

Finding a topic:

interesting and sustaining

1. topics from courses that you want to explore in more detail
2. topics from courses that you always wanted to take that didn't fit in your schedule
3. topics that link courses/ areas of interest
4. topics from recent publications in your field that you want to know more about

strategic

1. highlighting a topic for graduate school or employment
2. highlighting your training
3. highlighting your unique combination of interests

If you are stuck:

1. generate a list of topics: make yourself add to the list each day
2. ask your friends what courses/ topics you talk about
3. ask professors to identify topics or publications

Once you have topics, for each identify 3 ways that you could study these topics.
Eliminate unfeasible means, help refine what interests you and how you can study it.

Narrowing and focusing the topic is part of your interaction with your thesis advisor.
Better to be too ambitious than to have a narrow or insignificant topic that won't sustain you.

Finding a thesis advisor.

1. Faculty who were interesting teachers.
2. Faculty who share similar interests.
3. Faculty who is student oriented.
4. Faculty with access to resources/ training which you need.
5. Faculty who has expressed interest in your ideas/ work

If you want to meet with faculty member and they are too busy, find someone else.

Ask the faculty member about their commitments: how quickly could they provide you with feedback, how regularly could they meet, how can they support you.

If the faculty member want to exercise more control/ influence over the topic than you are comfortable with, find someone else.

Talk to other students who have worked with this advisor and get their reactions; look for evidence of commitment to students.

Talk to your advisor about schedule of work, portioning out grades.

Make regular appointments to talk over your work, provide drafts of proposals, literature reviews, etc.

Involve Honors, departmental advisor, or department head in negotiating expectations if needed.