Summary of Advice on Project Proposals and Charters
Prof. Vesecky, 12-5-13

Once your team is formed you will need to prepare and submit a project proposal and a charter. You will also need to submit a Gantt chart for your project. The Gantt chart will be submitted electronically so if can be viewed with MS Project. Often the Gantt chart is too big to fit well in a Word document. If your project is an approved one and your team is formed this fall quarter, you will need to submit these items by Friday midnight, December 13, 2013. This document is to summarize information that will help you in composing your proposal and charter. This material was covered in a Wednesday class by Dr. David Munday when he also went over some good and bad examples of proposals and charters from past classes. You can use the SDP website to look at past proposals and charters. The Google atmospheric sensors project from the fall 2012 class and the AMPS robotic delivery project from the winter 2011 class are good examples — and there are many others.

In the two tables below are the major items that need to go into your proposal and some advice.

- **Major Items**
  - Abstract (≈ ½ page)
  - Team members & brief qualifications
  - Motivation – Why are you doing this?
  - Objective – What?
    - Minimum functionality
    - Test for success
  - Approach – How?
    - Block Diagrams (overview & more detailed)
    - Division of Labor (non-overlapping areas of responsibility for each team member)
  - Budget Estimate
    - Justification
  - Conclusion – Why you think you will succeed & implications if you do.
For your charter here is a summary of the primary contents.

- **Primary Contents**
  - Contact Information
  - Overview (mission statement, project description, division of labor)
  - Code of conduct (meetings, time commitment, team interaction, finance handling, documentation management, decision making and dispute resolution, termination policy)
  - Agreement with signatures (see examples)
A few tips on your charter are given below.

- Try to foresee difficulties in team interaction and performance (Ch. 3 of Smith)
- Devise appropriate methods to deal with them
- Carefully define roles & responsibilities of team members
  - Team leaders
  - Finances
  - Procurement
  - Engineering leaders for subsystems
- Make sure everyone has contact information
- Don’t permit team members to become isolated -- specify times when everyone is in lab together
- Don’t be too harsh or too lenient – promote the wisdom of Solomon
- Timeline (Gantt chart) is helpful, including plenty of time for integration and test

So with this advice in hand get your proposal and charter in by Friday, Dec. 13\textsuperscript{th} 2013 and if they are approved you will be able to get lab space and a quick start on your project in the winter quarter. Work on the project during the break is strongly encouraged and will put you in a position to accomplish your goals effectively and in good time to meet the dead lines for completion near the end of the spring quarter.

Good thinking and good luck!