

Research Proposal (for the Conference Time)

You may wish to note the research conferences meetings are mandatory as you must turn in a research proposal.

A research proposal is written after you have completed some preliminary research. It is necessary, therefore, to have gathered and READ some research before writing the proposal. The sources and opinions presented in the proposal can and probably will be modified in the writing of the paper, so you need not be wedded to this particular thesis. However, it would be to your benefit to remain on this topic in your research paper.

In the professional world (both inside and outside of academia), individuals hoping to spend time researching a project often submit these kinds of proposals to review panels who determine whether or not the research project should continue. Ideally, a research proposal proves to me (your one-man review board) that your chosen topic has merit and is a feasible one, i.e. it presents some engaging or interesting trend and that sufficient research can be gathered through the resources available to you.

Proving that your topic will work requires work on the front end (research, reading, and preliminary trials at synthesis). In the real world, a failed research proposal means you lose for this year and have to try again or abandon your work. In the world of this class, it means starting over with your research and perhaps a more hectic pace of work as you are attempting to meet your paper deadline. Please feel free to come by and "try out" research topics with me. Often I can help you to focus or narrow your topic, to provide some troubleshooting or help with research. Be sure to spend some quality time in front of a computer trying to find out whether or not there are sufficient resources for your topic and skimming these to see how valuable they will be to you. Fifteen articles that are too simplistic or too technical will not help you whereas eight that are comprehensible and relevant will. **I cannot stress enough that some preliminary research work (skimming articles, taking notes over them, and writing or outlining potential subtopics/causes) is the key to success here.**

In addition, remember that the research proposal does not signal the end of your investigation process. Return to research some questions further in writing your paper, adding support to your paper where needed.

The research proposal should include:

- 1) a paragraph or paragraphs describing the trend that you plan to investigate in some detail, including your preliminary thesis statement
- 2) a paragraph establishing when the trend started, what's it doing, etc. (Note: This will largely be an informational and statistical summary of your trend.)
- 3) a paragraph that describes one of the subtopics/causes you will investigate in the paper (hopefully one discussed by at least two of your sources)
- 4) the Work Cited information of sources you have found (3-4 of these are needed)) AND a brief summary of each (approximately 5 sentences) indicating specifically how the information found in these sources relates to the topic and the primary sources