

Writing Challenge 5.0: Research Proposal

engl 281 / sec. D / autumn quarter 2009-10 / chang

A research proposal considers your overall topic ideas, your research question, your research process, and your sources and scaffolds what the next steps will be for the project. Many disciplines require written proposals before an experiment can be run, before a presentation can be made, before a seminar paper can be written. Research proposals can vary in length and scope. However, in general, all share certain conventions: framing of the project and putting the project in context or conversation with other research; a tentative claim or thesis or hypothesis; an approach or methodology; target audience; and tentative sources or references. For this week's writing challenge, you will generate a Research Proposal Memo to pitch a topic for your final, end-of-term Major Paper, which can take the form of a conventional, academic research paper or a McPhee-esque researched literary nonfiction paper. Memorandums (as used in the business and bureaucratic world) are brief, precise, information rich, semi-formal to formal, and purposeful pieces of technical writing. Your memo must address: 1) your specific paper topic establishing a prospective claim and exigence, 2) a brief outline of the paper, 3) your research plan, perhaps noting a key resource or two, 4) why the paper is viable, doable, and appropriate, and 5) any questions or concerns you might have about the assignment.

Guidelines and Due Dates

Format: 1-2 pages, typed, single-spaced, no title page, proper business memo format
Include a tentative bibliography if appropriate

Due: Tuesday, November 3, at the start of class

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