BREN SCHOOL REQUEST FOR GROUP PROJECT PROPOSALS

The Bren School of Environmental Science & Management at the University of California, Santa Barbara seeks Group Project proposals for our 2014-2016 Master of Environmental Science & Management (MESM) class. The Group Project serves as the master’s thesis for Bren School graduate students. The projects will be conducted from April 2015 to April 2016.

Group Project Objectives
The goal of the Group Project is to provide Bren School master’s students with training and experience in multidisciplinary environmental problem-solving. The Group Project process gives students the opportunity to learn important professional skills including, but not limited to, project management, working as a team, leadership, managing time and financial resources, organizing and presenting data, and communicating effectively with stakeholders.

Desirable Group Project Attributes
Student groups collaborate with outside clients to work toward solutions for an environmental problem. 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; appropriate client involvement that allows students to develop their own ideas and approaches; and open and professional communications and rapport among all parties.

Appropriate topics address environmental problems that require significant analysis to provide products and/or recommendations to the client, which might be a private firm, government agency, non-governmental organization, or other interested party. Projects should involve quantitative analysis and scientific investigation in order to reach a policy and/or management recommendation. The scope of the project must be realistic: Projects should be manageable for a group of 4-6 master’s students, spending about 25% of their time during three academic quarters (9 months), and with a limited budget. Projects that require a completion date before March 2016 are not feasible.

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 development of models or datasets are not appropriate, though such work may be part of the project. Projects with extensive data collection are generally time and resource intensive, and thus difficult for a Bren master’s group to undertake, making this less desirable. Proposals identifying an existing dataset needing analysis and some complementary work are more appropriate, if a policy or management recommendation is the outcome.

External funding from the client for the project (e.g., for summer internships or supplies, sampling and analysis) is one of several factors considered in project selection. If the proposal requires substantial resources, the client will need to include a clear commitment of financial support for the proposed project.
All proposers are strongly encouraged to contact Bren School Group Project Coordinator Casey Hankey (casey@bren.ucsb.edu) as a first step in proposal development. Casey can provide guidance regarding the request for proposals and proposal format. She also connects proposal authors with Bren faculty, staff and students who can provide additional guidance and assistance in the proposal writing process.

**Project proposals are due via email on January 23, 2015 by 5:00 p.m.** and are limited to **three pages** (excluding references, budget and justification, and client letter of support). Examples of last year’s successful proposal submissions are available for viewing on the Bren School website (http://www.bren.ucsb.edu/research/current_gp.htm).

**Proposal Format:**

1. Title, descriptive of the environmental science **and** management problem to be solved.

2. Name and contact information (email, phone, and affiliation) of the proposer(s). Proposers may be clients, faculty and/or Bren students. If you have worked actively with a faculty member or student(s), please list them as co-authors on the proposal. If more than two Bren students contribute to the proposal, the client and/or students must select two **primary** student authors. If the proposal is selected, the two primary student authors will have the option to be guaranteed membership in the group.

3. Client, including name, email, phone, and affiliation. The client is the primary representative from the client organization and the main point of contact for students. All clients listed on the proposal will be notified at the end of winter quarter (late March 2015) regarding the status of the proposal. If you would prefer to limit notification of the proposal status to specific individuals, please note this in your proposal.

4. Proposed Project (3 pages)
   a. Objectives. What are the science **and** policy or management questions that need to be answered by the project within the allotted time period? Focus on 1 to 3 concrete and achievable objectives.
   b. Significance. What is the context for this work? Why is this work important? Who is the target audience/client? Which other people (besides the client) would benefit from the results of this work?
   c. Background. Where is the project location? In general, how did the problem evolve? What has been done to date, if known?
   d. Available data. What data are available to address this problem? How and when can the students acquire the data for their analysis?
   e. Possible approaches. Briefly describe likely approaches that may be used to address the project objectives. One task for the students in a group project is to more fully develop the approaches that will best meet the project objectives, but suggestions from the client are extremely useful in focusing the early work.
   f. Deliverables. Are there specific products that you expect from the project, in addition to the final written report, policy brief, poster and oral presentation? What types of recommendations do you expect to have as an outcome from the project?
g. Internships. Will the client provide one or more summer internships to students in the Group Project to further the goals of the project and help the students develop professional skills? If so, please note the number of internships and describe the internships more fully in the client’s letter of support.

5. Supporting Materials (does not count toward 3-page limit)

a. Citations. Due to the scientific and technical nature of many interdisciplinary environmental problems proposed for Group Projects, proposers are encouraged to include citations to support their proposal.

b. Budget and justification. Each project chosen by the Group Project Committee will receive $1,300 from the Bren School to cover the group’s basic operations. This funding will be held at the school and only accessible by the students. The students will determine how to allocate the funds to cover expenses such as conference calls, travel, conference fees, poster printing, etc. If the proposed project requires additional funding for completion, the client must provide that funding. If needed, please include a budget with a description of anticipated costs that will be covered by the client.

c. Client letter of support. If the client will provide data, additional funding or internships, then the client must submit a letter of support. The letter should clearly describe the client’s commitments and timeline. The letter should be addressed to the Group Project Committee.

i. Data: If the client intends to provide data or facilitate acquisition to data, the client should specify the type and content of the data and when it will be available to students. It is preferable if the data can be provided to the students without stipulation for a non-disclosure agreement or restriction for publication. If a non-disclosure agreement is required, please describe the constraints around the use of the data.

ii. Funding: If the proposed Group Project requires more funding than provided to the students by the Bren School, then the client is responsible for providing those funds. Please clearly describe the client's financial commitment in the letter of support. Funds provided by the client for a specific group project ideally should be managed by the client. Grants to the University of California for specific Group Projects would require a Bren faculty principal investigator, preauthorization by UCSB's Office of Research, and additional indirect costs up to 53%; gifts to the Bren School for a specific group project require an additional 6% for indirect costs. If you are interested in making a gift to the Bren School, please contact Assistant Dean of Development Andrew Krupa (andrew@bren.ucsb.edu or 805-893-3712).

iii. Internships: Clients may offer one or more summer internships for Bren students in the Group Project. Only include an internship in the proposal if the opportunity definitely will be offered by the client if the project is selected. Internships should not only further the objectives of the Group Project but also must provide students with opportunities to develop professional skills. An internship requires that the client or another individual in the client’s organization mentor the student in a professional capacity. Ideally, internship opportunities will be paid. However, please include an unpaid internship if a valuable summer opportunity exists but funding is unavailable. If paid internships are offered, it is highly encouraged that the client pays the interns directly.
Limited Intellectual Property License
By participating in the Group Project, the client agrees that: (1) its logo and other "publicly-available" intellectual property may be used by the Bren School (e.g., its students, faculty and staff) solely in connection with the specific Group Project in which the client participates, and (2) any Group Project’s deliverables containing the client’s logo or other intellectual property may be made available via the Bren School’s website and other formats.

Upon written request by the client, a Group Project incorporating the client’s intellectual property will include a disclaimer identifying the client as the owner of the intellectual property and that all rights are reserved by the client. The client may, upon written request, withhold consent to use certain intellectual property owned by the client.

Selection Process
All submissions will be reviewed during the winter quarter by the Bren School Group Project Committee, composed of three faculty and three students. In late March, clients, students, and faculty will be informed of the status of submitted proposals. Students will be assigned to projects based on expressed preferences.

Project Selection Criteria
Approximately 17 Group Projects will be undertaken during 2015-2016. Criteria used by the Group Project Committee to select projects include the extent to which:
- the project represents a significant environmental problem that requires the group to produce a solution;
- the project has clear science and policy or management questions;
- the project matches the interests, expertise and capabilities of students and faculty;
- the project scope is feasible, given student experience and availability;
- logistics are practical; and
- anticipated financial needs of the project are met.

Project Timeline
After proposal preparation and selection, group projects are conducted in four quarters (Spring 2015, Fall 2015, Winter 2016 and Spring 2016) spanning part of the students’ first and second year of their Masters’ program. Students also may work on the project during summer internships.

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Additional Information
Examples of final papers 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 Bren School Group Project Coordinator Casey Hankey (casey@bren.ucsb.edu) or by emailing projects@bren.ucsb.edu. Please let us know if you are a member of a Corporate Partner organization.

Submit proposals via email by Friday, January 23, 2015 at 5 pm to:
Attn: Group Project Coordinator (projects@bren.ucsb.edu)
Bren School of Environmental Science & Management
2400 Bren Hall
UC Santa Barbara, CA 93106-5131