Mapping Your Research Plan

Erin I. Smith

Food for Thought

Spaghetti Plans

Lasagna Plans

Constructing a top-notch ~~lasagna~~ academic life
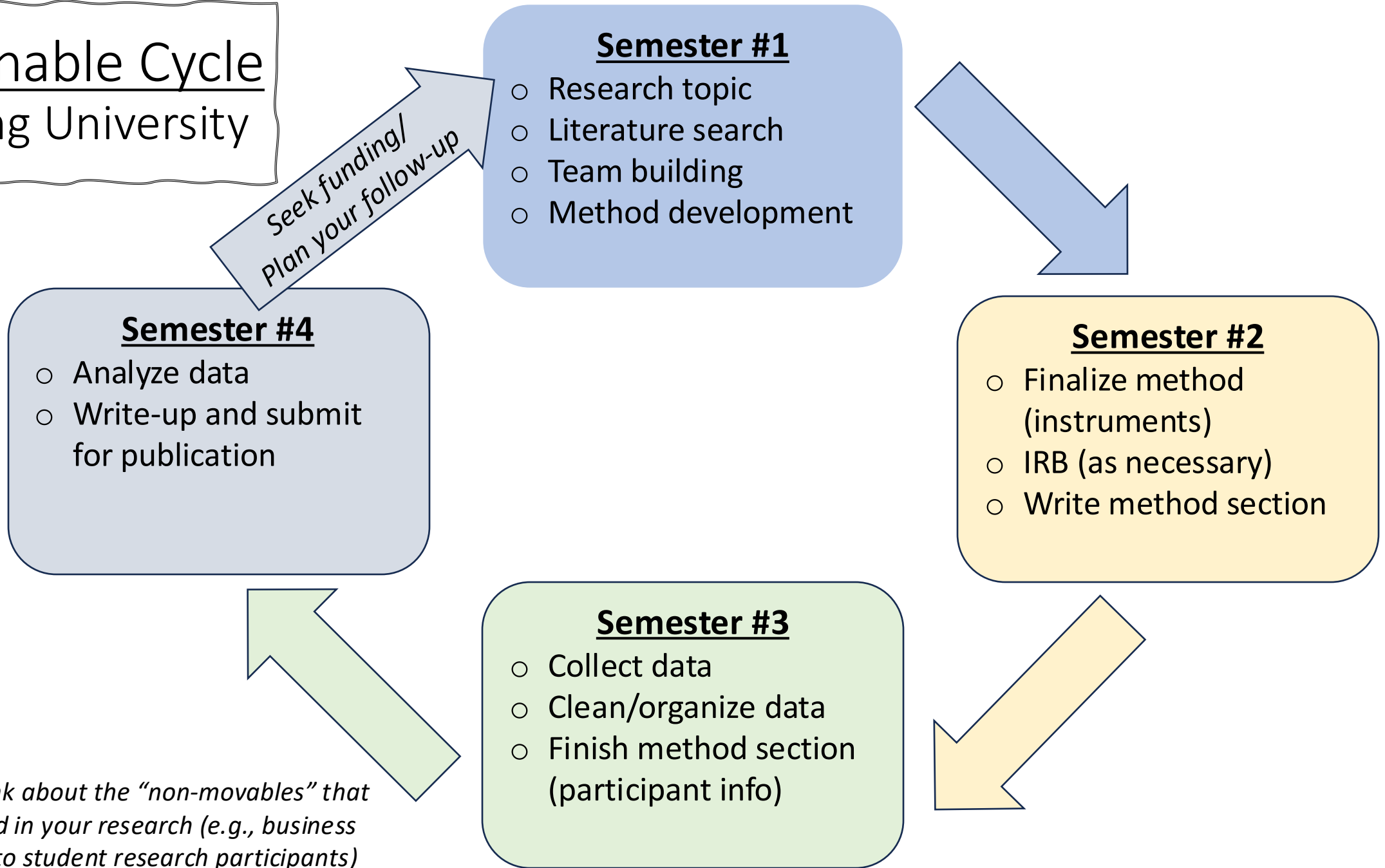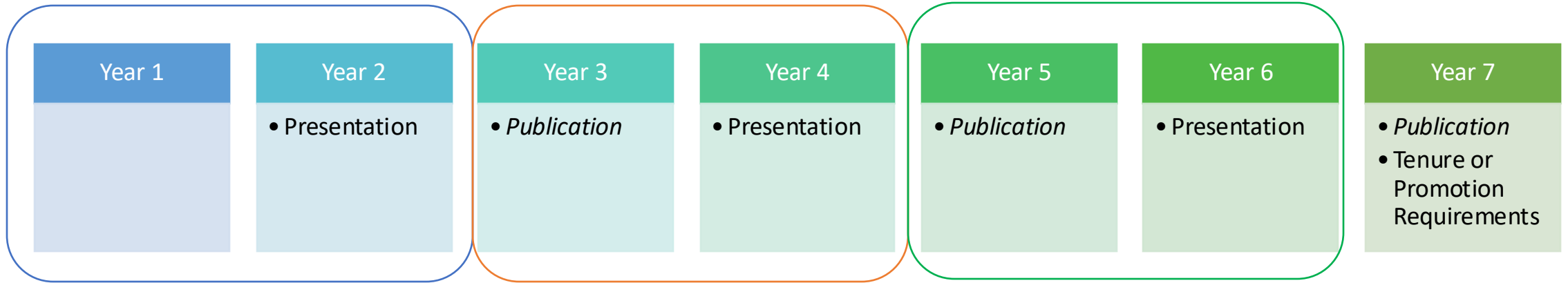
YOUR ACADEMIC CAREER – *early, mid, tenure, late…*
Teaching
Scholarship
Service
?

Sustainable Cycle
Teaching University

Semester #1
- Research topic
- Literature search
- Team building
- Method development

Seek funding/
Plan your follow-up

Semester #2
- Finalize method (instruments)
- IRB (as necessary)
- Write method section

Semester #3
- Collect data
- Clean/organize data
- Finish method section (participant info)

Semester #4
- Analyze data
- Write-up and submit for publication

Remember to think about the "non-movables" that may be embedded in your research (e.g., business timelines, access to student research participants)

Zoomed Out:

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7
	• Presentation	• *Publication*	• Presentation	• *Publication*	• Presentation	• *Publication* • Tenure or Promotion Requirements

- What are your scholarship threads and how do the time cycles overlap?
  - Individual work?
  - Collaborative projects?
- What is your research *agenda?* How do these pieces fit into a larger puzzle?

Example: A (near) decade of research
The Science of Children's Ministry

Question 1:
Does church matter? (i.e., can't kids get the benefits at home?)

Question 3:
What is the developmental impact of church-based social support?

Question 5:
What are the features of church children's ministries that are supportive for kids?

Crosby & Smith, 2015

Crosby, Smith, & Frederick, 2015; Crosby & Smith, 2017; Crosby & Smith, 2018

Smith & Crosby, 2017

Smith & Crosby, 2021

Crosby, Smith, LaChausse, Blanchette, & Palardy, 2021

First conversations started in 2013

Question 2:
How do we measure church-based social support for school-aged kids?
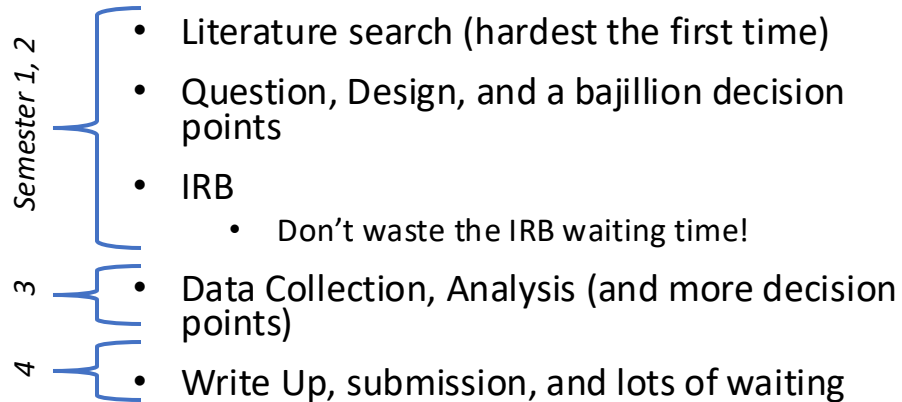
Question 4:
Yeah, but couldn't it be something *else* causing these outcomes?

Can we help ministries do better (and how), especially for kids who have experienced trauma?
Crosby, Smith, Gage, & Blanchette, 2021, Louisville Grant, reachhurtingkids.com

Research Project Cycle

Steps

Semester 1, 2

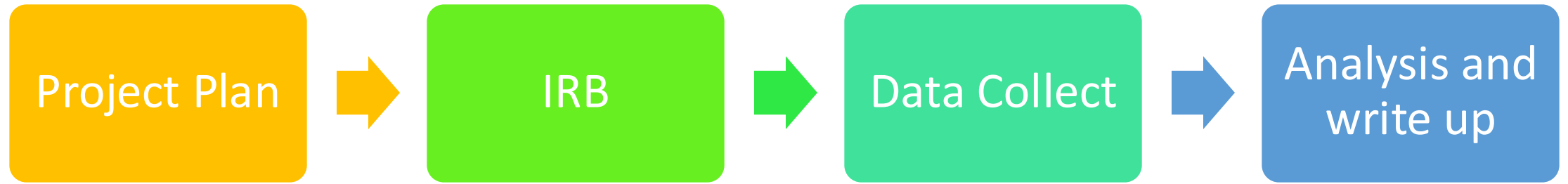- Literature search (hardest the first time)
- Question, Design, and a bajillion decision points
- IRB
  - Don't waste the IRB waiting time!

3

- Data Collection, Analysis (and more decision points)

4

- Write Up, submission, and lots of waiting

(Some) Resources

- Zotero/Mendeley
- Scopus/Web of Science/Google search alerts
- Kenneth T. Wang's Resources: https://ktwang.wixsite.com/ktw-home/resources
  - Lit Review Note System
  - Project Plan
  - Project Measures
  - *And others*
- AI Tools (e.g., ResearchRabbit.ai, elicit.com) – *use, but with caution*
- *Launching a Successful Research Program at a Teaching University* (Ryan & Milevsky)
- *Why Aren't You Writing? Research, Real Talk, Strategies, & Shenanigans* (Zumbrunn)
- *The Writing Workshop: Write More, Write Better, Be Happier in Academia* (Sarnecka)

2-year cycle

Project Plan → IRB → Data Collect → Analysis and write up

Weekly Rhythms

Wednesday: Scopus Alerts → Update Zotero (*even if I don't read them yet*) → Weekly writing or research time

Project Mapping

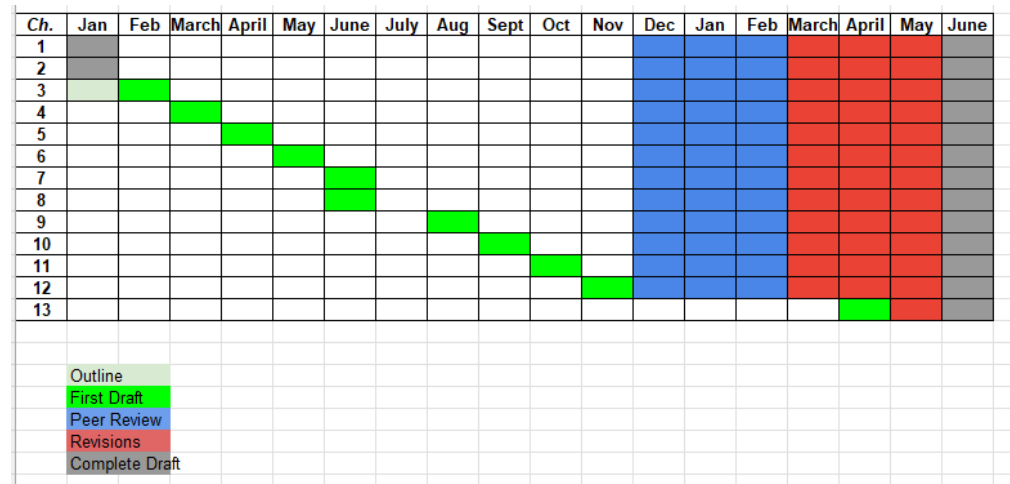| Ch.	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June
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Outline
First Draft
Peer Review
Revisions
Complete Draft
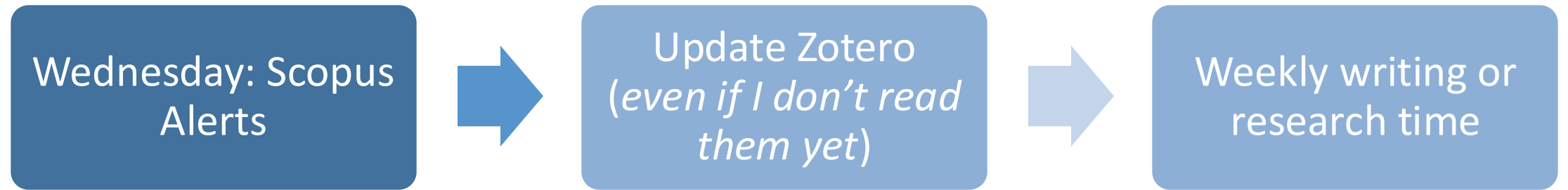
	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug
Resubmit (paper 1)	X															
Present (paper 1)			X													
Analyze (paper 2)	X															
Write up (paper 2)	X															
Submit (paper 2)		X														
Finish Guide		X	X	X												
Guide Expert Review (*No active work*)					X	X	X	X								
Guide Revisions										X	X	X				
Draft next grant application					X	X	X	X								
Grant End															X	X

A 90-Year Human Life in Months

Each row is 36 months = 3 years

Birth →

30th Birthday →

60th Birthday →

Turning 90

waitbutwhy.com