

Proposal Essay

You will write a 4-6 page, double-spaced, 12 point font essay proposing a solution to a problem faced by a community or group to which you belong, and address your proposal to anyone who might help solve the problem.

Comment [s1]: Like most written work, an assignment typically starts with an overview, giving the reader the big picture. Notice that audience, in this case "anyone who might help solve the problem" is an important consideration.

This paper should be in MLA format, including the headers, page numbers, and in-text citations and Works Cited page. Use Times New Roman 12 point font as your font type, please. **(Use that for the Essay and for the Topic Proposal and Annotated Bibliography, too. Make sure that all 3 of these assignments are formatted in MLA format, from the paper headers to the titles to the citations.)**

Comment [s2]: The assignment sheet then begins to break the task into component parts. This paragraph explains style and format. MLA style is one of the skills taught in English 111, and students should understand that the paper requires them to demonstrate that skill.

You should pick a topic that has a direct impact on your life. Think of an issue that you are deeply interested in and that affects your daily living. The best research papers are about something that interests you. Don't forget that this is a *persuasive* paper; your primary purpose is to convince your readers that your proposed solution to the problem is the best one for the given situation.

Comment [s3]: Words like "topic . . . issue . . . persuasive" help students know that this paragraph is about content and approach. In this case, students are being invited to choose a topic of genuine interest.

As with your previous essay, please write this essay in an academic voice: avoid the words "you" and "your" and if you use the word "I" make sure it is in connection with a personal example. Avoid phrases like "I think," "I feel," or "I believe."

Comment [s4]: Although many research assignments forbid the use of first person, in this case "I" may be used as appropriate to refer to personal experience. "I think," however, is considered unnecessary because any statement of belief or thought would always be attributed to the author. Reading an assignment sheet carefully can help students avoid pitfalls, such as assuming that all course assignments will have the same 'rules.'

Sample Paper Topics	
Problem	Possible Solution
Classes fill up too quickly and students are unable to graduate on time.	More online classes should be offered to allow students to finish their degrees on time without putting undue stress on campus resources, such as classroom space.
Students cannot get financial aid without information from their parents if they are under the age of 24.	Financial aid should only require parental information if the student is still claimed as a dependent on his or her parents' taxes.
Single parents struggle to juggle their parenting and work responsibilities.	There should be more opportunities for telecommuting.
Child care is too expensive.	Child care centers should write grants to increase funding and reduce costs to parents.

Comment [s5]: Examples are important. In this case the examples offer some topic options that might help students choose their own topics. The chart also demonstrates the problem/solution framework so that students can begin to imagine their own ideas in a similar framework. However, there is no reason for students to choose any of these topics over an original idea. Everyone choosing the same topic would make for repetitious reading for the instructor.

Working students cannot get to campus during the day for registration, advising or financial services.	College administrative offices should stay open in the evenings and weekends to accommodate these students.
An organization you belong to is running out of money because no one pays dues.	This organization should raise money through fundraisers and activities instead of membership fees.
College admission policies put too much emphasis on standardized tests, penalizing those who are poor test takers but excellent students.	Colleges should assess students based solely on GPA, extracurricular activities, and letters of recommendation.

Your essay must have:

- **A well-defined problem.**
- **A clearly described solution. (In some cases 1-2 clear solutions may be ok, too.)**
- **A convincing argument in support of the solution(s).**
- **An anticipation of readers' objections and questions—counterargument(s).**

It is important in this assignment that you address your opposition. At some point in the paper, you need to acknowledge your opposition and deal with opposition points. You can choose to either completely refute an opposition point, or you can choose to concede that the opposition's point is of some value. You may find that you do both of these things at the same time

(You may use counter arguments in the section of your paper where you define the problem—the counter arguments could show why the other side does not think the problem is really a problem. Or you could use counter arguments in the section of your paper where you offer a solution, showing that the other side does not agree with your proposed solution. Or you could include counter arguments in both areas of your essay. Wherever you include counter arguments, you must make it clear that the other side's viewpoint is not your viewpoint and you must always refute or concede!)

- **Evidence to back up your ideas.** You will be conducting research to find statistics, facts, quotes from experts, and studies. You should also conduct an interview if it's a possibility for your topic. Hypothetical examples, anecdotes, and personal experience can also be used in this paper. (You may need to use evidence to define your problem and really convince your reader it really is a problem. You will also likely need evidence to support the validity of your proposed solution.)

You must use 5-7 research sources in this paper. Research sources can include magazines, books, credible internet web sites, scholarly journals, articles from NC Live and interviews. You will use MLA documentation to give credit to your sources through in-text citations and a Works Cited page. **No more than 3 of your sources can be internet web sites and you must use at least one database article.**

Comment [s6]: This section helps students understand how the essay might be organized and what should be included.

Comment [s7]: Any good essay must have evidence for support. Here students are being instructed to conduct research as well as to use personal experience. Some restrictions are being placed on the types of sources that may be used in order to direct students to reliable sources.