GUIDELINES FOR PREPARING RESEARCH PROPOSALS FOR KENYON'S SUMMER LEGAL SCHOLARS PROGRAM

1) The proposal must contain a clear and concise statement of the research questions and focus of the research. Explain clearly what it is that you are attempting to investigate and why your question is important. This might include a statement about your field or discipline’s approach to your question or related issues;

2) The proposal should contain a statement about the sources of information, data, or literature about your research topic. Here you will want to talk about what materials or sources you think exist to advance your work as well as how you expect and intend to access these sources. You might also discuss why your project requires funding and cannot be accomplished through a class assignment (e.g. it requires travel to archives, it involves field work or interviews of subjects, etc.);

3) The proposal should articulate your goals and objectives in pursuing the research. Ask yourself what you hope to have achieved or accomplished when you have finished your work. Further you might reflect upon how you will assess or evaluate whether your project was successful;

4) The proposal must contain a statement about the methodology you expect to employ in your research. Indicate why you have chosen this approach as opposed to others; and

5) The proposal must contain a well-conceived timetable for the research, indicating the anticipated calendar of tasks week-by-week; this is where you will show that you have realistically calculated the time it should take to accomplish the phases of your work. If you are enrolled in an individual study course or some other class during the spring semester through which you can prepare for the summer research, you should discuss this in your proposal. If you expect to enroll in such a course in the fall to continue the research, this should be discussed as well. Of course, projects that involve human subjects will require Kenyon IRB approval, so your proposal’s timetable should reflect your planning and intentions in this regard.

A good proposal will be clear and understandable to a reader who is not an expert or even particularly knowledgeable in your field of inquiry. It will avoid unnecessary jargon in favor of demonstrating a sophisticated and nuanced approach to the issues presented therein. Be sure to proof-read it and submit it in a form that shows that you appreciate the fact that your receipt of an award is based entirely upon the impression that your proposal will make upon the selection committee.

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