# Research Proposal Rubric

| **Criteria** | **Description** | **Exceeds Expectations (5)** | **Meets Expectations (4)** | **Almost There (3)** | **Needs Work (2)** | **Missing or Inaccurate (1)** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Project Focus** | Provides a clear, detailed plan for the Informational Report you will write as part of the semester-longproject. |  | Proposes a topic to study for the informational report for non-expert readers and justifies its importance. |  | Discusses the semeseter-long project but does not propose or does not detail the topic and its justification. | Focuses on another topic. |
| **Introduction** | Introduces the topic and purpose of the proposal. Includes a purpose statement. Does not use a heading. | States topic and purpose directly, clearly, and engagingly; sets up proposal focus unmistakably. | States topic and purpose clearly and directly. Purpose statement is clear and detailed. | States topic, but needs more details. May be missing purpose statement or may include unneeded heading for section. | States topic but vague, indirect, or incomplete. Multiple minor errors (such as missing purpose statement). | Introduction missing. |
| **Project Overview** | Reintroduces and defines the subject, indicates what it involves, and why it’s important. | Provides thorough explanation; clearly defines subject, importance, and relevance; fully persuasive. | Explains subject, importance, and justification clearly. | Explains subject but leaves out one or more details that impact the effectiveness of its persuasion. | Subject or importance mentioned, but section requires more explanation. Significant information may be missing. | Section missing. |
| **Literature Review & Sources** | Summarizes and includes two quotations from each of at least five credible sources. | At least five credible sources, each summarized and quoted twice with context and explanation; expert analysis and integration of quotations. | At least five credible sources, each summarized and quoted twice with context and explanation. | Five sources present but some summaries vague OR quotes lack context. | Fewer than five sources OR summaries and/or quotations incomplete or not explained. | Section missing. |
| **Project Audience** | Identifies, describes, and analyzes the needs of the non-expert audience for your report. | Identifies a specific non-expert audience and thoroughly addresses knowledge, needs, interest, and access. | Identifies a non-expert audience and addresses knowledge, needs, interest, and access clearly. | Audience identified but one required point missing or unclear. | Audience vague or incomplete; multiple points missing. | Section missing. |
| **Project Personnel** | Describes proposer’s qualifications to research and write about the topic. | Clearly explains qualifications, background, and relevance to topic in persuasive detail. | Explains qualifications and relevance to topic. | Mentions qualifications but does not fully explain or clearly connect them to the subject. | Discusses qualifications minimally, including few relevant details and/or showing no connection to the subject. | Section missing. |
| **Project Timetable** | Includes a Gantt chart and introductory sentence. Provides a rough schedule for each stage of the project. | Introduces chart with forecasting sentence; chart detailed, accurate, and visually clear. | Includes forecasting sentence and Gantt chart with realistic targets for all stages of the Informational Report project. | Chart included but vague, missing tasks, or lacks clarity. | Chart incomplete, inaccurate, or missing forecasting sentence. | Section missing. |
| **Request for Approval** | Summarizes subject and its importance. Requests approval, and provides contact information. Does not include closing or signature. | Clearly reiterates subject, importance, and persuasively requests approval with contact info. | Reiterates subject, importance, and requests approval with contact info. | Subject or approval request unclear or missing one required element. | Weak request and/or multiple required elements missing. | Section missing. |
| **Works Cited/Bibliography** | Lists all sources in correct format. | Cites all sources accurately with correct formatting. | Includes all sources with consistent formatting. | Omits a source and/or makes minor formatting errors. | Omits several sources and/or makes frequent formatting errors. | Section missing. |
| **Formatting & Document Design** | Follows memo format with required headings, spacing, and paragraphing. Uses contrast, fonts, chunking, and other formatting elements effectively to increase readability. | Uses flawless memo format. Shows strong contrast between headings and the document paragraphs. Uses spacing, fonts, and chunking and other formatting elements to make the message highly readable and professional. | Uses memo format accurately. Formats headings, spacing, and design consistently with appropriate contrast. Uses lists, horizontal rules, and boxes as effective visual elements. | Uses memo format, though may include minor errors. May be minor errors in headings, paragraphing, or spacing. | Uses incorrect memo format, inadequate contrast between headings and text, large paragraphs, and/or inaccurate spacing. | Does meet formatting or design requirements. |
| **Tone & Plain Language** | Uses clear, objective, professional tone. Uses short sentences and other plain language techniques. Avoids jargon. | Is consistently objective, professional, and reader-friendly. Phrases sentences concisely and smoothly. Perfectly written for the audience. | Is objective, professional, and clear throughout. Effectively uses plain language and avoids jargon. | Is mostly objective and professional but occasionally uses complicated, overly technical, wordy, and/or repetitive phrasing. | Uses unprofessional tone and/or language that is too technical or confusing | No attempt to customize the tone and language to the audience. |
| **Illustrations (Optional)** | Includes illustrations as needed and relevant, with two-part captions for each. Refers directly to the visual in the text with clear explanation and context. Avoids clipart. | Uses relevant, professional visuals throughout; provides clear two-part captions; refers directly in the text with full explanation and context. | Includes relevant visuals with accurate two-part captions; refers directly in the text with clear explanation and context. | Includes visuals but captions are incomplete, context is limited, or references are unclear. | Includes visuals that are weak, irrelevant, or unprofessional. Does not include captions or references in the text to explain them. | Uses only inappropriate clipart or irrelevant images. |