Hand in a new version of a senior project proposal. This can be a significantly improved version of the one you did in CMPSC 580 or, if you have changed your topic, it can be a new proposal.

Your proposal should have:

- a title
- an abstract
- the names of your proposed first and second readers
- a thesis (see below)
- a realistic assessment of the steps you need to take to produce these deliverables
- a plan for carrying out these steps (see below)
- anything else that you know about the problem or topic
- a list of references, preferably with annotations (see below)
- a feasible backup plan in case your initial project runs into problems

Thesis Statement

The thesis statement can be either a testable hypothesis (if your proposal involves doing experiments) or a brief descriptive statement that succinctly and concretely explains the purpose and value of your project. The first type of thesis is generally easier to state, but if you do this then you must explain something about the nature of the testing (e.g., what will be measured and how?). The second type is harder to pin down; for this you should consult with members of the computer science department faculty for advice on what is or is not an acceptable thesis statement.

The Plan

Your plan should include your use of your “support team” (regular meeting times or a regular review of one anothers’ work). The best kind of plan has definite goals combined with a definite timeframe. For instance, if your project requires a lot of background reading, you should “schedule”
time for doing this background research and set dates by which you will have summaries written of the relevant papers, books, or other resources. If your project requires the installation of third-party software, your plan should include a date by which you expect to have the software up and running. If you need to write code, you should have milestone dates in mind ("basic design done by . . . ; rough prototype for very simple cases up and running by . . . ; interface implemented by . . . ; first test run by . . ."). You won’t necessarily be able to stick to this plan (things go wrong), but it gives you something definite to work towards.

Annotated Bibliography

The BiBTpX format allows a field named “note”. Use this to enter anything you want to remember about the references you read. Later you can edit this information and transfer it to other portions of the document, but for now it is like a convenient online file of data upon which you can draw.

Submit two hard copies by next Friday.