

TOPIC PROPOSAL

Due: 10/09 to Blackboard before Class

Professionals and scholars write to superiors to propose projects. For this assignment, you will write with the purpose of persuading your instructor that you have identified a viable research question this semester.

Format

This paper should follow MLA formatting guidelines. Your proposal should include bold headers for the Introduction, Rationale, and Request for Approval.

Introduction

The introduction should state your proposed topic, your research question and its significance. Provide any necessary background information or define any unusual terms or concepts. Finally, end the introduction with a *thesis statement for the proposal* which reflects the **purpose** for this proposal. This is NOT the same as your “working thesis” (which you have not yet determined).

Rationale for the Study

To support the *thesis statement for the proposal* you must show that your research question fulfills at least **two** of the following criteria for a viable topic:

- It will remain interesting to you for the duration of the semester (e.g., it applies to your major, your personal interests, etc.);
- It addresses an unsettled dispute or an unsolved problem;
- It is focused and manageable;
- It has been researched by others, including at least one scholar;

You will write a claim which reflects each selected criterion and you will support it with specific and appropriate information from your experience, your reasoning, and published sources (sources are optional at this point).

Aim to write at least one P.I.E paragraph which is **unified, developed** and **coherent**.

- **Unified:** Each claim supports the thesis and each piece of evidence supports the claim.
- **Developed:** Evidence is detailed and specific and refers directly to the sources (if you chose to show this has been researched by others—finding outside sources is optional otherwise).
- **Coherent:** Information is presented in a logical order.

Request for Approval

Your proposal will close with a request for my approval of your proposed topic. At this point you may want to reiterate its main “selling points.”

Grading Criteria

This paper is worth 10 Points toward the Informal Writing Assignment category.

Dimension	Criteria	Developing	Competent	Exemplary
Organization	Writer follows all MLA formatting conventions. Writer presents all appropriate sections (introduction, rationale, and request). The rationale section follows the "PIE" method: each developmental paragraph demonstrates unity and coherence.	2	3	4
Content & Argument	Writer presents his/her research question and its significance with context and clarity. Writer presents an appropriate thesis for this proposal and supports it with at least two argumentative claims which reflect criteria for a suitable research topic. Writer provides detailed, relevant, and convincing evidence to support each claim. Writer integrates evidence from sources with skill and accuracy.	2	3	4
Style	Documentation: If used, writer provides accurate attributions and/or in-text citations for each piece of evidence from the sources. Bibliographic entries demonstrate mastery of MLA style. ESWE: Writer uses Edited Standard Written English with precision and accuracy (grammar, spelling, and mechanics).	1		2

Key to Categories:

- I. Exemplary: The writer demonstrates mastery in this area.
- II. Competent: The writer demonstrates satisfactory skill in this area.
- III. Developing: The draft needs revision, and/or the writer needs further instruction and practice. .