**Mini-Proposal**

**(20 points possible)**

**Instructions: Write a 4 to 6 page mini-proposal, articulating the essential elements of your study.**

If approached correctly, this mini-proposal is designed to help you draft the fundamental pieces of what can be later expanded and inserted into your actual dissertation proposal and ultimately your final product (dissertation).

**1. Context? Where does your proposed study fit?**

Your presentation of this context will place your proposed study in a scholarly context; identify the problem (to be detailed in), show the ways in which your proposed study is similar to or different from other studies, and demonstrate why the topic is of scholarly and professional interest.

Elements: statement of problem / definition/delimitation of topic / statement of purpose

(conceptual framework / theoretical approach / literature review)

(personal motivation / interest in topic)

**2. What are you proposing to do? How are you going to do it?**

Your presentation of the context will have helped you to identify the problem (call it the topic if you prefer). Now you can tell your readers what you are going to do with the problem. The methodology should be appropriate to the kind of inquiry you have undertaken.

Elements: research design: questions and methodology

(setting, participants, methods of data collection & data analysis)

**3. Significance? So what?**  
Why is it worthwhile for you to spend a significant portion of your life on this inquiry and for your readers to read it?

Elements: scholarly significance and implications / expected contribution to knowledge

**4. Feasibility? Are you able to handle it?**  
This is one of the concerns of your dissertation committee. If you want to prove that there is life after death or on the moon, they want to make sure that you can actually do it. Therefore, if you convince them that you have had sufficient training and preparation in astronomy, access to NASA archives, among other things, you may get a green light. Otherwise, they might think: "It is a great idea, but..."

Elements: research & dissertation timeline

**5. Outline? What will your project include?**  
A chapter breakdown would be helpful if you want to indicate to the committee that you have already organized your ideas at some macro level. In terms of presentation of the proposal, you need to pay attention that your topic is narrow and specific; and the goals clearly stated. Tell them unambiguously what you are proposing to do.

Elements: dissertation chapter outline