English 1900 Date Assigned:
Date Due:

Statement of Purpose

Assignment

So far, our intention in all these initial readings and writings has been for you to think about what you might want to do for your rhetorical, multimedia project. Now that you're doing your dissoi logoi, you're getting a handle on the issue you're interested in, and you'll soon be ready to make an overt, explicit claim about that issue to an audience who might be interested in it. At this point, then, I want you to sketch a proposal for your project according to the basics of rhetorical analysis we've been talking about all semester: **purpose audience, context**. But now, I want you to include **text**. That is, in addition to thinking about the first three, I want you to think about the kind of text you might create for your purpose, audience, and context. Will it be a piece of writing? A website? A video? A podcast? Or something entirely other that I haven't thought of? I want you to be as creative as you like about this part of the project.

I want you to write about 300-400 words in response to each of the following questions:

1. Purpose: what do you want to do? What change do you want to see? What do you want to have done? What would be different if your idea were adopted? What would be the best possible outcome? What would be the worst possible outcome?

2. Audience: To whom are you speaking and why? To answer this question, generate a list of audience characteristics. Age, gender, ethnicity, level of education, etc. Then imagine your audience at the moment they encounter the communication. Where will they be? What will they be doing? How might they respond at that moment? *Will* they respond at that moment? If so, why? If not, why not? Finally, consider the kind of evidence this audience will accept as persuasive. What sort of proof does this audience need? Why?

3. Context: What is the situation you're addressing? What's the history? What's happened before? What's happening now? Why is *this* a propitious moment for intervening rhetorically into the situation? Also, are you dealing with a SLU-centric context? Or something from outside of SLU but in St. Louis? Or something from your home community? Your previous schools? Your place of worship? Another public setting?

4. Text: What kind of text will be most effective for the audience in question? In some cases, it might be a traditional looking paper, but in many other cases, it won't. Maybe you need a website? A set of forms? A letter to the editor? Maybe something you haven't thought of yet? (NB: If you decide that the traditional paper won't work for you, fine. What you'll do is create your specific document and then attach a research analysis that will explain why you made the choices you made.)

Now, this proposal is (sort of) a contract. I'm not going to hold you to every particular, but this proposal should be what you pursue for the rest of the semester. In other words, we'll refer to this throughout the semester to see how you're doing. Sure, it will evolve and grow, and you might make changes here and there. But this proposal should be a guide for how you proceed for the rest of the semester.

Response & Grading

Because of the importance of articulating a strong proposal now, I reserve the right to ask you to revise this proposal. So, each of you will receive one of the following responses:

- Accept (10 points)
- Accept with Revisions (8-9)
- Revise and Resubmit (6-7)
- Reject (5)

If you get anything below "accept," you must revise the document and resubmit it to me w/in 48 hours. **Failure to resubmit will result in a 0 for the assignment**. For example, if you get a "Revise and Resubmit" (6-7 points) on the first try, and then an Accept (10 points) on the second try, I will average the two for your final grade (8-9 points).

	Accept/Accept with Revisions	Revise and Resubmit	Reject
P	The purpose is clear and appropriate for the rhetorical context. The claim, goal or outcome proposed is both appropriate and feasible. The document makes a clear claim about potential ways to address the chosen problem. (The writer may, at this moment, offer several solutions, which is fine.) Moreover, the writer has taken some risk, offering a surprising or novel perspective on the problem at hand.	The purpose is clear, discernable, and appropriate for the rhetorical context. Where appropriate to the assignment, the goal(s) or outcome(s) proposed is both appropriate and feasible. But perhaps the writer hasn't fully articulated any potential solutions or ways to address a given problem. The author may do a good job of describing the problem, but doesn't really say how he/she wants to intervene in the given situation and change it.	The only thing the author has done is to describe the problem, but he/she doesn't really say how he/she wants to intervene in the given situation and change it. At the end of the document, we know what issue the writer wants to write about, but we don't know why.
A	The author has clearly stated the intended audience, and it is a realistically manageable group. In other words, the author can "point to" the intended audience and can explain why that audience matters. (There is no talk of "America" or "Society.")	The author has clearly stated the intended audience, though perhaps the group is not realistically manageable. There's no talk of "America" or "Society," but perhaps the author cannot quite "point to" the intended audience.	There is no talk of audience, or there is talk of "America" or "Society." The reader (me) has no idea for whom the project is intended.
C	The document clearly and unmistakably places the issue in an historical, cultural, educational, and/or political context so that the audience understands why the issue matters. The document creates the context by showing the audience what's at stake.	The document attempts to place the issue in an historical, cultural, educational and/or political context. The writer has researched the given situation, but perhaps the writer has attempted to set out a context, but hasn't done so as fully as necessary to make sure that something is at stake.	The document offers no historical, cultural, and/or political context. The document as written without any sense of *why* the document has been written—i.e., the reader has no idea why the writer is writing about the issue at hand. There's a potential argument, but no sense of why *now*.
T	The text is clearly described and the author explains why the text will work for the intended context and audience. The author has made a discernable decision about the text and can give reasons as to why. Those reasons, moreover, are persuasive.	The text is clearly described and the author explains why the text will work for the intended context and audience. The author has made a discernable decision about the text and can give reasons as to why. But perhaps those reasons aren't entirely persuasive, or perhaps the author hasn't anticipated potential problems.	The author has made no attempt to describe a potential text, or the author has simply said "a paper" (which is the equivalent of saying "America" or "Society"). We have of no idea of what sort of text the author will choose or why he/she will choose it.