Assignment 6

Introductions to Proposals/Reports: General Guidelines.

DUE: 6th week of class.

- **NO regular class this week.** Instead, we will meet in small working groups (ideally 3) in my office for ~1 hour. We’ll need longer if the groups are bigger.
- **Format:** 1.5 pgs, double-spaced
- **Send** introductions to your instructor and to the peers in your working group by 10 AM the day before your meeting, so they have time to review and edit it.
- Be sure to include your name and the title of your paper.
- **Bring** your edits of the other students’ work in your editing group. We will discuss all of them during the meeting.
- **Turn in:** a draft of your proposal showing your own edits.

An introduction to a proposal or to a paper is essentially an expansion of the abstract (or summary) that you have already done. Your introduction should have these components, preferably *in the following order*:

1. The context for your work
2. How your work links to this context
3. Your specific question
4. Your approach – could be general (eg, field experiments, lab, models) or more specific if you are at that stage.
5. How your work links to some of the more general concerns

More specifically, your summary should have 3-4 paragraphs. These are fully explained in the EEB Writing Guide.

**TACTICS**

1. Write your outline/list of points: hand write this (or at least print this out) so you can move ideas around as needed. REMEMBER, most of the outlines you produced for the summary were much too long: use key words only.
2. Print out your list and edit it for logic (preferably by hand). This is the best time to move ideas around (NOTE: this is this ‘macro-editing’), not after you have done the narrative.
3. Write and edit the first draft.
4. Print (always 2x spaced) and then hand edit your draft for logic (if it’s still needed once you flesh out the outline), grammar and conciseness.
5. Revise.
6. Repeat 3-5 a couple of times until you are completely satisfied. It is best if you can wait a day or 2 between the writing and editing so you don’t fall in love with your own words as easily.

**NOTE:**

1. Look at the example of a short introduction in the EEB writing guidelines (Box 1, page 15), to see how this should be done.

2. Pay close attention to all of the comments on your abstract. Not all comments need to be followed, but they indicate where a reader had a problem. Consider these when editing for: order of ideas, the logical structure of your argument, and grammar. Not everyone did that on the rewrite of your abstracts.