

Project 1: Inquiry Proposal Essay

Rough Draft/Author's Note due 1/28

Peer Workshop/Professor Conferences Week 4

Revised/Final Draft due 2/11

See more details on the Project 1 rubric

WHY ARE WE DOING THIS?

In this first unit, we will consider how to ask good questions through inquiry and preliminary research. We cannot just jump into a scholarly or public conversation, just like we would never just dive into cooking a complicated recipe without previous experience in the kitchen. We are going to work our way into argument by first finding out what conversations specific discourse communities are having about food and food-related issues. We will also consider how our positionalities affect how we ask questions and approach issues. Finally, we will review the steps involved in crafting an inquiry-based research argument, planning our research over the course of the semester. This proposal should set you up for a productive journey into a particular food-related question, giving you a place to start your inquiry, research, and argument. The key terms for this unit are **rhetorical situation** and **discourse community**.

WHAT ARE WE DOING?

You will write a 2-3 page inquiry proposal essay. The proposal should be divided into two parts. You can use bolded headings to keep each section separate.

Part 1: Research Question

Share your overall **food-based topic, focus, and research question(s)**. What about food do you plan to explore and research this semester? *Note: this question should not be a thesis statement. Your question should be open-ended; you should not know the answer yet. Also, be prepared for your question to change as you learn more throughout the semester.*

Answer the following questions:

- How is your question **specific** and/or **local**? How are you narrowing your question so that it is focused on a particular *exigence*?
- How is your question **timely**? Why does this matter right now? Again, consider *exigence*.
- How is your question **contended**? What are the different points of view on the topic?
- What **discourse communities** are you entering with your research? What academic disciplines and/or groups of people are part of the conversation?
- Why is your question **important**? What is your personal interest in this question/issue? How is it relevant to you or others? What personal experiences do you have with the issue (if any)? What about your **positionality** affected how and why you selected this question?

You will use your preliminary research to support your answers to the questions above. Use **at least three websites or other sources** (no scholarly sources) in your proposal and discuss what you learned from each one. *The point is NOT to use evidence to prove something about your topic or to "infodump" about the topic to your audience. The point is to demonstrate what you learned through your research and how that learning shaped your question. For example, you might say: "I read [this source, including the author,*

article title, and website or book], and I learned [this... no more than 2 sentences]. This source helped me understand my topic better [in this way]." *Make sure to use informal citation methods: share the title/author/website/etc. of where you got information, but no need to use official MLA citation. Do not copy and paste or quote anything from other sources; rewrite the information in your own words.*

Part 2: Research Plan

Create a plan for what you need to do before you get to the argument writing stage of the semester.

Consider the following:

- What other smaller questions will you need to answer in order to answer your overall inquiry question? What do you not know that you still need to find out?
- How do you plan on answering all of these questions?
- What kind of research will you need to do? How will you go about doing that research? Where will you start?
- What resources (sources, people, databases, etc.) might you use to help you answer your question(s)?
- What is your goal for this inquiry-based research argument? What do you hope to accomplish?

WHAT SHOULD IT LOOK LIKE?

Your proposal essay should be **2-3 pages** (~750-1,000 words), **double-spaced, and in MLA format.**

Please include a header with your name and the date, as well as a title. Your proposal should be submitted as a **Word document**. This project is worth 10% of your grade.

WHEN IS IT DUE?

Rough draft and author's note is due by Friday, 1/28 at 11:59 PM to the Project 1 Workshop Draft [assignment box](#) on Blackboard. (See Week 3 for more information.)

During Week 4, we will **Workshop** your draft during class and you will meet with Dr. K for a one-on-one **Conference**.

Final draft is due by Friday, 2/11 at 11:59 PM to the Project 1 Final: Inquiry Proposal Essay [assignment box](#) on Blackboard.