

Research Proposal Guidelines

There are three parts to the research proposal that you are going to submit here in Blackboard: a topic proposal (two pages in length), a traditional outline of your topic (one page), and an annotated list of three potential resources (one page) that you might use in your larger research argument.

Please upload a single, four-page document here in Blackboard before the submission deadline noted in the course calendar.

You should upload your work in either a Microsoft Word file (.DOCX) or PDF file for evaluation.

Format Requirements:

- Use Times New Roman, 12-pt font for all of your work
- Use double spacing for the topic proposal and the annotated citations and single spacing for the outline.
- Include a running header (right justified) on each page with your last name and the page number.
- The document should include the following information in the upper left corner of the first page of the document:

Student Name

Professor Name

Course Number

Assignment due date

Topic Proposal

The first two pages of this document should include your research proposal. Your work should address each of the following six areas listed below, and you need to include a word count inside a parenthesis at the conclusion of each section. Please follow the word-count guidelines listed for each section as follows:

- Summary (100-150 words)

Summarize your subject and the various subdivisions that you will be discussing. What is your overall view on your subject, and why have you selected this topic?

- Purpose (50-100 words)

What is the goal of this essay? After a reader puts the paper down, how would you like your writing to impact his or her thinking on this subject? Are you working to educate, inform, persuade, or create action?

- Audience (50-100 words)

Discuss the demographics of your target audience. What do they already know about this subject, and what do you need to explain for them in greater depth? Is your audience hostile, neutral, or sympathetic toward your approach to argumentation and/or your subject (this impacts the tone you will adopt)?

- Opening Statement, Thesis, or Hypothesis (50-100 words)

While you are likely still developing your thesis, take a stab in this section at composing the first 3-5 sentences of your thesis (narrowed topic + main ideas).

- Method, Materials, and Data (50-100 words)

Is your piece largely inductive or deductive? Which Web sites, books, newspapers, or magazines (specifically) will you be using? Which theorists or experts are most important in your subject area?

- Expected Outcomes (50-100 words)

Make an effort here to forecast your results. For instance, if you are researching the various medical applications for using stem cells, do you think this is a widespread phenomenon, or is it still an emerging area of research?

Outline

The third page of your proposal should include a traditional outline (Roman numerals, capital letters, numbers, and lower-case letters) which plots the course for your research paper. **Your work here should include an introductory section, at least three subdivisions for the body of your research argument, and a conclusion (sections I-IV).** It is okay if this plan changes in the course of your writing process, but for now you are just illustrating forethought in planning your work.

Annotated Citations

The fourth and final pages of your proposal should include the alphabetized citations for *three* resources that you might use to support your research argument. Each citation should include as much publication information from the core elements of the MLA documentation style as you can identify as well as a written annotation of 2-3 sentences outlining the features of this particular resource.

Please note that annotations *are not* required in the final draft of your research paper, which has a requirement of ten resources. This exercise is meant only to orient you to a common research practice that you are likely to encounter in future college classes. You can remove the

annotations and paste the citations into your “Works Cited” page when you have finished the final draft or your research argument. ⁽¹⁾

Here is a sample for what your final page should resemble:

Annotated List of Works Cited

Adams, Sarah. “Writing the College Term Paper.” *College Language Association Journal*, vol. 1, Southern University, spring 2016, www.url.edu.

This article by Sarah Adams outlines the steps necessary to compose a persuasive college term paper. The piece includes sections on composing the introduction, finding and evaluating resources, and compiling a list of citations. I plan to use her advice on developing an interesting hook, where she notes that “clear college writing should capture the reader’s attention from the first page.” ⁽¹⁾

Jennings, Alan. “Composition in the Technical Writing Classroom.” *IEEE Journal of Technical Communication*, vol. 45, IEEE Transactions Clearinghouse, summer 2015, www.url.edu.
Jennings discusses the... ⁽¹⁾

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