

# Business and Technical Writing: The Proposal

## Due Dates

Each one of these elements is assigned a point value. *Failure to produce a viable product on these dates results in the total loss of those points.*

**Planning Guide: 3/19 (10 points)**

**Rough Draft: 3/23 (10 points)**

**Final Draft: 3/25 (40 points)**

## Background

A proposal is a document that presents a problem, situation, or task that needs to be addressed or examined. It tells the reader what the problem or task is and the approach(es) that may be taken to solve it or achieve it. In this assignment you will be generating an idea for a proposal, drafting the document, and then completing it. It is, however, only one half of the assignment.

The second half of this assignment is to create a formal report (the final assignment in this class). The requirements for the report will be explained on that assignment sheet, but briefly, for this proposal assignment you will need to select a problem, topic, or task large enough to deserve sustained investigation, but manageable enough that you can find or produce enough information to report on. I am willing to consider a wide range of topics, but you must convince me that you have chosen a worthwhile topic that you are capable of handling well.

After you have written the proposal and it has been approved, you must then go out and actually do what you have proposed; therefore, your proposal should be “real” in that it should address a problem, issue, or task that you think requires examination. For example, one year a student used this assignment to write a proposal to teach a guitar experiential class. Her report was then the submission of detailed lesson plans and curriculum guidelines, including any educational theory she investigated. Another student wanted to write a number of applications for scholarships for college. Her report was the presentation of these applications (forms and essays) and a written analysis of her activities. Finally, a student wanted to create a walking chart from Delta of highly visited areas (i.e., how far is the walk to the South Building? How far is the walk to Wendy’s? How long do the walks take?). Her report was the production of a chart which she hung in the hallway.

You may follow the superstructure of the proposal (we'll go over this in class), or you may reorder some sections according to need. Your proposal should contain some or most of the following:

- Introduction: this is where you give a brief overview of the sections of the document.
- Problem: what is the problem you will address
- objectives: what features will a solution to this problem need in order to be successful?
- Solution or product: the plan for achieving the objectives. How you propose to address the problem.
- Background data/sources: where will you get your information?
- Scope/limitations: what (if any) are the project's parameters?
- Methods: the plan, the resources, the schedule (often broken out as a separate section), the logistics.
- Budget: not always relevant, but if you have costs, put them here.

### **Audience**

The purpose of this proposal is to pitch an idea for a formal report or product. The primary audience is one who has commissioned the proposal and who has the authority to approve, reject or use your work. The report may have the additional audience of those who might be impacted by any recommendations or findings presented in the report, so keep this in mind when producing the proposal. For example, the proposal may be to investigate an alternative location for Delta, and its audience would be me. Bu the report itself would have a much larger audience: the Delta community, the school board, and even the State College community.

### **Group Work?**

If you wish you may implement this project in a small group that must be pre-approved by me. However, everyone in the group will be responsible for writing a proposal and the following report. Please speak to me ASAP if this is an option for you.

### **Format**

This document should be double-spaced, typed and approximately 2-3 pages.