

Anatomy of an Aligned Proposal

Use this guide to annotate the Megan Irby proposal. Identifying these strategies now will help you draft your own proposal in the next hour.

Strategy 1: The "Anti-List" Content Section

The Committee rejects proposals that simply list readings alphabetically because it fails to show "scaffolding" (progression of learning).

Look at Section 3 (Content) of the Irby Proposal:

- ☐ **Grouping:** Notice she groups content by **Conceptual Unit** (e.g., *Introduction to Roots of Health Inequity, Frames and Forces*, etc.), not by week or author.
- ☐ **Progression:** Can you see how Unit 1 (Introduction to the Roots of Health Inequity) builds the vocabulary necessary for Unit 6 (Shaping a New Narrative)?
- ☐ **Verbs:** Under each unit, she explicitly lists what students will *DO*:
 - Read: (The text)
 - Watch: (The media/film)
 - Write: (The specific reflection prompt)
 - Discuss: (The specific seminar question)

Your Takeaway: When you draft your content later, group your readings by *idea*, not by author.

Strategy 2: The Proof of Pedagogy

*A common Red Flag is vague pedagogy (e.g., "We will discuss the readings"). The committee needs to know **HOW**.*

Look at Section 2 (Format) and Section 3 (Content):

- ☐ **Specifics:** In Section 2, she mentions "shepherding the learning process" via "reflection assignments" (she also identifies specific materials and strategies to do this, such as peer-led group discussion guides when detailing her proposed assignments in Section 4).
- ☐ **The Writing to Learn Check:** Notice in Section 3, the writing assignments are **Reflections** (e.g., "Reflect on the allegory..."), not research papers. This aligns with the FYS mandate to focus on "writing to learn" rather than "learning to write".

Your Takeaway: Don't just say "we will discuss." Give an example of a specific discussion question or method (e.g., Think-Pair-Share, Debate, Peer-Led).

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Strategy 3: The Outcome "Formula"

Do not assume the committee sees the link between your assignment and the outcome. You must state it explicitly.

Look at Section 5 (Outcomes and Assessment): She uses a specific formula to map the 4 mandated outcomes:

The Mandated SLO	Irby's Translation (The "Formula")
Critical Reading	<i>"Students will... receive guidance to critically analyze texts and build concise, cogent arguments."</i>
Inquiry & Analysis	<i>"Students will... review selected materials... and spend class time sharing oral presentations."</i>
Critical Thinking	<i>"Students will discuss and debate issues... formulating their own conclusions."</i>
Communication	<i>"Written reflections... and creation of strategic action plans are fundamental..."</i>

Your Takeaway: Use the sentence starter: *"Students will [FYS SLO] by [SPECIFIC ASSIGNMENT], which requires them to [ACTION]."*