

## Semester Topic Proposal (100 points)

Due: Tuesday, February 20, 2024

### Overview

This assignment will ask you to take your reader (your professor) through the process of selecting and narrowing down a medical humanities-related topic or issue that you would like to consider this semester. Bear in mind that you will be writing *all* major papers and the multimodal project on this topic; as I mentioned the first week of class, all your papers will feed into the next one. For example, any research and writing you do for the *dissoi logoi* essay can and should be used in your multimodal project; however, it's up to you to choose which sources and why as you will be asked to explain your choices and decision making.

There are 3 parts to this proposal: the process, problem, and significance. The first part is discussing and describing your research process from start to finish—so far—and how you came to choose this topic. Then, in the next two sections, you will use source material/your research to support and show your understanding of the topic or issue by discussing the problem and forming a research question and then explaining the significance of this issue.

Cite (in the text) and reference (at the end of the document) at least **3 credible articles from academic/scholarly sources** within your proposal. Use APA 7th edition formatting for the in-text citations and references page.

### 3 Parts of the Proposal

**Topic/Issue & Research Question (5 points):** Briefly state your topic and then come up with *one* research question on this issue. The research question is the one you would like to answer in your research and writing this semester, and although we will refine it throughout the term, the idea is to have it guide you as you write your assignments throughout the semester.

- *Rubric:* The topic is briefly stated, and a research question is present (and posed as a question, not a statement). The topic fits the medical humanities theme. It is clear the writer has thought about the issue and question carefully; the writer avoids generalities.

**Problem. (25 points)** Discuss the problem you have identified and *why* your research says it is a

problem. Provide background information or any other relevant details to explain the problem to your reader. For this section, use research to help illustrate the specific problem you are going to explore in your assignments this semester.

- *Rubric:* The research question is present and written as a question (instead of a statement). The question shows the writer has thought carefully about the topic and narrowed it down. The problem is relevant to the class theme (medical humanities) and is debatable. The problem is clearly defined and well-written. The writer provides an overview of the problem and may make connections to personal experiences. The problem is related to the medical humanities field. The writer refers to research when describing defining the problem, and sources are fairly cited in the text. Minimal grammatical/mechanical errors.

**Significance. (25 points)** In this next section, describe the significance of the issue. Once again, use any of your 3 sources to support your ideas here. Consider these questions when composing this section: What is at stake if this issue is not addressed? Who are the stakeholders, or who does this issue affect? Why is this issue important? How might you be affected by this issue? What personal experiences do you have with this issue?

- *Rubric:* The significance of the problem is clearly stated and well-supported by at least 3 academic sources. The writer may use personal experience, but they combine research with their own narrative to blend the two. Sources are cited in the text. Minimal grammatical/mechanical errors.

**Process. (30 points)** Describe how you came to choose your topic at this point AND then consider carefully what your next steps will be in the research process. Some questions to consider about your process so far: What steps have you taken so far to narrow down your topic? Did you consider other topics? If so, why did you choose this one instead? Include any and all steps you took, including any homework assignments but mainly what steps you took on your. Details and specifics are needed here to show your audience (your professor, in this case) how you narrowed down your topic.

As you did for your previous assignment to locate a medical humanities article in one of the library's databases, please describe where you found each of the 3 sources you are using for this assignment as well. What keyword searches did you use? How did you change your search terms, and why?

Then, think ahead and describe what you know you will need to research more *specifically*. For example, if your broad topic at this point is “how graphic memoirs raise awareness of mental health issues and stigma,” maybe you need to continue to look for graphic memoirs on this topic or maybe you want to narrow your topic to a specific illness such as schizophrenia.

- *Rubric:* The writer explicitly describes how they narrowed down and/or decided upon the current problem including searching for sources, brainstorming, talking with peers, etc. The process of locating sources is described with details and specifics and avoids generalities. In thinking ahead, the writer demonstrates they have thought through the next steps in their research process. Minimal grammatical/mechanical errors.

**Sources. (15 points; 5 points each)** At least 3 appropriate and credible academic sources are cited in the body of the proposal AND on the References page. All citations adhere to [APA 7th edition](#) formatting with minimal errors.

*Rubric:*

- At least 3 academic/scholarly articles
- Must be on the same issue/topic (e.g., *not* AI & health records AND health disparities for women with chronic pain)
- No websites or books (you can find these later, if need be)
- Cites all 3 sources at least once in the body of the proposal (quotes, paraphrases, and/or summaries are all great)
- Includes all 3 sources on a References page at the end of the document
- Uses APA 7th edition for the citation style (this includes the in-text citations and those on the Reference page)

- *Sample Proposal Template* -

**Name:** Holly Golightly

**Topic & Research Question:** The issue I want to research this term is..... My research question is...

**The Problem:**

**The Significance:**

**My Process:**

**References**