

## Essay 4: Proposal / Field Research

### Discourse-Community: *The social context for your writing*

Your assignment is to write a proposal for an improvement to a public facility. Think of your proposal as a way of participating in a community of civic-minded residents of your area, who frequently share their ideas about how to improve local conditions with each other and with those in power. To write effectively for that discourse community, you will need the four types of knowledge described below.

<b>Rhetorical Knowledge:</b> <i>Who you will write for</i>	<b>Subject-Matter Knowledge:</b> <i>What you will write about</i>	<b>Genre Knowledge:</b> <i>What you will write</i>	<b>Process Knowledge:</b> <i>How you will write</i>
<p><b>Primary audience:</b> In your prewriting, identify a reader or a group of readers that could conceivably act upon/carry out your proposal (e.g., city council, parks commission, etc.). In writing a proposal, you essentially ask the audience to approve your plan (not by addressing the audience directly, but by submitting a plan that appeals to them). Your audience may know more about the topic than you do, so it is important to demonstrate that you have acquired sufficient knowledge to present a well-informed proposal.</p> <p><b>Secondary audience:</b> As your instructor, I will read your proposal to evaluate how effectively you have addressed your primary audience.</p>	<p><b>Topic:</b> Your topic should be a public facility. Your proposal will suggest the addition of something new or a change to the public facility. You will gather new knowledge about the facility via field research. Keep these pointers in mind:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A public facility is a place for public use, funded and maintained by the government or a nonprofit organization. Examples include parks, community centers, certain clinics, parking garages, intersections, etc.</li> <li>• You should choose a facility that you can observe closely. You also need to be able to interview someone who knows a lot about the facility.</li> <li>• Your proposal will outline a plan for changing the facility or adding something new to it. This might mean changing or adding a policy, or changing or adding something physical (such as equipment).</li> <li>• Your proposal must focus on a change or addition to an <i>existing</i> facility (if you propose an entirely new facility, you will have nothing to observe during field research).</li> </ul>	<p>In a proposal, the writer’s purpose is to suggest change to an existing situation or the establishment of something new in an existing situation. The writer justifies his or her suggestion by showing a need for change and by emphasizing the benefits of the proposed action; the proposed change must be described fully.</p> <p><b>Definitions:</b> Understanding these terms will help you to formulate good ideas for a proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposal: A suggestion or plan</li> <li>• Justification: Reasons, validating statements</li> <li>• Benefits: Positive outcomes, advantages</li> <li>• Description: A full depiction</li> </ul> <p><b>Thesis:</b> The thesis of a proposal is a <i>suggestion</i> (for example, “The FDA should make the labeling of tobacco products much more informative...” ) which mentions the <i>benefit(s)</i> of the proposal (“...so that consumers will better understand the consequences of smoking”).</p> <p><b>Organization:</b> In general, the proposal should be organized as an informative essay, with an introduction, body, and conclusion; a central thesis; and unified, well-developed paragraphs. The particulars of organizing proposals will be examined in class.</p> <p><b>Length:</b> The proposal should be <u>approximately</u> 700-1000 words (about 2-4 full typed pages, double-spaced).</p> <p><b>Format:</b> The paper should be presented in APA format. In the case of an essay that requires no library research, be sure that the title page, abstract, and running head are in APA format. Parenthetical citations of personal communications (phone calls, emails, interviews) should follow APA guidelines, which will be discussed in class.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. After analyzing the task and conducting invention activities, complete Guided Prewriting 4.1 and submit it via Moodle for instructor feedback and approval.</li> <li>2. You are required to do field research by observation and interview. Make sure you can spend up to half a day observing public use of the facility you plan to write about, and that you can set up an interview with an expert about the facility. In the interview, you will ask the expert a series of questions about the facility. It is crucial to do your observation before you do your interview.</li> <li>3. Complete Guided Prewriting 4.2 and share it with your team to get feedback.</li> <li>4. Revise/edit/tweak Guided Prewriting 4.2 and submit it via Moodle for instructor feedback.</li> <li>5. Write Draft 4.1 and submit it for peer review by teammates (who will read the draft before class and provide written feedback during class). Bring a hard copy of your draft to class on the Draft 4.1 due date.</li> <li>6. Revise Draft 4.1 based on peer review feedback to create Draft 4.2.</li> <li>7. Print a triple-spaced version of Draft 4.2 and bring it to class for editing.</li> <li>8. Submit a revised and edited draft (Draft 4.3) for grading and feedback by your instructor.</li> <li>9. Turn in your team’s prewriting evaluation, your team’s peer review of your draft, and Draft 4.2.</li> </ol>