Proposal Essay

Assignment

Produce a formal proposal describing the research project you intend to pursue for the rest of the semester. This proposal should build on the material you have collected and created over the last number of weeks.

**Note: The proposal must be written in the third person--avoiding the use of first and second person pronouns (I, You, We, etc.)**

Structure

Introduction (one paragraph): The introduction is designed to hook your reader into your topic/proposal and provide some historical/cultural context for your project. At the end of your introduction, include a tentative thesis statement--this thesis should be clearly stated and placed in bold for emphasis.

Section 1 - Research Methods and Sources (multiple paragraphs): This section (as many paragraphs as you feel are necessary) will be broken into two subsections: (1) Discuss your research path so far. What articles have you already found? What are some of the new things these articles taught you about your topic that lead you to your thesis? (2) Discuss the methods and resources you will use to find additional resource material for your project based on what you have already found. Be sure to include references to sites, databases, and key terms related to your topic/thesis that you will use to find research materials. Make sure your reader understands how the methodology/sources you have chosen are appropriate to your specific topic.

Section 2 - Troubleshooting/Looking Ahead (one paragraph): In this section you should discuss potential issues/challenges you see arising from pursuing this project. Are you concerned about finding enough sources? Why? You don't need solutions for these challenges (yet) but you may want to consider how you will solve them.

Section 3 - Timeline (one bulleted list): Include a timeline for your research project using the due dates listed in the Course Syllabus as your foundation. That being said, do not simply state that you will complete the assignments listed by the dates listed--that's a given. Instead, set up specific milestones (by day or week) for yourself to help you stay on track. Example: If the Annotated Bibliography is due on Nov. 6th, when should you finish collecting your research so you will have enough time to thoroughly annotated all of your resources before that deadline?

Section 4 - Conclusion: In your conclusion, address the "So What?" of this project. That is, why does what you are discussing matter as more than an academic exercise ("Teacher says I have to write this and I want a good grade in the class")? Why should your audience want to read your research project? Why does it matter?

Section 5 - About the Author: As an addendum to your proposal, create a biography of yourself as a student researcher. Some items to consider when writing this section: Why should your audience trust that you will do a credible job on this project (ethos)? Avoid relying on subjective or vague pathos ("You should trust me because I'm a good person and I'll give this project 110%!") and focus more on objective items that an audience would trust.

Section 6 - Works Cited (Preliminary Bibliography): The final page of your proposal needs to be a preliminary Works Cited page containing citations for all sources consulted up to this point in your project development--especially sources that are directly referenced in the proposal. Be sure the citations are accurate to the most recent MLA format and alphabetized by the primary author's last name.

Final Draft will be 900-1200 words minimum—excluding Works Cited Page.

A little advice: Think of the proposal this way: If you were writing a proposal for a $10,000 grant, how would you convince your readers that they should fund your project? Would you use bland language, or would you finely craft it into something more dynamic?
Be sure to follow all format guidelines listed in the Course Syllabus:

1. Double-space the document
2. Use 12 point Times New Roman font (This item is in 12 point TNR font for reference)
3. Set all margins to one inch in the document
4. Indent the first line of each paragraph—this can be done by pressing the “Tab” button.
5. Create a header which contains your last name and page numbers—this must be an imbedded header, not simply typing this material at the top of each page. Please view this tutorial if you are having issues (“ctrl” & left click on the previous sentence)
6. In the upper left-hand corner of the first page, list your name, your instructor’s name, the course, and the date.
7. Use italics throughout the document when referencing longer works (books, magazines, newspapers, etc.) or film titles.
8. Use quotation marks when referring to article titles.
9. If you include a title, be sure it is centered and clearly separate from the main text of the document.

Course Outcomes Covered

- Adapt the writing process to a variety of tasks, formats, and genres, with more intense focus on the research process and argumentation.
- Produce writings on a wide variety of texts & materials.
- Search, retrieve, and evaluate materials accessed from print and electronic sources (academic databases & the WWW).
- Produce documented essays based on multiple sources -- both secondary and primary.
- Produce reflective memos, letters, and journals (as well as blogs, lists, and threaded discussions) about the writing process and the active learning objectives of the Program.
- Locate, evaluate, organize and use information retrieved from electronic sources, including academic databases and web sources.