

Grant Writing in Communication  
ASC 620, 20911D Fall, 2015  
Tuesdays 9:30-12:30  
ASCG38

*Professor:*

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*Readings:*

Gerin, W., Kapelewski, C. H., Itinger, J. R., Spruill, T (2011). [Writing the NIH Grant Proposal: A Step-by-Step Guide \[Paperback\]](#). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. *This is the recently revised edition that has been updated for the new shorter NIH grants we'll be writing. This book is available in soft copy and a kindle version on Amazon.*

Additional Readings as Assigned including numerous sample funded grants.

***Focus and Goals***

Grant money enables one to do the types of complex and innovative disciplinary and interdisciplinary projects that aren't otherwise possible. And, increasingly, federal grant money is one way that faculty are evaluated for tenure in the social sciences and communication. What's the process that will best enable you, as a faculty member in communication or psychology, to eventually land your own major grant as a PI? In this course we will review a number of different grant vehicles and ways to find out about available grants, find out how to get involved on grants, work on developing and submitting real projects (i.e., an NIH RO1), and introduce you to the process of "what happens next" (evaluating grants, resubmission) with hands-on experience.

***Scaffolded team experience.*** Successfully receiving one's own federal grants often follows from getting prior experience (e.g., in graduate school, on post-docs, as a junior faculty member) as part of a grant development team lead by one or more experienced PIs. This course is designed to scaffold you with the skills and experience to actually submit, as part of a team, a competitive grant to a public (e.g., federal) granting agency. There are numerous vehicles for funding (e.g., NSF, NIH, CDC, DOD, State Grants as well as foundations, etc.): Each one has its own "bells and whistles." We provide examples of funded grant vehicles, and focus on writing a standard federal grant vehicle for researchers in communication or other social sciences (an NIH RO1). [If you prefer to write an NSF grant that is another option but there has been serious cutting of NSF funds recently and likely increases for NIH] Mastering the art of creating a successful NIH RO1 grant enables you to apply for funding to numerous government agencies who use the same process as well as State Agencies that use similar forms and processes. You will team up with others including one or more faculty members (e.g., faculty who are or have been a PI on a federal or state grant and have domain credentials critical for the grant).

Because the grants we are developing will be “real” grants, if they are funded, the students who contribute substantially to them should be:

- (a) given priority consideration for appointments on them
- (b) be able to note their contribution to a successful grant application on their vitas
- (c) able to count on a letter from the grant’s PI or Co-PI noting their contribution to the grant process
- (d) able to suggest “write in” studies that they would be interested in conducting.

***Pre and post-doctoral funding grants.*** NIH has a variety of grant mechanisms for researchers at various stages of their careers. If you don’t already have your Ph.D. there are T and F series awards that one can apply for (if a U.S. citizen or non-citizen nationals or be lawfully entered into the US for permanent residence); if you have your degree there are K series awards (and one F series; same citizen requirements as F&T) as well as R series awards of various types (for researchers who have successfully competed for research funding; not restricted by US citizen and residency status). If you prefer to write an individual award in anticipation of a dissertation or post-doc this is another option for students in the class. There are also State and other awards for research funding (e.g., from APA, NSF, private foundations, etc.). We will review these.

August 25                      Introduction to Grant Writing: An Overview , Nitty-Gritty and Organizational Planning/Timetables; Agency Review Criteria

September 1                      NIH, Connecting with an Experienced Mentor; Generating Ideas and Identifying Sources and Types of Funding; Pointers and Tips (including software helpers). Gerin 1,2,3;  
***Homework 1: Nail down which grant writing team you will be part of; Team must present plan for reaching content goals and assign tasks for September 8 presentation. Meet with Prof Miller this week especially if you are doing your own dissertation or post-doctoral or similar grant.***

September 8                      Initial Research Team and Idea Plan Specified/Presented. Preparation and Preliminary Steps for Writing an NIH Grant Gerin 4; *Handouts.*

***Homework 2:***

- A. One page description of specific aims, research hypotheses/questions should be turned in.***
- B. Additional One page description of what has already been done (preliminary studies by team) and initial review of what has been done outside of the work of the team (e.g., be sure you aren’t re-inventing the wheel; rely on faculty experts to understand the domain landscape and begin to gather articles with them to get a grasp on this literature (10+ references)).***

*C. Think about pilot studies that you should do. Meet your PI to begin planning these.*

*D. Grant source, potential review panel audience identified and warranted.*

September 15

Writing the Application, Part I; Agency contact.

Gerin 5

*Homework 3: 4 page overview due (condensed this will become your summary). Provide a short proposal along with a one page cover sheet (Specific Aims) that explains why you are conducting this research. What are the hypotheses and why are they important and interesting to explore? Be specific about what the design will look like, the DVs, IVs, operationalized variables. Specify the sample's characteristics (where will you access your sample; what partners/letters do you need to nail down your access to this sample). Procedures – start to nail these down tightly. Make clear ties between hypotheses and design. Do studies (2-3 for a three year grant) make a coherent package of studies?*

*•Specify 1-2 pages the pilot study(ies) that need to be performed and what they will document. Meet with PI to develop these and prepare IRB materials for submission to conduct them.*

September 22

Design and Methods; Gerin 5

*Homework 4: Revised Section A (Specific Aims) and draft of B (Background and Significance) Due. Here specify the following: (1) the problem your study will address, (2) why the problem is a public health concern and therefore important to NIH (3), what others have done to address this problem and why that isn't sufficient, (4) what you plan to do that is different from previous studies, (5) how your research will have an impact on public health, (6) why your plan is novel cutting edge, and should excite the reader, (7) an overview of your methodology, (8) study hypotheses.*

*•Report on contact with at least one agency. Prepare a "script" (turn in) and written up notes regarding the conversation.*

*•Provide 1 page description of needed pilot studies*

September 29

Writing the Application, Part II: Human and Animal Concerns

Gerin 6

*Homework 5:*

*A. Draft of Section C (Preliminary Studies) including:*

*(1) Description of the team, including prior collaborations and relevant experience (2) studies conducted by the PI and key personnel that are relevant to the proposal, (3) pilot data (for ROI and some other applications). Here if you do not have the pilot studies lay out design and what the studies will test relevant to proposal (later, hopefully when you have the results these will support your hypotheses or require you to change them or your methods in line with pilot data).*

***B. Draft of Section D (Research Design and Methods outline/draft).***

***C. Provide evidence that you are making progress on pilot studies (e.g., you should have IRB application submitted at this point).***

October 6

Budgets Gerin 7

***Homework 6: Turn in draft of human subjects section of grant. Begin to plan pilot studies with your team PI for the real grant submission (report on plans).***

October 13

Writing the Application, Part II Electronic Submission Processes Gerin 7

***Homework 7: Turn in a complete budget using NIH budget forms. Justify all expenditures.***

***•Bring in approved IRB materials for any pilot studies needed. Provide plan and timeline for pilot studies you are conducting.***

October 20

Proposal Nitty Gritty; The Art of Revisions and the Extras (e.g., bios, other support, etc.)

***Homework 8: Revised Draft (A-C) and Full Draft Research Design and Methods (about 13 pages) including tables and figures.***

October 27

Checklists and Submitting the Application Gerin 8; Appendix C

***Homework 9: Abstract, Revised Specific Aims, Bios and Other Support Due; Drafts for Sections G through K due.***

November 3

Feedback, Feedback, and More Feedback

***Full draft due this week: Abstract, Specific Aims, Background and Significance, Preliminary Studies, Research Design and Methods, References***

- November 10            No Formal Class ([Appointments and revisions all week](#))
- November 17            Grant Review and Award Process; What panel members look for.  
Gerin 9; *Guest Panel of Panel Members*  
*Grants Due*
- November 24            *Grant Panel Reviews (feedback due regarding other proposals in*  
*Class; you are playing role of reviewer)*
- December 1             *Grant Revision Due*

Evaluation:

- 50%    Final grant proposal
- 20%    Homeworks
- 20%    Participation in class
- 10%    Grant Critique Presentations (all members of a group must read and evaluate alternate proposals).

## Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

### Academic Conduct

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Section 11, *Behavior Violating University Standards* <https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/>. Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity* <http://equity.usc.edu/> or to the *Department of Public Safety* <http://capsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us>. This is important for the safety of the whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. *The Center for Women and Men* <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/> provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage [sarc@usc.edu](http://sarc.usc.edu) describes reporting options and other resources.

### Support Systems

A number of USC’s schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the *American Language Institute* <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. *The Office of Disability Services and Programs* [http://sait.usc.edu/academic-support/center-programs/dsp/home\\_index.html](http://sait.usc.edu/academic-support/center-programs/dsp/home_index.html) provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, *USC Emergency Information* <http://emergency.usc.edu> will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.