

Prospectus

For this assignment, you will write a prospectus in 250 words with at least two sources cited.

What is a prospectus?

A prospectus is a statement that one writes in order to describe the various elements of a project they hope to undertake. Prospectuses take many forms depending on the context in which they are written, and nearly every profession requires some sort of a prospectus. The skill to write a strong prospectus is essential to succeeding in almost any profession.

What kind of prospectus will you be writing in this class?

You will be writing an **academic prospectus**, which summarizes not only the topic of your research paper, but also states a working thesis, what the stakes of that argument are, and how you will go about proving your argument. Prospectuses are about **the art of being able to articulate the purpose of your longer project in a concise and precise manner.**

What your prospectus needs to include:

1. Topic and Thesis Statement

The topic is the general area you want to write about. Examples of topics are things like: “Ebola in America,” “ISIS,” “the Cold War,” or “Representations of the legal system on television.” Topics tend to be broad, and are like the “field” in which questions are asked.

2. Research Question

Topics are not questions. You ask a question within the area of the topic. One topic could lead to many different questions. For example, the topic “Sleeping Habits” could have the following questions:

- *What are the effects of sleep on reflexes?*
- *Does sleep have an effect on reflexes?*
- *Is maximum reflex efficiency achieved after eight hours of sleep?*

When you find a question, or a few possible questions that truly intrigue or interest you, you should analyze them.

- Is your question too vague?
- Is it too narrow?
- Can it be answered with a yes or a no, or does it demand a more complex answer?

Think about other ways to ask the same question. Be as clear as possible about the question you are asking.

3. Working hypothesis

A hypothesis is a statement that can be proved or disproved. A research question can be made into a hypothesis by changing it into a statement.

Maximum reflex efficiency is achieved after eight hours of sleep.

It should not be based on information you have started to analyze and synthesize. For that reason, **you must find at least two sources in order to develop your working hypothesis.**

4. Roadmap

The prospectus needs to make clear **how you are going to answer your question**, or how you are going to defend your thesis.

5. Works Cited

These should include **scholarly sources**, which may include entire books, chapters of books, and scholarly journal articles. Be careful, as not all books are considered scholarly resources.

6. Keywords

Choose at least 4 keywords.

A good prospectus will

- concisely and clearly state the topic, research question, and working thesis for your final research paper
- incorporate relevant information from scholarly sources
- clearly outline a potential roadmap for how you might build your argument
- include rhetorical choices appropriate for your chosen audience