A Modest Proposal Revisited

Due: Monday, October 20

You began your research eight weeks ago with a proposal. At the time, you may have begun some preliminary searching, but you were most likely unaware of what sort of information was out there. You might have found yourself wondering what sort of information you would be able to find, whether your initial attitudes would change, or whether you would be able to take a firm stance on an issue. Perhaps you had trouble with sections on the proposal assignment that asked you to define a research question, to consider sub-questions, or to suggest a structure for your paper or to propose potential resources.

The revisited proposal gives you a chance to come back to the ideas that set you in motion while you are mid-process; thus, you can take what you’ve learned and use it to develop a more focused, more informed proposal for your final research project. Continuing with our party metaphor of research, this is the point during the event where you survey your friends (the groups of writers and thinkers you have chosen to hang out with), and you decide how to wrap up your time together.

In other words, this paper is where you focus your research toward your final, persuasive essay. The purpose of this two-page assignment is to give you a space to generate ideas relating to the work you have done so far and to provide you with an opportunity to formulate a research question to address when writing your final paper and to take a stab at a thesis for your paper.

You should have a topic that matters and you should already have spent some time with it. Make sure that an argumentative claim may be made about it. Make sure, too, that such a claim can be argued reasonably and completely in eight to ten pages.

Guidelines

Typically, a proposal is a fairly pointed, organized genre. You must address the following inter-related questions in your proposal in order to receive full credit:

- What is the research question you will be exploring? Once you have a topic, you’ll form a “research question” about that topic. Examples of research questions include: “Is deer hunting a violation of animal rights?” or “Do conventional IQ tests show racial bias?”
- Why have you chosen to explore this research question? Why is it a worthy
question? Identify the controversy or the question at the heart of your research project. You should have a sense of at least two sides of the question.

- What are related sub-questions to the over-arching question that you might consider?
- What are your ideas for structuring the paper? After reading what experts have to say about your topic, where do you stand on the issue? The thesis statement is the argumentative claim that supports the entire essay. This assignment is where you attempt to identify a thesis statement, and you identify the objectives and goals of your research.
- Explain why you chose this topic. Why is it important and interesting to you and to others?
- Identify four specific resources you think you will use, based on your earlier research. At least two should have academic rigor.

Format

Follow MLA style for formatting your proposal. The final copy must be in 12 point Times New Roman, with the appropriate heading and pagination. Title your proposal—and not simply with the word “proposal.” You must be in class to turn in the assignment; it is due at the beginning of class on the date due, October 20. No late proposals will be accepted.

I will read your draft:

- to determine your success in writing a proposal;
- to look for a research question and thesis;
- to find answers to all of the above bullet points.