BIS/IDIM Proposal Statement Outline

The overall purpose of the proposal statement is to make clear how your general academic and other interests are related to your BIS or IDIM program. That is, it explains and justifies the courses in your program by exploring the logic of your program, the coherence and function of each of your concentrations, and the contribution each course makes to those concentrations. The following is an outline which you should follow while drafting your statement. Read it carefully.

I. Introduction and background material (approximately 1 page)
Describe your academic experiences and general interests as they relate to the program you are proposing. You should include both academic and non-academic goals and interests that are relevant to your proposed program. Keep in mind that this is a proposal for your academic program, and therefore you should emphasize the intellectual and creative aspects of the program.

Then introduce the most basic elements of your program: say in a couple of sentences the program you are pursuing (BIS or IDIM?) and its concentration titles (e.g. Art or Mass Communication). IDIM applicants should begin with a clear explanation of their Program Theme, explaining how it relates to the areas of concentration and how the concentrations themselves are interrelated. If appropriate, this is a good place for BIS students to note briefly any relevant connections among the areas proposed. You may wish to note briefly the relationship between your individualized program and your plans for the future.

II. Description of areas of concentration (approximately 3-4 pages)
The second part of your proposal statement should describe your concentrations. Discuss each concentration in turn, following the order in which they are listed on your Course Worksheet. Non-CLA concentrations should be described last. For each concentration, you must do the following:

1. Describe the concentration itself: its overall purpose and its specific focus or function. Explain what you expect to learn from the concentration, using concrete examples. IDIM applicants must explain how each of the areas of concentration contribute to an understanding of the overall theme. This may be done as part of your explanation of each area, or this may be the subject of a separate paragraph.

2. Now discuss each course. (Please note: You will probably not stress each course equally, but every course in your proposed program must be discussed.) Begin with transfer courses, if any. Then proceed to U of M courses, ordering them by course number (this should be the same order as they appear on your Course Worksheet). Explain how each of these courses contributes to your theoretical and practical understanding of your chosen areas and stimulates your interest in specific related issues. It is important to emphasize the overall coherence of the concentration – how each of your course selections makes sense in terms of your description of the overall concentration in (1) above.

III. Conclusion (approximately 1 page)
Briefly summarize the strengths of your proposed program. Emphasize the appropriateness of an individualized degree for you by focusing on how your course selection enables you to meet your academic goals. Explain how your plans for the future (career, graduate school, post-college plans) relate to your chosen course of study in an individualized degree program.

IMPORTANT: INCLUDE A COPY OF YOUR COURSE WORKSHEET!
Attach your Course Worksheet to your proposal statement and deliver them to 345 Fraser Hall. Be sure that the Worksheet lists all course designators and numbers, number of credits, and grades for completed courses. Also indicate whether credits are quarter-based or semester-based.