendation to the Dean's Office within one month. The Dean's Office will notify all applicants of the final decisions within ten working days. The grant period will officially begin upon notification, unless otherwise specified and agreed to by both the faculty member and the Dean's Office. Once an award has been made, the faculty member will sign a letter of agreement with the Dean's Office specifying fiduciary and legal obligations.

Students may contact the Faculty/Student Research Committee chairperson for comments.

Final Report and Requirements:

Final report: One copy of the final report (the abstract from any resulting thesis, dissertation, or publication will be accepted as one form of the final report) to be submitted Susan Sherlock, Dean's Office, 5605 WWPH. Students and faculty are requested to share their findings with their colleagues in the School of Education at the annual research forum hosted by the Council of Graduate Students in Education (CGSE), 5100 WWPH, 648-7055. Grant recipients will be notified of their presentation's location and time.

