**Professor Levecq - Proposal guidelines**

Please email me the proposal (no Blackboard submission). Only Word documents, please. If you don’t meet the deadline, you won’t get credit, but I will respond to the proposal.

I may ask you to have a conference with me. In that case, you will only get credit after our meeting has taken place.

The proposal consists of three parts:

**1. Brainstorming (one page, double-spaced)**

In this first part, you are doing some thinking on your own. There’s no audience here—you’re basically in a conversation with yourself. So don’t worry about style, paragraphs, etc.

You can do some research before you write the proposal, but you don’t have to.

**By** **now you have picked a topic and a concept (see concepts on paper assignment sheet),** and the goal is to try and think about them in a more detailed and sophisticated way.

**Answer the following questions**:

- Why is it interesting to consider the topic through that concept? What interesting light does the concept throw on the topic? In what ways does using the concept help see the topic differently from a common understanding of it?

- Is or was the topic important today or at a particular time period? Is it being discussed differently today, or has it been discussed differently at particular time periods?

**2. Thesis statement**

Here the goal is to present the result of your reflection to a reader. Look back over your brainstorming session, and ask yourself: are there any ideas in here that are interesting enough that they will give some new insight to a fairly intelligent, fairly educated reader?

Once you find one, you can start the process of putting together your thesis statement. Your goal is now to present your insight to a reader. In order to make sure that your reader understands your argument properly from the very beginnning, your thesis statement should have the following qualities:

1. **insightful**: it says something that is not obvious, an original take you have on the topic;

2. **well articulated**: it takes some time to explain the idea adequately;

3. **significant**: it states how the insight makes a significant contribution to the world of ideas, i.e. it answers the “so what?” question.

In order to be able do all this, I find that a **thesis statement in three sentences** often works best:

1. what is your insight? what interesting idea are you trying to convey?

2. explain more fully what the idea consists in (this part is important because it helps you generate ideas that you will elaborate in the body of the paper—but remember: this is an explanation, not a list of items);

3. explain why you think this idea is interesting to consider.

You will probably finesse your thesis as you start writing the essay and develop more ideas.

**3. Two ideas**

Once you start writing the essay, your goal will be to convince your reader that your thesis is valid and interesting. The essay is called “analytical-argumentative,” since you will provide analysis of a text and its context in order to argue a point. In this section of the proposal, mention two ideas you will use in the body of the paper in order to develop your argument. Ideally, each of these ideas will be the main point of a paragraph.