**The Research Proposal**

Writing a research proposal is one way to effectively manage your research paper. A proposal gives you an opportunity to develop the foundation of your research paper. The proposal also will give your professor a chance to see and understand your purpose and your reasoning for choosing a specific topic. By doing research and constructing your proposal, you will hopefully be able to avoid any difficulties or issues that occur during the research process. Your objective is to make a case for the question(s) you plan to explore, the sources you plan to use, and the validity of the issue. Your topic should be **current and controversial**. The ultimate goal is to argue for change. Research both sides of your issue. The quality of your proposal will dictate if you will be permitted to write about this topic.

**Research Question.** What question will you be exploring? (**You must examine a controversial issue that has two clear sides**). You need to approach your topic as an open-ended question that needs answering first. You are going to have to explore both sides of the controversy in order to make a good argument. Why does this question need to be asked? Why does change need to occur?

**Research Conversation.** What have you learned about your topic? What side of the issue has the strongest argument? Can you narrow your topic? If your topic is too broad, such as immigration, how are you going to narrow your topic down to a manageable one? Your topic needs to be current and controversial. Reading, watching, or listening to the news will help.

**Search Strateg*y***. What sources are you using? Avoid blogs, student essays, and encyclopedias. What kind of experts will you need to include? Can you distinguish between a reliable and unreliable source? Always, consider the source.

**Managing Information.** How are you going to keep track of the sources you find? How are you managing the information you find? Suggestion: keep the information from different sources separate, and make sure you have all citation information in order to avoid plagiarism.

**Project Challenges**. What challenges do you anticipate (locating current sources, finding enough research information for both sides or one side, or finding a stance to take)? Creating a thesis?

**The proposal is due \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_to turnitin.com by 11:59 p.m.** A good proposal will address all of these questions and will be submitted to the instructor in **APA format, Times New Roman, 12-size font, and double-spaced, at least two-three typed pages.** The printed copy is due on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ at the beginning of class. Students who submit proposals that meet these criteria will almost certainly get their choice of a research topic.

**Format + Rubric**

**APA** format + cover page **(5 pts.)**

**References** page in APA format **(10 pts.)**

**Question**: Structure your research topic into a question **(5 pts.)**

Example: Should voting be mandatory in the United States? (Center this at the top of your second page, replace the title with your question)

**Paragraph 1 (20 pts.):**

* Explain why you chose the topic. How is it relevant to you? In what ways might it be
* relevant to the United States? To the world?
* Who is primarily affected by the topic? Be specific.
* Which side are you “leaning” towards? Why? Explain your reasoning behind this decision.
* Give a brief summary of your topic.

**Paragraph 2 (20 pts.):**

* Summarize the “For” argument.” Provide **three reasons** for the “For” side.
* Include at least one direct quote or paraphrased statement from at least one source; make sure you have a lead-in for each direct quote and cite each direct quote and/or paraphrased statement. You must have a lead-in for every direct quote. Cite each direct quote and each paraphrased statement.
* What specific evidence does the source give in support of the “against” argument? Is the evidence from experts? Why should this evidence be trusted? Is the evidence reliable? Why?

**Paragraph 3 (20 pts.):**

* Requires the same information as paragraph 2, but the “Against” side. Have at least three reasons for the “Against” side.

**Paragraph 4 (20 pts.):**

* What questions do you have about your topic? These questions will guide your research.
* What do you anticipate being the challenges in your research and in creating your arguments for each side?

**References:** at least two sources, one for each side.

**Reminders:**

1. at least two sources
2. at least one source for paragraphs 2 and 3
3. cite each piece of textual evidence

**Regarding sources:** Don’t use ProCon.org or any type of encyclopedia, blog, school newspaper, newsletter, or doctoral candidate paper. Don’t use a business.

**Attribution**:

Stelly, Kimberly. "Research Proposal [Assignment/Rubric]." *Strategies, Skills and Models for Student Success in Writing and Reading Comprehension*. College Station: Texas A&M University, 2024. This work is licensed with a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License ([CC BY 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)).