EN 102-056 S17

J.Park

# Major Essay #3: Proposal (cover story)

**Writing Task:** Your third major essay will be a cover story that will come in the form of a proposal. A proposal presents a well-defined problem and offers a well-supported and well-reasoned solution to that problem. Think back to the cover story you analyzed for your first major essay (How did the author present the depth and scope of their topic/subject? How did the author appeal to their audience?). Though your cover story may not have addressed a clearly identified problem, the topic was explored and presented with depth and thoughtfulness. In other words, though a cover story may not be a proposal, it can serve as a model for the level of thinking and writing you should aspire to include in your proposal.

A proposal is, at its core, an argumentative essay. You are arguing that a problem exists and you are arguing for your solution as the best way to address this problem. You will, therefore, use the argumentative techniques you’ve analyzed and evaluated in your sources to write a convincing, thoughtful, and well-rounded proposal. We will also look into other strategies for effective arguing later in the unit.

You will have full freedom in choosing your topic. You can choose a problem related to the topic/s you’ve explored this semester, you can rephrase the topic from the last major essay into a problem, *or* you can choose to pursue an entirely new topic. Whatever you decide, select a problem that you’re willing to earnestly engage with. Once you’ve identified a well-defined problem, you must do the research in order to provide necessary context for your reader, support/examples, and to come up with a solution. You must find and use *a minimum of* ***four*** credible and content-appropriate sources:

* At least three of these sources must be texts.
* Your fourth source can be another text, a visual (such as a documentary, a YouTube video, etc.), or a primary source (such as a personal interview or an informal poll).
* At least three of these sources cannot be sources you used in previous major essays.
* You are welcome to use more than four sources.
* Bonus: Create your own visual and include it in your proposal (7 extra credit points).

A note on writing for your **audience**: Imagine your proposal existing in the “real world.” Imagine your proposal as the cover story for a mainstream publication like *TIME, The Huffington Post*, *The Atlantic*, etc. What background information must you include to ensure your wide audience understands your problem? What kind of tone and style should you use for this essay? What types of examples and evidence should you include? How can you best convince your audience that your solution is the best?

In sum, a successful proposal does the following:

clearly defines the problem (includes sufficient background info/context and/or explains how the problem impacts your audience),

provides a thoughtful and comprehensive solution to the problem, considers anticipated questions to the proposed solution, and shows a critical engagement with the sources used.

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**Length**: 1500

**Format**: MLA (double-spaced, 12-pt Times New Roman, in-text citations, Works Cited page) **Grade weight**: 200 points (20%)

**Due date**: Friday, 4/7 at 6pm (submit to Turnitin); \*Revised due date – W 4/12 by 10pm **Essay Evaluation:**

Academic Honesty: All the work you turn in must be original and your own. You may not turn in work from a paper file, a friend or family member, the Internet, or a tutor. Papers that do not comply with this policy will be turned over to the Dean’s Office for review. Please see the academic misconduct policy on the course syllabus and your instructor for further clarification.

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| **Concerns** | **Points possible** |
| *1st Concern: Ideas*   * Does the writer demonstrate an understanding of the writing prompt? * Does the writer demonstrate an understanding of audience and purpose? * Does the writer present clearly articulated ideas that show strong critical thinking? * Does the writer present a clear, well-formed, and thoughtful thesis? * Does the writer maintain their purpose throughout the essay? | **/50** |
| *2nd Concern: Support*   * Does the writer use specific information to develop their point concretely and thoroughly without digression, repetition, or non-substantive material? * Is source material smoothly integrated into the writing? * Does the writer explain the connection and relevance of the source material they present? | **/50** |
| *3rd Concern: Organization*   * Are paragraphs organized around thesis-based assertions? * Does the introduction capture the reader’s attention and map the paper’s direction? * Does the conclusion effectively wrap up the essay? * Is the essay forcefully written with strong, logical progressions that aren’t formulaic? * Are transitions used within and between paragraphs in a way that enhances the development of ideas? | **/40** |
| *4th Concern: Style & Voice*   * Is the tone appropriate for the audience and purpose? * Does the writer’s voice seem natural, not forced? * Are the sentences substantive, powerful, and varied in construction? * Is there a balance between overly casual language that may undermine the writer’s credibility and overly sophisticated words that may sound empty or forced? * Will the reader be convinced that the purpose of the essay is sound and compelling? | **/35** |
| *5th Concern: Conventions*   * Does the writer correctly cite all sources? * Did the writer carefully edit the essay for careless mistakes? * Is the essay formatted according to MLA requirements? * Is the essay reasonably within the specified length? | **/25** |

(Rubric adapted from Dr. E. Chandler)