Writing Exercise II: Research Proposal

**Purpose and Description**

Expert researchers do more than simply collect information and report on it. They identify problems, ask questions, consult databases, study the scholarly conversation, gather and analyze data, and present new findings both to their research communities and to non-expert audiences. They also spend time convincing others that their research is worth undertaking at all. With these foci in mind, your aim in this assignment will be to propose a study that you can continue to develop through the remainder of the semester. What follows are some guidelines for helping you engage with this process.

Part I: Providing Context

Compose 1-2 paragraphs in which you do the following:

* Identify and explain the problem or issue that drives your inquiry;
* Propose a research question that you can use to focus your study. Specifically, you should begin with an indirect question and refine it as you learn more about the problem you have identified: I am studying \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_because I want to find out what/why/how \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Part II: Describing Particulars

Compose 1-2 paragraphs in which you do the following:

* Identify and describe the audience for your inquiry (general);
* Identify and describe the audience for your inquiry (academic);
* Identify and describe the methods you will use to answer your question, including the types of evidence or information/data you may need to collect to add to existing scholarship.

Part III: Explaining Significance

Compose 1-2 paragraphs in which you do the following:

* Explain the potential significance of your inquiry for the audience you have identified. You might ask: When you have answered your question, what will your audience know that it did not know before? How will your research contribute to an existing body of knowledge? What other benefits (e.g., social, educational, economic) might come out of your research?

**Specific Requirements**

Your proposal should:

* Provide a clear foundation for your inquiry;
* Demonstrate understanding and use of at least 2 **scholarly** sources;
* Be ~2 **single** spaced pages (1000 words maximum);
* Be written in a clear, precise, and active prose style;
* Use 12 point Garamond or Times New Roman typeface;
* Use MLA or an approved citation style;
* Be uploaded to Canvas as a Word document by 11:59 PM on October 4, 2019

The overall aim of this assignment is to help you clarify the scope of your inquiry rather than identify a particular argument you want to support. So, try to approach it as an opportunity to pursue a question that is meaningful to you and that you can answer, as fully as possible, by the conclusion of the semester. Please write or stop by my office (or both) if you have questions about this assignment or anything else related to the course.