
Workshop on Drafting a Research Topic Statement

July 2012

Purpose of this workshop:

The objective of this workshop is help with writing a 1-2 page statement of the research topic.

Note: The writing of the research topic statement intended as an exercise, and does not assume that you have selected your actual thesis topic. At the same time, what you do in this workshop may prove helpful to formulate your final research topic.

Drafting a Research Topic Statement

Prepare a 1-2 page draft version of a research topic statement.

1. Review

Review your submission to the assignment **Finding Topics and Related Research**. You can try to expand the answers to Questions 2-3 for your statement of the research topic.

2. Latex

Write your statement as a Latex document (using the bibtex bibliography). A sample file "researchtopic.tex" is available in a Dropbox folder.

3. Structure

Structure your document in the following way:

Title, Author, Date

Introduction:

- Describe the area of your research.
- What are the open questions in this area?
- What is the relevance of answering these questions?

Research Question:

- Describe the specific problem that you plan to tackle. If possible, state a hypothesis.
- Why is the research problem hard (that is, why does it require a PhD thesis to solve the problem?)

Related Work (State-of-the-Art):

- What is known about the topic of your work in the literature?
- What is the current state of the knowledge?
- What are the most related works? Discuss up to 5 related references?

Work Plan and Methods:

- Describe how you will conduct your research.
- Which methods will you apply? If you plan to devise a model, describe the model. If you plan to build a software/hardware system, describe the system. Etc.
- If your work has multiple parts, describe all parts.
- Describe the effort required, and provide an estimated time table.

Research Contributions:

- What are the expected research contributions of your work?
- How will your research contributions advance the current state of knowledge in your area?
- Describe how your results be useful to other researchers?

Bibliography.