

Writing a Project Proposal

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The purpose of writing a PROJECT PROPOSAL is to clarify and organize your ideas for yourself, to communicate your ideas to others, and to build an ACTION PLAN with realistic steps directed at clear goals.

Your project must be photo based although it may incorporate other mediums. I expect you to bring in at least ten work quality prints each week. If for example, you wish to work with 4 x 5 inch: transparencies (an expensive medium) that is your option. However, for the purpose and constraints of the class you would be asked to also use an alternative allowing you to show ten pieces each week, for example, shoot ten paper negatives and bring in contact prints of those.

The project must be open-ended. It is our purpose to expand and develop a body of work throughout the semester looking at multiple photographic issues. If you chose to pursue an area of photography for example, fashion which may appear on the surface to be only concerned with technical issues such as lighting...I would expect you to explore and experiment with lighting using the feedback of the class to talk about how the content is affected and what to try next. In other words throughout the semester we will test and stretch our suppositions of results.

The **PROJECT NARRATIVE** is divided into two sections: a Problem Statement and a Project Description (minimum of one typed paragraph each).

Problem Statement: to begin writing this statement, answer for yourself the following kinds of questions: what is this project about, and why are you concerned with it? Be specific.

Project Description: describe in detail what you think you know now about the final form of the project. Be specific. Refer to the Working Questions for ideas.

The **ACTION PLAN** must address logistic issues and offer a TIMETABLE of events. In this section of the PROPOSAL you should explain if you will need any special equipment or any special permissions, and how you will achieve these ends. If you are going to rely on the cooperation of others, you should explain how you are going to obtain this cooperation, and have a backup plan if this fails.

WORKING QUESTIONS

The following questions are offered to help you identify and articulate what you presently know, and don't know, about your project.

FORMAL CONSIDERATIONS

Structure:

- A. How might the pieces of the whole be strung together —what might be the sequence.
- B. How might time be used within the piece—how might the piece unfold in time.
- C. What is the central image or vehicle that carries the content.
- D. How does the form function.
- E. What is the shape of physical's of the piece.

Technique:

- A. What is its method of construction.
- B. What is the quality or style that gives distinctive character to the piece.
- C. Execution—quality/care.

CONCEPTUAL CONSIDERATIONS:

- A. What is the mode of thought in which the artistic statement is presented: symbolic, rational, relativistic, etc.
- B. Define where your concerns are grounded: psychological, political, social, historical, fictional, autobiographical, etc.
- C. Examine the type of thinking predominant in both the forming and the experiencing of the piece: meditative, calculative, relativistic, linear, etc.

CONTEXTUAL CONSIDERATIONS:

- A. The piece is formed for what kind of audience, what number of people, what place, time, circumstance, context.
- B. What is the belief system in which the piece is founded.
- C. Out of what historical tradition does this work come—what are the resources you have at your disposal to find out all you want about that tradition.

*Quoted from Peter Thompson and Lynn Sloan, Columbia College Chicago