Second Writing Assignment: Prospectus
MMW 122, Winter 2015

Length: 3-4 pages, plus Works Cited Page
Due: Week 5, in section.

What is a Prospectus?
The prospectus is the plan for your final paper and contains, in paragraph form, all of the elements of the final paper. It is probably the most important, and often the most difficult, assignment to write. Its purpose is to help you to organize your research into an argument: to formulate your thesis, counterarguments, and rebuttal, and to plan how you will use your sources to provide the evidence you need to support your claims. Remember that your prospectus is a planning document, not a final draft; you are free to make substantial changes if further research shows you that you need to do so.

Prospectus:
Write a 3- to 4-page overview of your research paper. Your project will still be incomplete, but don’t worry about that; just do as much as you can with the research you’ve conducted so far. Your prospectus must be written in expository prose (three to four substantial paragraphs is typical) and should do the following:

- Give your paper title
- Introduce your topic:
  Establish the historical and geographical context (within the period 1750CE-present).
  Specify the particular person or people, practice, institution, event, artifact, and/or phenomenon that you will be investigating.
  Include at least a few of the observations that have led you to pose your question.
  Explicitly state the question that your paper will address. Acknowledge other scholars’ work on your topic and consider alternative interpretations or answers to the question (potential counterarguments).
- Propose your own arguable claim (your working thesis).
- Discuss the main points that you will address and the evidence that you will use as you develop your thesis.
- Comment on the significance of both your topic and your thesis.

Your prospectus should contain very few direct quotations, but you should refer to the scholars whose work you have consulted and you should summarize at least some of the evidence you will be using to support your argument.

Prospectus template:
On the MMW website you will find a prospectus template that will help you to shape your prospectus. You must submit a completed prospectus template in addition to your 3-4 page prospectus.
List of Works Cited:
Type up a works cited list that includes all of the sources to which you refer in your prospectus, and staple it to the back of your prospectus. The criteria for the list of works cited are as follows:

- It should include all of the scholarly sources you cite in your prospectus. This material should include all of the lectures, section discussions, assigned course texts, scholarly websites, and encyclopedia that you have cited in your introduction and supplementary parts of your paper as well as all of the scholarly books and journal articles that you have cited throughout your paper.
- All of the sources should be relevant to your research subject.
- Each of your sources should be recorded in a complete, MLA-style citation.

Photocopies/Printouts:
As always, provide a photocopy/printout for every source to which you refer – highlighted, labeled, and title page included – as for the other assignments. Arrange your printouts in the same order in which your sources appear on the list of Works Cited and clip them together, but do not staple them to your written assignment.

A final point: Your prospectus will not be accepted after Week 7. Because all components of the writing assignment are required to pass the course, you will fail the course if your prospectus is not submitted by this time. Once you have submitted your prospectus, you may change your topic only if you have your TA’s written permission. If you do change your topic after you have turned in your prospectus, you will be required to submit a new prospectus and list of works cited by Week 8. It is thus to your advantage to formulate your prospectus very carefully before you turn it in.

This assignment, the second of four writing assignments, will be worth 10% of your final course grade. Please remember that this assignment, like all assignments written for MMW, must adhere to all of the guidelines set out in the MMW Style Sheet. You must complete all four writing assignments in order to pass the course. Remember to keep the graded copy of this assignment; you will be required to turn in a portfolio containing all of the assignments at the end of the quarter.

An assignment that is missing one or more components of the components below will be considered late and will not be graded until all of the components have been submitted. If you fail to submit the Prospectus by Week 7, you will fail the course.

In order to be considered complete, an assignment must include all of the following:

___ 3-4 page Prospectus
___ Works Cited page
___ Prospectus Template
___ Photocopies/printouts
___ Criteria for Evaluating Web Pages (for all web sources that you use)
___ Graded Research Question Worksheet
___ Library Workshop Handout
___ Grading Rubric