



BREN SCHOOL REQUEST FOR GROUP PROJECT PROPOSALS

The Bren School of Environmental Science and Management at the University of California, Santa Barbara seeks Group Project proposals for our 2011-2013 Master's of Environmental Science and Management (MESM) class. The Group Project serves as the thesis for Bren School Master's-level graduate students. The projects will be carried out from April 2012 to April 2013.

Group Project Objectives

The goals of the Group Project are to provide students with training and experience in multidisciplinary environmental problem solving, in preparation for professional careers; and to provide a mechanism for students to learn important management skills, such as working as a team, developing leadership skills, managing time and financial resources, organizing and negotiating.

Desirable Group Project Attributes

Students are expected to collaborate with outside clients that have a problem that can be successfully addressed and solved by the group project. The project requires: an environment in which the students can learn to operate as an independent professional team; a spirit of trust and collaboration by all parties; client involvement appropriate to allow students to develop their own ideas and approaches; and healthy and professional communications and rapport amongst all parties.

Appropriate topics address current environmental problems, which require significant analysis to provide a recommendation to the "end customer", which might be a private firm, a government agency, a non-governmental organization, or a combination of interested parties. Projects should involve quantitative analysis and scientific investigation in order to reach a policy and/or management recommendation. It is important to keep the scope realistic: projects should be manageable for a group of 4-6 Master's-level students, spending about 25% of their time during the three academic quarters (9 months), and with a very limited budget. Projects that require a completion date well before March 2013 are difficult to accommodate.

Proposals designed to investigate or expand knowledge of an environmental issue are appropriate if they are multidisciplinary, i.e., they include both science and management aspects, and have a clear problem-oriented objective.

Projects whose main purpose is model construction or data set development are not appropriate, though such work may be part of the project. Extensive data collection is generally time and resource intensive and thus is difficult for a group project to undertake, making this less desirable. Proposals identifying an existing dataset needing analysis and some complementary work are more appropriate, if a policy recommendation is the outcome.

Although it is useful to have some external funding for the project, either for partial internships during the summer or for supplies, sampling and analysis, or other requirements, this is only one of several factors in project selection. However, if the proposal clearly requires substantial resources, a commitment from an identified client is necessary.

All proposers are strongly encouraged to contact Assistant Dean for Academic Programs, Satie Airame (airame@bren.ucsb.edu) as a first step proposal development. She will offer guidance and recommend faculty sponsors. The Proposal Selection Committee will evaluate the proposals and will determine those that have a higher probability of success based on the criteria indicated below.

Proposal Format

Project proposals are due by 5:00 p.m. January 27, 2012 and are limited to ***three pages*** (excluding references). Examples of last year's successful proposal submissions are available for viewing on our website (http://www.bren.ucsb.edu/research/current_gp.htm). **Proposals must follow this format and should include all of the following:**

1. Title, descriptive of the environmental science and management problem to be solved.
2. Name and contact information (email, phone) of the proposer(s). Only two Bren student proposers may be listed on a proposal.
3. Bren Faculty Sponsor (if applicable). This section is not required; however, if a faculty member assisted in proposal development, please include their name here. Proposers are encouraged to contact faculty for guidance on proposal development.
4. Proposed Project
 - A. Problem Statement. What is the context for this work?
 - B. Project Objectives. What questions need to be answered by this project? Are there clear science and management questions?
 - C. Project Significance. Why is this work important? Who is the target audience/client?
 - D. Background information. Where is the project location (if applicable)? In general, how did the problem evolve? What has been done to date, if known?
 - E. Stakeholders, other than the client. What other people would benefit by the results of this work?
 - F. Possible approaches and available data; this should be concise. One of the tasks for the group project participants is to decide how best to meet the project objectives and develop their approach. If data sets are available, it is useful to identify them here.
 - G. Deliverables. What types of recommendations do you expect to have as an outcome from the project? Are there specific products that you expect to have at the end of the project, other than the final written report and oral presentation?
 - H. References
5. Client, including name and email (or phone) of contact person.
6. A commitment by the client to provide data and other information required for a successful project with no stipulation for a non-disclosure agreement or restriction to publication of the report.
7. Anticipated financial needs and sources of support (see below)
8. Internship Opportunities. If applicable, how many internship opportunities will be available to Bren students?

Financial Deliverables

Indicate expectations with respect to financial needs, and any support commitments that exist or are very likely. A letter of commitment from identified clients is necessary if funding is a requirement for a successful project. The letter of support does not count towards the 3-page limit. This letter should be addressed to the Group Project selection committee.

- a) Anticipated financial needs: (travel, conference fees, etc.)
- b) Financial sources of support:
- c) Internship stipend amount per student: (paid or unpaid internship? If paid, what is the stipend amount?)

Project Selection Criteria

Approximately 20 Group Projects will be undertaken during 2012-2013. Criteria used to select projects include:

- Extent to which project represents a real environmental problem that requires a solution from the group project.

- Extent to which the project has clear science and management questions.

- Extent to which the project matches expertise and capabilities of Bren School students and faculty. Refer to <http://www.bren.ucsb.edu> for information on the school and its faculty.

- Extent to which the anticipated financial needs of the project are met.

- Extent to which scope of project is feasible, given student experience and time availability.

- Extent to which logistics are practical.

Selection Process

All submissions will be reviewed by a selection committee composed of faculty and students. Final selection will be made by early March. Clients, students and faculty will then be informed of the projects that have been accepted and will be assigned based on expressed preferences.

Project Timeline

After proposal preparation and selection, group projects are conducted in three quarters (Spring, Fall, and Winter) spanning part of the students' first and second year of their Masters' program. The project might involve summer internships.

Group Project Activity

Year 1:	
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Fall:	write proposals
Winter:	select projects
Spring:	1st term: scope project; organize; conduct external review

Summer: internship or group project work

Year 2:	
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Fall:	2nd term: conduct project
Winter:	3rd term: conduct project; prepare final report
Spring:	final presentation is expected to be the first week of Spring qtr.

Additional Information

Examples of final reports from each year's completed projects are available at

http://www.bren.ucsb.edu/research/gp_past.html

Questions regarding Group Project goals or proposal preparation can be addressed to Assistant Dean for Academic Programs, Satie Airame (airame@bren.ucsb.edu) or by emailing projects@bren.ucsb.edu. Please note if you are a member of a Corporate Partner organization.

Submit proposals via email to:

Attn: Group Project Coordinator, Amy Burgard via email at aburgard@bren.ucsb.edu

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