

Final Research Proposal and Grading Criteria

Overview

IMPORTANT: YOU WILL USE THIS RESEARCH PROPOSAL TO WRITE YOUR SENIOR THESIS PAPER IN HIST 494, YOUR CAPSTONE COURSE. PLEASE BE SURE TO SAVE YOUR WORK ON THIS RESEARCH PROPOSAL IN YOUR LOCKER IN D2L. YOUR LOCKER IS LOCATED ON YOUR HOME PAGE IN COUGARTRACK. (THIS IS THE PAGE WHERE ALL OF YOUR COURSES ARE LISTED).

Writing a research proposal requires that you think carefully about your topic, the questions you want to answer, why those questions are important, how they relate to what other historians have written, and what sources you will need for your research. In other words, you have already done the basic work for your research proposal when you completed earlier assignments. You have already done most of the work! Now you must put it all together. It is highly recommended that you save all work from this course, as you will build on this Research Proposal in HIST 494: Senior Seminar in History, which will culminate in a 20-25 page Research Paper.

The proposal is worth 100 points and is due in the appropriate Dropbox by **11:59pm on the Saturday of Week 8**.

Content

You will write a brief proposal. Your target length is 6-7 pages (not counting the bibliography). In those 6-7 pages you must explain the following:

- The general area of history addressed by your research (e.g., the history of the Great Depression in the United States).
- Your specific research topic (e.g., ethnic and religious tensions in Pennsylvania mining communities towns during strikes and other labor conflicts in the 1930s).
- The precise questions you will address in your research (e.g., did employers manipulate such tensions as an anti-union strategy, and did union organizers try to build multi-ethnic/multi-religious alliances).
- How your question relates to issues raised/discussed by other historians who have worked on similar/related topics? (In other words, what do the secondary sources say?)
- Why this question is worth answering from an historian's viewpoint? (how would your project contribute to our understanding of the topic?)
- What primary sources you will use to answer this question?
- What methods of analysis will you use to draw answers out of the primary sources?

Formatting

Proposals must be formatted according to the following guidelines:

- Be typed, double-spaced with 1 inch margins, 12-point font, and numbered pages.
- Include a title and title page. The title does not have to be fancy, but should reflect the purpose of the project.
- Be well-written and free of excessive grammatical errors, misspelled words, typos and other mistakes. You should pay careful attention to paragraph structuring; each paragraph should develop a single, coherent idea. Follow all rules of proper grammar and composition.
- Use the formal Chicago citation style for references (footnotes). Details on this citation style are laid out in the *Manual for Writers*.
- Include a bibliography, with primary and secondary sources listed separately. The bibliography should be a complete bibliography for your research topic, not just the sources directly referenced in your research proposal.

Assessment

The proposal will be evaluated on the following criteria.

HIST 294: Introduction to the Historian's Craft					
Criteria	A (90-100 pts)	B (80-89 pts)	C (70-79 pts)	D (60-69 pts)	F (0-59 pts)
Content (60 pts)	Proposal explains the general area of history addressed by the research.	Proposal explains the general area of history addressed by the research.	Proposal does not adequately explain the general area of history addressed by the research.	Proposal does not adequately explain the general area of history addressed by the research.	Proposal does not explain the general area of history addressed by the research.
	Proposal explains the specific research topic and places it within the general area of history.	Proposal explains the specific research topic and places it within the general area of history.	Proposal does not adequately explain the specific research topic and place it within the general area of history.	Proposal does not explain the specific research topic and place it within the general area of history.	Proposal does not place the specific research topic within the general area of history or fully explain its historiographical context.
	Proposal explains the historiographical context of the specific research topic and places it within the general area of history.	Proposal explains the historiographical context of the specific research topic.	Proposal does not explain the historiographical context of the specific research topic.	Proposal does not explain the historiographical context of the specific research topic.	Proposal does not define two to three specific research questions.
	Proposal explains the historiographical context of the specific research topic. Proposal defines two to three specific research questions.	Proposal does not clearly define two to three specific research questions.	Proposal does not clearly define two to three specific research questions.	Proposal does not define two to three specific research questions.	Proposal does not address why the specific topic is of historical interest and significance.
	Proposal explains the historiographical context of the specific research topic. Proposal defines two to three specific research questions.	Proposal does not adequately addresses why the specific topic is of historical interest and significance.	Proposal does not adequately addresses why the specific topic is of historical interest and significance.	Proposal does not address why the specific topic is of historical interest and significance.	Proposal does not address what primary sources will be used.
	Proposal addresses why the specific topic is of historical interest and significance.	Proposal does not adequately addresses what primary sources will be used.	Proposal does not adequately consider the methods of analysis that will be used to draw answers out of the primary sources.	Proposal does not address what primary sources will be used.	Proposal does not consider the methods of analysis that will be used to draw answers out of the primary sources.
	Proposal addresses what primary sources will be used.	Proposal does not adequately consider the methods of analysis that will be used to draw answers out of the primary sources.	Proposal does not adequately consider the methods of analysis that will be used to draw answers out of the primary sources.	Proposal does not consider the methods of analysis that will be used to draw answers out of the primary sources.	Proposal is plagiarized in part or whole.
Writing (20 pts)	Paragraphs are unified, coherent, and effective, with transitions between ideas.	Shows organization through a logical progression of ideas and fairly sophisticated transitional devices.	May list ideas or arrange them randomly rather than using clear logical structure.	May have random organization.	Lacks organization.
	Sentences are correctly constructed, logical, and complete.	May contain a few errors such as spelling errors, awkward language, improper grammar, flawed punctuation, and other technical mistakes that do not impede overall understanding.	Usually contains mechanical errors, such as spelling errors, awkward language, improper grammar, flawed punctuation, and other technical mistakes which are confusing but do not impede overall understanding.	Usually contains many mechanical errors such as spelling errors, awkward language, improper grammar, flawed punctuation, and other technical mistakes or few major errors that impede reader's understanding and ability to see idea progression.	Contains many mechanical errors or few major errors such as spelling errors, awkward language, improper grammar, flawed punctuation, and other technical mistakes that block reader's understanding and ability to recognize connections between thoughts.
	Incorporates an introduction, body, and conclusion. Avoids spelling errors, awkward language, improper grammar, flawed punctuation, and other technical mistakes.				
Sources & Citations (15 pts)	Cites sources sufficiently and appropriately.	Cites sources appropriately.	Cites sources using Chicago Manual of Style, but may have some errors in the citation style.	May cite sources, but may do so incorrectly.	Does not cite sources.
	Chicago Manual of Style is used for all citations and the bibliography.	Uses Chicago Manual of Style. May have a few minor errors, but nothing major.		Does not use Chicago Manual of Style or uses it incorrectly.	Does not use Chicago Manual of Style or uses it incorrectly.
Format (5 pts)	Paper is typed, double-spaced with 1-inch margins and 12-point font and numbered pages.	Paper is not properly formatted in regards to font, margins, and page numbers.	Paper is not properly formatted in regards to font, margins, and page numbers.	Paper is not properly formatted in regards to font, margins, and page numbers.	Paper is not properly formatted in regards to font, margins, and page numbers.
	Paper includes a title and title page.	Paper includes a title and separate title page.	Paper does not include a title and/or separate title page.	Paper does not include a title and/or separate title page.	Paper does not include a title and/or separate title page.
	Paper includes a title and title page.	Paper includes a separate bibliography that is not properly formatted.	Paper includes a separate bibliography that is not properly formatted.	Paper does not include a separate bibliography.	Paper does not include a separate bibliography.
	Essay includes a separate bibliography with primary and secondary sources listed separately.				Paper is plagiarized in part or whole.