Prospectus Prompt (Paper 1)
MMW 15, Summer 2015

Length: 3 pages, plus Works Cited Page
Due: Section, Monday, August 17 (Week 3).

What is a Prospectus?
The prospectus is the plan for your final paper and contains, in paragraph form, all of the known 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-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), should be based on research using scholarly sources, and should do the following:

- Introduce your topic (See A Writer’s Reference, RW or Easy Writer 5th ed., EW):
  Establish the historical and geographical context (1900CE - present) (WR, 115-16; 01-102; 358-359 or EW)
  Specify the particular problem, 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 (WR 359-362, or EW)
  Acknowledge other scholars’ work on your topic and consider alternative interpretations or answers to the question (potential counterarguments) (WR, 97-98; 105-106 or EW)
- Propose your own arguable claim (your working thesis) (WR 9-13; 106-110).
- Discuss the main points that you will address and the evidence that you will use as you develop your thesis. (WR, 103-105 or EW 39-44)
- Comment on the significance of both your topic and your thesis (WR 11).

Your prospectus should contain very few direct quotations, but you should refer to and cite as necessary the scholars whose work you have consulted and 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. It is meant to be a very succinct exercise, therefore, you may not type your template; it must be hand-written. **You must submit a completed prospectus template in addition to your 3 page prospectus.**
List of Works Cited (WR, 470 or EW, 254):
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 in your paper and clip them together, but do not staple them to your written assignment.

A final point: Your prospectus will not be accepted after the first section of Week 4. 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.

This assignment, will be worth 15% 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 both writing assignments in order to pass the course. Remember to keep the graded copy of this assignment; you will be required to turn it in with your Final Paper.

An assignment that is missing one or more 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 the first section of Week 4, you will fail the course.

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

- 3-page Prospectus
- Works Cited page
- Prospectus Template
- Photocopies/printouts of cited material
- Criteria for Evaluating Web Pages (for all web sources that you use)
- Printed Grading Rubric

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