**Archival Proposal**

Proposal due **Oct. 20** / Rough Draft due **Nov. 12** / Final Draft due **Nov. 17**

**20%** of final grade / **Length:** 4-6 pages

**Purpose:** The Archival Proposal is the final step in our series of archival projects. For this assignment, you will connect your primary and secondary research as you develop and propose a solution to a contemporary problem facing our campus or community. A proposal paper aims to identify a problematic situation that merits your taking a stand and then advocates a plan of action that is not only possible and desirable but will resolve or address that problem. This argument should build directly out of your research in the archives; you are faced with the task of making history relevant by using it to inform your thinking and writing about a problem and your solution.

**Directions:** In this piece of writing, you will identify and explain your problem or issue; translate your stand (or position) into a thesis statement that proposes a solution; support your proposal with specific reasons that are themselves supported by convincing evidence (i.e., good reasons); and in general do what’s necessary to convince your audience to consider, maybe even accept and act on your proposal. It is important that you select a specific audience for your piece (this might be the same audience you wrote for in your Archival Analysis). This audience should be an individual or group that is capable of responding to your proposal in some way. In other words, your purpose here is to persuade an audience to take action, so make sure that you select an audience who is capable of doing so. Decide exactly what kind of action you want your audience to take. Do you want someone to directly enact your proposal or do you want to create grass-roots support for an action that someone other than the audience would take?

Think carefully about how to incorporate information from your primary sources. Does that historical information help you explain the problem or issue? Or does it help you illustrate or exemplify a potential solution? Problems do not arise out of thin air; by carefully incorporating evidence from your archival research, you will be in a better position to address the history of a current issue.

Keep in mind as you brainstorm/draft some common elements of successful proposals:

* Think about what strategies you will use to present your good reasons for making or supporting this change. Will you need to narrate, analyze, define, or evaluate this issue in order to convince your audience?
* Be sure to outline the possible consequences. What will happen if your audience does take action? What will happen if they don’t?
* Be aware of competing solutions. Address alternatives that your audience might support, and do your best to convince them that your solution would be the most effective. Don’t ignore the opposition.
* Address issues of feasibility. What kind of labor is necessary to accomplish this change? Who will do the work? Who will pay for it? How long will it take? The more detail you can provide, the more feasible your plan will seem.
* Establish your ethos. Research the issue in detail, and communicate to your audience that you are knowledgeable about this subject.