

Writing Project 3: Proposal



Timeline for Project 3

- Week 11: Intro to Climate Change + Topic, due MON 4/5
- Week 12: Annotated Bibliography + Outline, due MON 4/12
- Week 13: Draft Building, due MON 4/19
- Week 14: Draft Workshop, due MON 4/26
- **Week 15: FINAL Proposal, due by midnight WED 4/28**

Project 3: Proposal is the capstone writing project for English 102: Advertising, Consumerism, and the Environment. Your completed project will reflect the culmination of your skills in research, analysis, argument, and revision, as well as your knowledge of our course theme. An effective proposal identifies a problem, informs readers about the issues surrounding the situation, and persuades readers to take a particular course of action in response. You are to identify a problem related to advertising, consumerism, and environment by focusing on one specific solution related to **climate change**.

We have spent a great deal of time this semester studying the power of advertising and the problems of over consumption. As Sut Jhally argues in his film *Advertising and the End of the World*, commercialism pushes collective issues, like social and environmental problems, to the margins of our awareness. How can we find solutions to these problems by confronting the cycle of consumption? Your proposal should speak to this larger ethical question. We now know these human activities over the past 100 years have brought us into an era of **climate change**--when the effects of our overuse of fossil fuels, over-consuming and disposing of products has increased our average global temperature enough to cause patterns of extreme weather, disease, extinction, and social unrest.

Unfair as it may seem, **you** are inheriting a climate change problem that you did not create. However, it is **your generation** who must face the consequences of the lifestyles of your parents, grandparents, and great grandparents' generations. It is up to **you** to constructively address the problems of climate change to ensure we have a livable earth far into the future.

It may sound hopeless. But it's not. What humans do **now** will determine how our future plays out. Remember, you don't have to (and cannot) solve all the problems of climate change all

alone. Nor do you have to be a climate scientist to understand how we created the problem and how to fix it. Instead, you can tackle **one** aspect of climate change based on your interests, knowledge, skills, abilities, and concerns. The idea is to choose **one specific problem**, research how the problem can be addressed **locally**, and propose a **solution** to the appropriate **audience**—those with the power to make the necessary changes.

An effective proposal identifies a problem, informs readers about the issues surrounding the situation, and persuades readers to take a particular course of action in response. You are to identify a problem related to advertising, consumerism, and environment. The table below will help with topic ideas. You might choose an idea outside of these categories, but you must submit it for approval.

Industry + suggested documentaries	Problems	Solutions
Fashion/Apparel	Sweatshops, exploited workers, cotton farm pesticides, chemical pollution, excessive waste	Fair Trade certification, livable wages, sustainable sourcing, upcycled fashion, curb consumption
Food	Hunger, food insecurity, food deserts, pesticides, fast food/junk food, health problems	Organic food, whole food diets, local farms & foodways, community based agriculture
Plastics	Not biodegradable, kills wildlife, Pacific trash heap, petroleum based (“dirty”)	Stop single-use plastics, Recycle/reuse, clean up trash
Agriculture/Farming	Methane, land use, deforestation, transportation, animal welfare, pesticides	Plant-based diets, local food systems, clean sustainable humane farming practices
Oil/Energy	Biggest polluter. Non-renewable, “dirty” fossil fuels, coal/oil, globalization, mass profits & zero accountability	Renewable/clean energy (solar, wind, geothermal etc), alternative fuels, green cars, green transportation

Topic Statement

First, establish a topic that interests you, is related to the course theme, and is specific and debatable, and relates to the above industries (or other subject to my approval). The more specific and interesting the issue, the better your proposal will be.

This template can help, though you are not required to follow this format:

In my Proposal, I will address a problem within the _____ industry. This problem contributes to climate change by _____. I see the problem as _____ and the solution as _____. I am interested in this topic because _____. My research will answer the

question _____? My proposal will be written to _____ (actual audience) because they have the power to implement the changes proposed. The people who are affected by the problem include _____, and those who will benefit from the solution are _____ (implied audience).

Another way to write your topic is like this:

Big Problem: Plastics are bad for ocean life.

Big Solution: We should stop producing and using plastics.

Naysayers: The plastic industry wants to keep making profits. Consumers like the convenience of plastic.

Local Problem: The use of plastic grocery bags pollutes roadways and waterways.

Local Solution: The city of Spartanburg should ban single-use plastic bags.

Audience: Spartanburg City Council members

Annotated Bibliography

As you prepare for the final paper, compile an annotated bibliography of at least five academic sources from the USC Upstate Library or Library Databases (not from Google or other Web-based searches) that provide information and/or arguments about the topic you plan to discuss in your final paper. These sources can help you to understand the issue you are exploring and the various critical responses different groups have to that issue. You may agree with some of them, but at least one should advocate a position that you do not support. Your goal is to learn more about your topic, not merely to confirm what you already believe.

Your Annotated Bibliography must include the following:

1. A full citation information in MLA style for each source.
2. An annotation, or explanatory paragraph, that accomplishes these two tasks:
 - **summarize** the point and argument of the text and the type of evidence used to support its claim. This summary should be a restatement of the main ideas. You should always think of a summary as an overview; distill the text to its most essential points. The purpose of a summary is to explain what someone else said, not just what they are talking about. For instance, don't say, "This article discusses three solutions to the problem of climate change." Instead, list the three solutions the article discusses and summarize the argument it makes about the three options. Be sure to introduce the author at the start of your summary, and use signal phrases to show that the ideas belong to the text. Occasionally, you may integrate brief quotes, but in general you should be summarizing or analyzing in your own words.
 - **evaluate** the strengths and/or weaknesses of the source based on the quality of evidence and the effectiveness of the argument. Be aware of potential bias, which can be due to the author's politics or values, as well as area of expertise. Most academic journals include brief biographies of the authors, which can provide you with a sense of their potential bias.

EXAMPLE Annotated Bibliography entry:

Carrington, Damian. "Why There's Only One Honest Objection to Wind Farms." *Damian Carrington's Environment Blog*. The Guardian, 21 Jun. 2012. Web. 28 Jan. 2013.

Carrington argues that the British government's decision to subsidize wind farms has not led to an unfair increase in fuel prices and is therefore not responsible for what has been called "fuel poverty" of a large section of the British population. Fuel poverty refers to the inability to cover the cost of fuels needed for transportation and other generations of energy, such as heating and cooking. Carrington is reporting to concerns that the rise in the price of electrical energy has left large sections of the populations unable to purchase fuel energy. To provide more information on how wind power works, he hyperlinks to the "renewable energy" section of *The Guardian*, which lists a number of reports that provide information on renewable energy.

Guidelines

You will propose an informed and carefully considered course of action to a particular audience, making clear your reasoning and justification. You will attempt to persuade that audience to accept the course of action you are proposing through careful analysis and research as well as ethical use of rhetorical strategies. Keep in mind that a proposal is a call to action. While a well-informed persuasive argument is necessary to this paper, you must also ask readers to do take a particular action in response to a problem. We will work together in class on building an effective outline, introduction, full draft, and revision. These are the steps you will take when drafting your proposal:

- Provide a clear and descriptive **summary** of what you define as a problem or situation requiring change, including credible evidence.
- Make clear the current social, environmental, and industrial (etc.) **factors** that create the problem. Consider the competing interests among various involved groups.
- Situate this global climate problem in a **local** context.
- Identify the **people** affected by the situation you describe—the **actual audience** (those who will read your proposal, who have the power to make changes) and the **implied audience** (those negatively affected by the problem and positively impacted by the solution).
- Formulate a precise and focused **thesis statement** that clearly states the **solution** and identifies the course of action you are proposing.
- Develop an **argument** with supporting evidence while addressing other points of view, especially the doubts of **naysayers**.
- Cite all **sources** inside the text of your paper as well as in a Works Cited page using correct MLA format.
- Final proposal should be **5-7 pages + Annotated Bibliography**.

Proposal Checklist for an A

Use the following checklist to self-assess your Proposal. We will be working on these requirements step-by-step in BaseCamp. You will use this list to review a classmate's draft in our Draft Workshop in Week 14. I will be looking for these things as I evaluate your work. I hope this checklist helps you make an A on your final Proposal!

Proposal = call to action

- For your essay to qualify as a proposal, you must clearly establish the **problem** in your intro paragraph. Don't overlook this important step!
- You must also clearly state the **Solution** to the problem. This is your thesis—the proposed action that will solve the problem.
- Keep in mind that you want readers to implement your solution. This means you will issue a **call to action**. Be clear and persuasive about what action steps your readers should take.

Cite all info from research

- *Anything learned from research must be cited!*
- Use quotes for others' words. The rule is "**three or more consecutive words**" from another source must use quotation marks!
- This includes quotes as well as paraphrased/summarized info. Paraphrase/summarize means you restate others' ideas in your own words. Even though it's your own words, you still have to cite your source!
- Use parenthetical citation in the essay: (Author p#) for print source, or (Author) for an electronic source. The author's last name in parentheses must match up with the Works Cited list.

Sandwich your quotes

- Build a quote "sandwich" using this format: intro/quote/restate/relate. Introduce the quote and its author, insert the quote, restate it in your own words, and relate it to your main point. Do this everytime you use a quote or evidence from research!
- Use **signal phrases** to show you are moving from your ideas to others' ideas. For ex: "As Bell Hooks argues...", or "Here, Coates reminds us that..."
- When you introduce the author/source, include their credentials. Insert the quote or paraphrased info, followed by MLA parenthetical citation (Author p#).
- Then, explain the meaning/significance/relevance of quote. Remember, you are using it to support your own viewpoint, so remind us what you are arguing. Relate it back to your thesis.

EXAMPLE: *Sut Jhally, professor of Communication at University of Massachusetts, claims that advertising appeals to our selfish desires. "The market appeals to the worst in us--greed, selfishness--and discourages what is the best about us--compassion, caring, and generosity." (Jhally 78). Here, Jhally argues that advertising appeals to negative self-interested characteristics of the individual instead of positive collective interests of humanity. In this way,*

advertising perpetuates a culture of greed, superficial values, and short-term interests.

Include a Naysayer

- Write two paragraphs in which you respond to potential naysayers.
- In the first paragraph, introduce and represent fairly your naysayer(s).
- In the second paragraph, respond to their objections by acknowledging the validity of their claim while standing your ground.
- For more about Naysayers, view the PowerPoint slideshow in Course Documents.

Include Transitions and Metacommentary

- Include **transitions** to improve the flow of your writing. Transitions make connections between sentences and paragraphs.
- Use **metacommentary** to guide your reader. Metacommentary tells your reader what you are doing and why. Include metacommentary in areas where the reader needs additional explanation and guidance.
- **One idea, one paragraph**
- Make sure each paragraph emphasizes one idea, and one idea only.
- The main idea should be expressed in the first sentence of the paragraph.
- Similarly, each supporting sentence should make one point.
- Support the main idea with evidence from research.
- Close with a restatement of the idea.
- Each paragraph should function like a mini-essay: thesis-support-conclusion.

For MLA citation help

- Visit Purdue University's Online Writing Lab.
<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>