

Welcome to UW CSE 590X!

How to PhD

Thriving in the Allen School's PhD Program

Who Is Mike?

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Who Are We?

Michael Ernst



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Why Take This Course?

Increase your inspiration and motivation to do great research

- **Hard work**, passion, tenacity, intense focus, **hard work**

Develop the skills needed to thrive in an academic environment

- Communication skills, time management, ...
- Applicable beyond grad school and beyond academia

Avoid common pitfalls

- Learn from the mistakes of those who came before you
- Imposter syndrome

Course Feedback

We love feedback – it's an opportunity for us to make this seminar better!

- **Email us**
 - Also anonymous feedback: <https://feedback.cs.washington.edu/>
- **Send a message** on EdStem

Rules of Engagement

It is the expectation that everyone is respectful of each other

- **Respect** for *all*
- **Inclusion** for *all*
- **Kindness**

Our discussions assume confidentiality

- Be comfortable **sharing**
- Be **honest**
- Address the **good** and the **bad**

The people in this room are not your competition

Developing Research Ideas (first module, 3 weeks)

- Week 1: introductions, brainstorming, feedback
- Weeks 2 and 3
 - Feedback on documents
 - Panel with people who won a fellowship
- Homework for week 2 (due 1 week from today):
 - Write a 2-page research proposal
 - Could be the same as for your application, but, is that still what you want to do?
- Homework for week 3: revise your document

Schedule for today

Get a duck

Introductions

Project proposals: practice and iteration

- What makes an excellent project proposal?

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Personal statement: practice and iteration

- What makes an excellent personal statement?

Introductions

Explain your research vision or project or proposal

Form groups of 3.

Each person presents for 2 minutes.

Each person gets feedback for 3 minutes.

What makes an excellent research proposal?

What makes an excellent research proposal?

What is the purpose of a research proposal?

Heilmeier Catechism



- What are you trying to do?
Articulate your objectives using absolutely no jargon.
- How is it done today, and what are the limits of current practice?
- What is new in your approach? Why do you think it will be successful?
- Who cares? If you are successful, what difference will it make?
- What are the risks?
- How much will it cost?
- How long will it take?
- What are the mid-term and final “exams” to check for success?

Explain your research vision or project or proposal

Form groups of 3.

Each person presents for 2 minutes.

Each person gets feedback for 3 minutes.

Personal statement: explain your research journey

Form groups of 3.

Each person presents for 2 minutes.

Each person gets feedback for 3 minutes.

What makes an excellent personal statement?

What makes an excellent personal statement?

- Tell a story
- Be specific (no vague superlatives)
- Show, don't tell
- Express enthusiasm
- Express your research personality

Personal statement: explain your research journey

Form groups of 3.

Each person presents for 2 minutes.

Each person gets feedback for 3 minutes.

Homework:

Submit your Duck ID on Canvas

Write a 2-page research proposal

Bring 3 copies to class next week