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The Scholarly Project is a required 4-year longitudinal course designed to stimulate critical thinking, enhance intellectual acuity and inquisitiveness, and foster excellence in the development of clinician educators, clinician scientists and physician investigators. The Scholarly Project allows medical students to conduct research with a faculty mentor on a topic of interest in the fields of health and health care.

The overarching goal of the course is to provide all medical students with the necessary educational and practical tools to pursue a highly successful and productive career in clinical or academic medicine. Related goals include:

1. Through completing a scholarly project, students will generate new knowledge.
2. Through participation in learning sessions and training modules, students will gain a foundation in scientific method, critical thinking, and the responsible conduct of research.
3. Helping students refine and differentiate their own career and specialty orientation prior to application for residency.

To achieve these goals, the Scholarly Project Program has three components:

1. A didactic component consisting of lectures, small group sessions, team learning, workshops and completion of training through the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI).
2. Assistance in developing skills necessary to formulate and describe a research question, an associated hypothesis, and the methodology to conduct the research.
3. The student Scholarly Project (SP).

The didactic component of the SP will provide all students with an understanding of basic research principles, including but not limited to the responsible conduct of research. These sessions are also part of Pathways to Health in Medicine, the Evidence-Based Medicine thread, with some sessions that are standalone for the Scholarly Project.

Students will have access to library resources, to learning experts who can help formulate questions and provide guidance on preparation of abstracts, oral presentations, posters and other media used to deliver scientific content.

Conducting and completing the SP will provide all students, regardless of their ultimate career path, an enhanced appreciation and understanding of the linkage between research scholarship and health and health care.
Course Learning Objectives

During this course, students will:

1. Describe basic research principles, including hypothesis testing and experimental design.
2. Demonstrate understanding of the ethical and responsible conduct of research, including conflict of interest, bias, research misconduct, risk assessment, informed consent, privacy and security, and data reproducibility and management.
3. Describe the purpose and function of investigational review boards, and other regulatory entities governing biomedical research.
4. Demonstrate understanding of the basic principles of human subjects research by successfully completing CITI training modules.
5. Explain basic elements of proposal and grant writing.
6. Describe the importance and process of peer review.
7. Explain the varying criteria for authorship on publications across the paradigms of research (e.g. team-based science versus medical education research).
8. Explain the role of statistics in planning research projects, evaluating research data, and presenting research results.
9. Describe how research findings are (or are not) incorporated and translated into improving human health, through the clinical practice of medicine.
10. Describe the principles that both mentors and mentees must understand and adopt for effective mentoring.

Expected Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Design a research project, based on formulating a research question, and testing a hypothesis.
2. Design a research project that meets the requirements for the ethical and responsible conduct of research, including conflict of interest, bias, research misconduct, risk assessment, informed consent, privacy and security, and data reproducibility and management.
3. Incorporate appropriate statistical, analytical and evaluative methods appropriate to the research question and data collected.
4. Successfully prepare a final deliverable that meets the requirements established for the Scholarly Project.
5. Place their research in the context of scientific advancement and, where appropriate, clinical practice.
6. Demonstrate effective engagement as a mentee in a longitudinal mentoring relationship.
GENERAL COURSE ORGANIZATION
& structure

This is an 8-semester course. A succinct outline of activities by semester is provided below. Detail on activities by semester is provided later in the document.

**MED820A & MED820B:**
The first two semesters (MED820A and MED820B), will be devoted to core didactic training for all students, identification by each student of a research project and faculty mentor, submission of documents to appropriate regulatory bodies, and dedicated research time during the summer between MS1 and MS2.

**MED820C – MED820F**
Semesters 3-6 (MED820C – MED820F) will be devoted to continued research on the Scholarly Project.

**MED820G & MED820H**
Semesters 7 and 8 (MED820G and MED820H) will be devoted to preparing the final deliverable for the SP, and participating in the SP symposium.

DISTINCTION TRACKS
& the scholarly project

The SP is structured around the College of Medicine Distinction Tracks (DT). The intent of doing so is both conceptual and practical.

Conceptually, DT within the COM serve as a platform for students to distinguish their interests along thematic lines that characterize the UA COM, Tucson. Practically, this provides a framework to guide students in selecting a mentor and a scholarly project.

All DTs excluding the Community Service DT will participate.

Students will conduct their SP under the umbrella of a single DT. Importantly, this does not require the students to meet the requirements for achieving distinction in that track. It is essential for students to understand this fact. The SP will have a single common set of requirements which do not vary by track, and are not determined the DT. By contrast, each DT has a separate set of requirements to achieve distinction in that track.

Students must understand how the requirements for completing the SP within that track differ, if at all, with the requirements for achieving distinction in that track. This will be accomplished in a number of ways:

1. All DT handbooks will include an identical description of the requirements for the SP, separate and distinct from list of items specific for achieving distinction in that track.
2. The DT directors and coordinators will serve as points of reference to guide students in the decision process.

For MED820A, the primary role of the DT and the DT director, as it relates to the SP, will be to explain...
to interested students how the general categories of research topics listed for that DT fit within the overarching theme of the DT.

**ORGANIZATION OF SCHOLARLY PROJECT RESEARCH**

**criteria, guidelines, and collaborative projects**

**GENERAL CRITERIA**

1. Each student will formulate a main research question that they will answer in a scholarly way (e.g. through research and critical analysis) during the four years of their SP, in conjunction with a faculty mentor, who will serve in that role for the entirety of the SP.

2. Each student will conduct a separate SP. In other words, teams of students will not work on the same SP.

3. The topic of the SP is up to the student, and should be based on a combination of interests, experience, abilities and synergy with the those of the faculty mentor.

4. From that question, they will generate at least one hypothesis that they will test in addressing the research question.

5. The research methods used, the type of data collected, the processes of data analysis and interpretation, and the format for the final deliverable will depend upon and be appropriate for the specific SP.

**GUIDELINES FOR SUCCESSFUL SCHOLARLY PROJECTS:**

While there are no formal criteria that distinguish successful from unsuccessful research projects, the following are commonly understood guidelines:

1. The question, and the hypothesis, should examine an important issue. In order to make important advances in expanding knowledge, one has to study an important question. The question should pass the “so what” test. If no one really cares about the answer, the research fails that test.

2. The question, and the hypothesis should have no simple answer. While they should be focused, they cannot be answered with one word, a number, a list, etc. The answer should be evidence-based.

3. The data to answer the question/hypothesis can be generated, analyzed and interpreted in the time frame of the project.

**COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS:**

While many SP will be collaborative, involving multiple individuals (faculty, graduate students, undergraduate students, research assistants, others), no two students can work on exactly the same project, defined as having the same specific hypothesis. All mentors must, with student input, determine and specify the precise role of the student in ongoing or future collaborative projects, including student responsibilities and tentative discussion of authorship/credit for publications.
INSTRUCTORS
& contact information

COURSE DIRECTOR
Keith Joiner, MD, MPH
Location: COM 3121
Phone: 520-626-4655
Mobile: 520-977-5733
Email: kjoiner@email.arizona.edu

ASSOCIATE COURSE DIRECTORS
Assistant Course Director 1: TBD
Assistant Course Director 2: TBD

MD/MPH PROGRAM DIRECTOR
Joe Gerald, MD, PhD
Location: Roy P. Drachman Hall, Rm. A227
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Email: geraldj@email.arizona.edu

PROGRAM COORDINATOR
Desiree Rose
Phone: 520-626-3684
Mobile: 808-260-6939
desireerose@arizona.edu

DISTINCTION TRACK DIRECTORS

BILINGUAL MEDICAL SPANISH
Director: Alejandra Zapien Hidalgo, MD
Email: azapien8@arizona.edu

GLOBAL HEALTH
Directors: Jerome Koleski, MD & Sommer Aldulami, MD
Coordinator: Diane Poskus
Email: dposkus@email.arizona.edu

INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE
Director: Randy Horwitz, MD, PhD
Coordinator: Jackie Gomez
Email: azcim-imdt@list.arizona.edu

LEADERSHIP AND INNOVATION
Directors: Mindy Fain, MD & Serena Scott, MD
Coordinator: Travis Garner
Email: travisgarner@arizona.edu

MEDICAL EDUCATION
Paul Gordon, MD (Interim)
Coordinator: Travis Garner
Email: travisgarner@arizona.edu

RESEARCH
Director: Marlys Witte, MD
Manager: Grace Wagner
Coordinator: Graceann Thompson
Email: grace@surgery.arizona.edu

RURAL HEALTH PROFESSIONS
Director: Carlos Gonzales, MD
Coordinator: Hildi Williams
Email: hildi@email.arizona.edu
MED820A

1. **Orientation and Introduction to the Scholarly Project**
   In the first week of matriculation, all students will receive an orientation to the Scholarly Project, and an introduction to the full course MED820A-H. As part of this orientation/course introduction, students will be queried as to areas of interest to them as potential SP topics, as well as any preferences for the DT in which to conduct their SP.

2. **Attend all lectures/sessions on Evidence-Based Medicine in the Pathways thread during the Foundations block**

3. **Successfully complete the following CITI modules:**
   - **Biomedical Research Investigators**
     - History and Ethical Principles
     - Federal Regulations for Protecting Research Subjects
   - **Native American Research**
   - **Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR)**
     - Introduction to RCR
     - Authorship
     - Collaborative Research
     - Conflicts of Interest
     - Data Management
     - Mentoring
     - Peer Review
     - Plagiarism
     - Reproducibility of Research Results
     - Research Involving Human Subjects
     - Research Misconduct
     - Using Animal Subjects in Research

4. **Access training resources and personnel.**
   A comprehensive set of links for resources to assist students with conduct of their SP is listed below:
   - College of Medicine Research Guide
   - College of Medicine Systematic Review/Scoping Review Guide
   - Cochrane Interactive Learning
   - UA Campus Repository
   - University of Arizona Journal of Medicine

5. **Beginning during MED820A, and continuing through MED820B, students will work with the SP Director, Assistant SP Directors, Distinction Track Directors, and other faculty to:**
   - **Further hone potential areas of research interest.**
ii. Select a distinction track for conducting the scholarly project

IMPORTANT NOTES:

*Students must conduct their project in one and only one distinction track.* They can enroll/participate in other distinction tracks, although they will be encouraged to limit those choices to only one additional DT and will not be eligible to enroll in more than two additional DT. Since the SP is intended, among other goals, to differentiate students based on their scholarship at the time of residency application, focused effort in one or at most two areas will best provide that differentiation.

*The SP will serve as the equivalent of the Capstone Project in those DT that have a Capstone Project as a requirement to achieve distinction in the track.*

iii. Access various databases that contain interests, biographies, publications, grant funding and collaborative networks for faculty at the University of Arizona.

Students can access various databases that contain interests, biographies, publications, collaborative networks, grant funding for faculty at the University of Arizona. A new database is being generated for SP describing medical student projects, as submitted by faculty in the COM and other colleges.

The selection of a project and mentor is inherently an iterative process. No one database will provide all of the information that required to identify potential mentors and/or research projects. Nor will all the information for any given faculty member necessarily be complete. The databases will be most useful when combined with input from DT directors and faculty, SP leadership, course instructors, house deans and more.

**Searchable databases include:**

*University of Arizona Profiles* (http://profiles.arizona.edu)

This database lists all faculty at the University of Arizona, in all colleges and programs. It can be searched by keyword, including faculty member name, topic and more. Information for each faculty member includes biography, interests, courses and scholarly contributions (mainly publications). The information is downloaded from each faculty member’s UA Vitae, which is updated on an annual basis.

*Knowledge Map* (https://kmap.arizona.edu)

This database illustrates, using a network diagram, collaborative interactions between faculty. It can be searched by keyword. Publications and grant funding for individual faculty, and for their collaborators are listed. The top 40 outputs for the keyword entered are shown. This output is complimentary to that from the profiles.arizona.edu database in #1 above.

*University of Arizona Research Catalog* (https://arizona.pure.elsevier.com/)

The Research Catalog allows you to search for experts by navigating an interactive map, by concept
or last name using the search box, or by free text inputs such as articles or funding opportunity announcements.

**COM Curricular Affairs Faculty Research Projects database** (forthcoming).

The SP leadership (Director, Assistant Directors, and Research Assistant) in conjunction with each DT will also use the above databases to assist students in identifying a project and potential mentors.

iv. **Select a mentor for the SP aligned with the chosen distinction track**

**IMPORTANT NOTES:**

- This will be an iterative process. Based on steps 1-3 above, students will contact potential mentors, and meet either in person or by video.
- This is by far the most important task for students in the entire SP. A good fit between the student’s interest, the mentor’s expertise and mentoring track record, the research environment and research team, the plan and organization of the summer research experience and more will be the key determinants of success. To assist students with this process, a set of guidelines and suggestions for optimal mentor-mentee selection and matching will be provided to the students (I need to generate this set of guidelines).
- Prepare draft outline of proposal in conjunction with mentor.
- Determine necessary submissions for regulatory review by IRB or other regulatory agencies.

v. **Complete SP Submission form for approval, in the following sequence:**

- Submit to mentor for review and approval for submission.
- Submit to Distinction Track leadership for review and approval for submission.
- Submit to SP leadership (Assistant Director and/or Director) for final approval.

vi. **Submit documents to appropriate regulatory agencies for approval, including:**

- IRB
- Banner Health
- IACUC
- Research laboratory and safety services

vii. **Depending upon the proposed SP topic, the following CITI modules may also be required**

- International research
- Genetics research
- Research with Children
- Research with Prisoners
- Internet based research
- FDA-regulated Research
- Research involving pregnant women, fetuses, and neonates
- Records-based research
viii. **Attend lectures and small group sessions on posing a research question and constructing a research hypothesis.**

### MED820B

1. **Students will continue the process begun in MED820A to:**
   
   i. Identify a research project and mentor for that project.
   
   ii. Complete the SP Project submission form.
   
   iii. Submit documents to appropriate regulatory agencies.

2. **Attend required sessions on formulating a research question and hypothesis, and principles of the responsible conduct of research.**

### MED820C – MED820E

1. **Continue research**

2. **Participate in progress reports**

   All DT will be required to monitor progress on SP.
   
   - Multiple options will be available to assess that progress, but it must be documented on a standard form (below) to be submitted to SP leadership.
   
   - In circumstances where progress is deemed insufficient by the student, the DT, or SP leadership, a standard sequence/process will be in place to remedy the situation.
MED820F

1. Continue research
2. Prepare summary of final deliverable for SP and submit to mentor for review

MED820G

1. Finalize SP Deliverable
   The criteria for the final deliverable are provided at the end of this document.
2. Submit to mentor for review and approval for submission to DT leadership
3. Submit papers appropriate for publication
4. If appropriate, prepare and submit abstract to local, regional, national or international conference

MED820H

1. Present at UA Scholarly Project Conference
2. Revise/Resubmit publication
GUIDE TO SELECTING A MENTOR
for your Scholarly Project

WHAT MAKES A GOOD PROJECT MENTOR?
Good mentors are experienced scientists who guide your research, but also challenge you to develop your independence. A good mentor will help you define and focus your research goals, and then support you in your quest to achieve them. He or she will share knowledge and inspire you, help you plan your project to complete it on time, provide regular constructive feedback on your project, writing and progress, and, hopefully, inspire you. In addition to promoting your research, your mentor should help you to develop your career goals. Above all, your project mentor should be someone you can completely trust to always keep your best interest in mind.

Good mentors have different styles and approaches in guiding their mentees, so there is no one right or wrong set of characteristics to look for in selecting your mentor. Personal comfort and rapport with the mentor is ideal, but neither necessary nor sufficient for success. Keep an open mind, realizing that success in research requires a skill set that is different than, although often complementary to, being a good teacher and/or clinician.

The SP Director and Assistant Directors, along with Distinction Track Directors, course instructors, and other faculty will be important resources in helping you identify a potential mentor. They will assist you in the steps below.

HOW DO YOU IDENTIFY IF A PROSPECTIVE MENTOR MEETS THESE CHARACTERISTICS?
Experienced researchers typically make the best mentors. Experience in this context is not a direct function of faculty rank, age, or duration of faculty position. Publishing papers in peer-reviewed journals is the most credible evidence that the individual has research credentials. Hence, you should look at the publication record of any individual you are considering as a research mentor.

At the same time, most faculty (particularly clinical faculty) without much if any direct research experience have extensive content knowledge in their specialty and a good understanding of important questions to address through research. Co-mentorship, in which an experienced researcher is engaged as part of the mentorship process, can be a particularly effective strategy in this circumstance.

HOW DO YOU APPROACH A POTENTIAL MENTOR?
Once you have identified a potential mentor, you should send an e-mail introducing yourself and expressing interest in having them as your mentor. You should attach an updated curriculum vitae or resume to this e-mail, along with a brief description of your interests and career goals.

It is often helpful to get an “introduction” to that individual from another faculty member who knows them and/or has suggested them as a mentor. The SP director and assistant directors will be glad to provide that introduction.
There will be one of many potential responses to your email, including but not limited to the following:

**The potential mentor:**
1. Replies and indicates they would like to talk to you/meet you
2. Wants more information before talking with you/meeting you
3. Suggests someone else would be more appropriate
4. Indicates they are not taking students
5. Does not respond

**MEETING THE POTENTIAL MENTOR**

Regardless of the response from your email, and the need (or not) to search for another mentor, it is incumbent that you meet either in person (ideal) or virtually with the potential mentor. In that interview, take advantage of this opportunity to learn as much as possible about the PI and the research environment. In particular, it is important to determine whether his or her approach to mentoring matches your needs and expectations. Ask about other students who have worked under this mentor. If possible, meet with or contact those students to learn about their experiences.

Experienced researchers will typically have ongoing projects that they will describe to you, and will make suggestions for some new aspect of the project that could constitute your SP. They may or may not be willing to generate an entirely new project. Be flexible in your thinking about this.

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**FACULTY MENTOR RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Faculty agreeing to serve as mentors commit to the following:**

1. Agree to serve as mentor for 4 years.
2. Work with students to complete SP submission form, including appropriate and required sign-offs
3. Assist students in completing documents for submission to regulatory bodies
4. Insure students are progressing in their project. This can be accomplished in the fashion most suitable and appropriate for both mentor and student, including group research in progress meetings, individual meetings between mentor and student, or other mechanisms.
5. Record progress each semester using the required report form
6. Identify problems in collecting data and work to resolve them
7. Report problems to SP leadership, if not resolved promptly
The table below lists the required elements for submission of your scholarly project proposal. You will work with your mentor in preparation of this material. The total length should not exceed 5 pages but can be shorter. Maximum lengths for some individual sections are listed - figures and tables are useful ways to display the information. You will be given opportunities to update your SP plan as needed, so don’t be concerned that you are locked into what you write here.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STUDENT:</th>
<th>Last, First Name</th>
<th>Expected Year of Graduation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MENTOR:</td>
<td>Last, First Name</td>
<td>Department/College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFFIRMATION:</td>
<td>By checking here, I (the mentee) ) indicate that I have discussed the mentor agreement with my mentor and we have agreed to work together.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DISTINCTION TRACK:</td>
<td>Indicate the Distinction Track for your SP:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TITLE:</td>
<td>Title of your SP:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT:</td>
<td>Provide a brief description of the research question, and the hypothesis. 100 words Maximum.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE</td>
<td>Briefly explain why you have chosen your SP topic, from both a scholarly and personal point of view. How does this fit with your experience, priorities and career goals? How will you use the SP to differentiate yourself? Maximum ½ page.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE</td>
<td>Describe the background for your SP by citing the existing literature and knowledge base on which your research question and hypothesis are based. Explain why your question is important and how the knowledge you obtain builds on prior studies to generate new knowledge. Maximum 1 page.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPROACH</td>
<td>Outline and describe the sequence of activities and methods you will use to complete your SP. Describe the basic study design, data collection methods, and data analysis. Where applicable, include the estimates of sample size needed to obtain statistically significant results. List potential problems with data collection or analysis, and contingency plans should those problems arise. Maximum 2 pages.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>TIMETABLE</td>
<td>Describe the general timetable for SP activities and the timeline of key milestones. Be as specific as possible since this information will be used to evaluate progress at interim review points. Explain how the time allotted will be sufficient to collect the necessary data.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES</td>
<td>Describe the expected contributions essential to SP completion of individuals involved in your project, including yourself, your mentor, and, if applicable, other members of the mentor’s team. If part of a research team, your description should include information about if and how your project dovetails with other projects, and how it is distinguished from other projects of the research team.</td>
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<tr>
<td>COURSE WORK</td>
<td>Describe courses or educational processes (meetings, simulations, other) that you will take to expand your knowledge base on the topic or methods required to complete your SP. You need not list the required coursework for all SP, but only additional activities specific to your SP.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ETHICAL/REGULATORY APPROVAL</td>
<td>Please state if your SP requires IRB review and/or approval and, if so, at what stage is your submission (approved, submitted, in development). Similarly, if your SP requires approval from Banner, animal care and use (IACUC), or biosafety, state the stage of your submission.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFERENCES</td>
<td>List references that provide background for your project. Only include those that you have read, and are cited in your background and significance, innovation or approach sections. Include only the 10 most relevant references.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUDGET</td>
<td>Include an estimate of any anticipated expenses associated with your project.</td>
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<tr>
<td>SUPERVISORY APPROVALS</td>
<td>Your proposal needs to be reviewed and approved by your mentor prior to submission. Please indicate when you obtained this approval from your mentor.</td>
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SCHOLARLY PROJECT PROGRESS REPORT
Submission form

The table below is a document that must be completed and submitted by the mentor for each semester of MED820B – MED820H and submitted to SP. It need not be submitted for MED820A.

Date: _______________  Student Name: ___________________________________________________________

Course: ___________________  Distinction Track: ____________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
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<th>MENTOR (if identified)</th>
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<tr>
<td>MENTOR DEPT./COLLEGE</td>
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<tr>
<td>FORMAT FOR SP PROGRESS</td>
<td>[ ] Presentation</td>
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<td>ASSESSMENT</td>
<td>[ ] Written Summary</td>
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<td>[ ] Meeting/Discussion</td>
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<td>PROGRESS ON SP TIMELINE</td>
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<td>[ ] Poor</td>
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<tr>
<td>COMMENTS ON PROGRESS</td>
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PROBLEMS (if any)

CHANGES IN SCOPE/SCALE (if any)

OTHER COMMENTS

APPROVALS (Initial) [ ] Mentor ______ [ ] DT Director ______

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