Mason Gross School of the Arts
Research/Proposal Development Worksheet

I.   **Defining your issue:** What central issue or question does your project address?

II.   **Situating your project in a scholarly context:** What approaches, theories, or artistic practices will you use to carry out your project? How will you draw on models, artistic work, and/or literature from your field or other fields?

III.   **Justifying your focus, methods, and sources:** How and why are you focusing your project on the particular issues, people, artistic practices, etc. that you have chosen? How will you collect and record the information that you need to complete your research?

IV.   **Implementing your plan:** Describe how you will organize and carry out your investigation.
- What is your timeline for your research project?
- What research, writing, or artistic activities will you perform and when?
- How many people and/or groups of people will you need to engage?
- How do you envision implementing any programming in conjunction with this project?
- Do you have gaps in expertise that you need to fill, and if so, how might you fill them?
- What funding do you need to ensure the success of your project? Create a specific budget and a narrative justification for each item.

V.   **Analyzing/assessing your evidence:** How will you examine and analyze the data you collect to solve the research problem or answer the question you originally posed? How will you know if your project has succeeded? How and why do you expect to be able to complete your research project and meet your stated goals?

VI.   **Conveying your interest in the topic and your qualifications for it:** Why are you interested in this project personally or professionally? What pressing issues do you see in your work that will benefit from your approach? What expertise, perspectives, training, or community contacts will you draw upon to make sure this project is a success?

VII.   **Summing it up in an abstract:** Highlight the passages from the sections above that best convey why you want to do this project and how you think it will help solve the problem or answer the research question you outlined. Use active words like "argue," "show," or "demonstrate"—rather than more passive or undefined words like "examine"—to highlight the central thesis of your project.