FACT SHEET #3 – Senior Comp Proposal Guidelines

The purpose of writing your project proposal is to describe what you are going to be doing, why it should be done, how you will accomplish it, and what results you expect from your efforts. If you know and understand these questions from the beginning stages of the project, you will save time and energy later. This proposal provides an opportunity for you to get feedback on your plans before undertaking the bulk of your senior project. At the proposal oral in October, your committee will ask questions about your plans and offer suggestions for ensuring your comp. project is a success.

Your proposal should be 1900-2200 words long (including the abstract) and directed towards readers with a basic understanding of the topic. The readers should know that you understand your topic and have a focused question or objective.

I. FORMAT:

• **Title** *(10 words or fewer)*: Your title should be descriptive and concise.

• **Abstract** *(<200 words)*: Include a brief paragraph which highlights the main points of your project (questions/objectives, motivation, and significance).

• **Introduction** *(~1000 words, 20-25 cited sources)*: Provide the background and context for your research question or project objective. State the question/objective clearly, as well as what you hope to accomplish with your project. Review the relevant high-quality literature which provides further context for the proposed project. The significance of the proposed project and its connection to the field of environmental science/studies must be clear.

• **Process/Approach** *(~500 words)*: Explain how you will accomplish your project, including the research design/approach and any data collection methods. Make sure you include when and where the project will be done. Write this section so that someone from outside your field will clearly understand your strategy for achieving the project's objective or answering your research question.

• **Expected & Alternative Outcomes** *(<500 words)*: Briefly describe the outcomes expected from your comp. project. What do you expect to find through collecting data? How will you know if you've achieved your project's objective? How do these expected outcomes connect to the field of environmental science/studies? What if the outcome isn't what you expected? If applicable, explain whether and how you will share the results of your project with broader audiences.

• **Budget and Timeline*** *(less than 1 page)*: Provide a detailed and realistic timeline of benchmarks for your project. Include a budget with justifications for expenses and how you plan to cover these expenses.

• **References***: A list of every reference cited in the proposal following APA guidelines. There should be a minimum of 25 cited sources.

*These sections are not included in the total word count.