

TWC443 Proposal Writing Spring 2011 Assignments

Congratulations on your appointment as a staff proposal writer for BJD Proposal Preparation, Inc. The next 16 weeks are your “probation period” during which you will complete a comprehensive and persuasive funding proposal for an organization. To orient you to the world of proposal writing for BJD Proposal Preparation, you will complete the proposal as a series of tasks each of which will be reviewed and evaluated. You will identify a client for whom you will write the proposal, an appropriate funding source, analyze its requirements, complete the research necessary to support your request for funding, and complete the proposal based on the requirements of the funding agency you have selected. As part of this process, you will collaborate with other staff proposal writers to share drafts and provide one another with feedback.

Course note: Of course you are role playing and will turn in your completed proposal as an assignment for this course. However, if you choose to also work with an organization to actually submit the proposal you complete, please let me know when you submit Part 1.

Appointment Acceptance (due Jan. 21; 2 pts)

Read job description assignments, and all other related documents. Submit to me as an attachment to an email, your "signed" acceptance of your job description as a proposal writer. In addition, let me know if you have any questions related to your role or tasks. **Remaining assignments will not be accepted for grading unless you have accepted your appointment acceptance during the first week of the course.**

And remember, please, that you are role playing as an employee who is writing to a supervisor. You should use appropriate tone and style of writing.

Discussion Board Posts (10 weeks @2 pts each = 20 pts)

Most (though not all) of the discussion board posts this semester will be associated with the written assignment that is due the same week so that you will have an opportunity to do the advanced research and preparation necessary to complete a successful proposal.

Most DB posts will be due on Thursdays (11:59pm) the weeks they are assigned; however, please check the calendar and the weekly announcements for exact due dates. The first 2 db posts will be due on Sundays.

We will also use the discussion board to help organize peer reviews; since they are part of the proposal project, they will be due on Sundays. You will not have an additional discussion board prompt during the weeks you have peer reviews.

Although I have not required that you respond to others for the majority of discussion board prompts, I encourage you to think of the discussion board as collaborative workspace where you work together to give each other feedback, encouragement, help. One of your job functions as a staff proposal writer is to collaborate with your peer proposal writers. Obviously someone who uses the discussion board to interact with his/her peers to engage and work as a team and to provide (and

receive) constructive and useful advice will receive a higher appraisal for that week than someone who restricts their interaction with others to required peer reviews.

Grading:

2 pts: Posts which are submitted on time, are complete, and demonstrate effort to be thorough and well thought-out will receive full-credit. Posts should also be well-organized, cohesive, and error-free.

1 pt: Posts which are submitted on time but lack thoroughness or are not well-thought out, are not well-organized and/or lack clarity, include mechanical (grammar, spelling, punctuation) errors.

0 pts: Late posts or posts that demonstrate little or limited effort.

Proposal (90 pts total)

Part 1: Identify and analyze the organization (due Feb. 6th; 10 pts)

As a proposal writer for BJD Proposal Prep, you are responsible for recruiting new clients. And so your first task is to identify (recruit) and analyze the organization for which you will write a proposal. You will need to do some research about the organization in order to complete this assignment.

You should choose an organization in which you have interest. If you are a volunteer, for example, you might consider whether that organization is in need of funding of some sort. Or perhaps there is a school, educational support organization, or other non-profit organization that you would like to make a client so that we can help them find funding.

If you are having trouble identifying an organization, contact me. This can often be the most difficult and time consuming part of this project so don't wait until the day the assignment is due to get started or to contact me if you need help identifying or narrowing your choice.

In **memo** format submit to me:

- the name and location of the organization
- your relationship to the organization (none at all, or are you a volunteer, parent or other relative/friend of a child who attends, etc.)
- tell me whether you will submit your proposal as a class assignment only or if you plan to submit it for funding on behalf of your organization
- a brief analysis of the organization
 - use the bullet points under "survey the agency" on pages 20-21 in your textbook to analyze your organization
- be sure to describe your research method in your memo: how did you locate the information for the analysis? Be specific.

Evaluation will be based on:

- Complete and clearly written memo
- Comprehensive and well-researched analysis of the organization
- Formatting and mechanics

Part 2: Identify the funding need (due Feb. 13th; 5 pts)

Your second task is to identify a funding need for the organization. You should have some ideas based on your analysis of the organization but now you need to finalize what the specific need is so that you can begin identifying a potential source of funding. In fact, if you haven't already started thinking about funding sources this is the time to do so.

Submit to me via the Dropbox:

- page 1-4 of the [Nine Steps to Proposal Development worksheet](#). You will need to do some research, so cite sources. Remember this is your first step to identifying the problem or need and brainstorming "solutions"; you will continue to research the problem/need in the coming weeks.

Grading will be based on:

- Clearly identified funding need and thorough completion of the worksheet
- Clearly articulated context
- Formatting and mechanics

Part 3: Identify and analyze a funding source (due Feb. 20th; 10 pts)

Identifying a source of funding can be one of the most time-consuming aspects of proposal writing. There are many resources available online to help you locate funding; your textbook lists several in Appendix B, and I have included a list which is linked from the BB course site under Course Documents. In addition, the organization you are writing for may have suggestions based on current or previous grants they have received. You should also consider sources that might not list themselves in databases. Local businesses, for example, will often fund local non-profit organizations. To find these opportunities you may need to search their websites or contact them directly.

To be successful, the funding source must be a good match for the organization and for the program or project you are proposing be funded. The funder is your audience; therefore, you need to analyze who they are, what they do, and why in order to write a successful proposal.

In the Discussion Board, you posted your completed Foundation Center's Prospect Worksheet (in Course Documents) for each potential funding source (a minimum of 3). The worksheet is a starting point to help you narrow potential funding sources and make a final selection that is most appropriate for your organization. Once you have selected the funding source, you will need to do additional research to fully analyze the funder to complete this assignment.

Be sure that you select a funding opportunity that requires a written narrative as part of the proposal. A funding opportunity which only requires completing a template with check boxes and short answers will not meet the requirements of this course. If you're uncertain about whether the opportunity you've found fits the course, check with me in advance before submitting this portion of the assignment.

Submit via the Dropbox a short report in memo format in which you:

- identify the funder you have selected
 - be sure to describe your research process and how you decided upon this funder based on what you found

- go beyond description to analyze the funders you researched so that your decision is placed in context based on the organization you are writing for and the purpose for requesting funding
- describe and analyze the funder you have selected and the proposal requirements:
 - the funder:
 - what is its mission, goals, values?
 - what types of programs and projects does it fund?
 - are there geographic or other restrictions imposed on funding?
 - proposal requirements:
 - what is the deadline for the proposal?
 - what type of information is required? are specific components (such as those listed on page 4 of the textbook) required?
 - what are the formatting guidelines?
 - how much funding can be applied for? is it a fixed amount or range?
 - what else does the funding agency require or expect as part of the proposal process?
- attach a copy of the agency's proposal guidelines/requirements (or a URL)

Grading will be based on:

- identification of a funding source that is a clear and logical match for your organization and the project/program to be proposed
- complete description and analysis of the funding agency and the proposal requirements. The results of your analysis should make it clear that the funding source you have selected is an appropriate choice.
- formatting and mechanics

Part 4: Draft Problem Statement/Goals and Objectives (due Mar. 6th; 10 pts)

For this assignment, you will write a draft of your problem statement and goals and objectives. Although the funder you have selected may not use this terminology, the problem statement and goals and objectives are key components of a proposal: they explain why funding is needed and what the organization will do with the funding. No matter how worthy the cause or program, no proposal is ever funded without a well-worded and convincing problem statement and objectives. Your problem statement should be accompanied by sufficient background information that you have gathered through the research you've completed and posted to the discussion board. In other words, you must convince me as the proposal reader that there really is a problem significant enough (for the organization you represent and for its constituents) that I should agree to fund your project/program. In addition, your goals and objectives should be clear and focused enough so that I am convinced that they address the problem. Again, no matter how worthy the cause or organization, no funder will award money if goals and objectives are so broad that it is unclear what the money will be used for. Part of being persuasive is to be clear, focused, and specific.

Submit to [Doc Sharing](#) your draft problem statement and goals and objectives in the format that is required by the funder you have selected. **Be sure to upload your file to the "Draft Problem Statement" category. Use the following naming convention for your file: LastnameProblemDraft.doc.**

Be sure to also submit a copy of or a link to the funding agency's requirements and guidelines. The copy you submit will be used for peer review after Spring Break.

Keep in mind, this is a draft. The purpose of a draft is to receive feedback so that you can revise and improve the final version. Therefore, grading will be based on:

- submission of a draft that demonstrates time and effort to research and writing
- a submission that is limited in content or formatting or that appears to have been hastily written to meet a deadline will receive 0 points

Part 5: Peer Review (due Mar. 13th; 5 pts)

Review the drafts of 2 other students, as assigned. A guide will be posted to use to review the drafts.

Part 6: Budget (due Mar. 27th; 5 pts)

Budgets are another key component of all funding proposals. The budget tells the funder how the money will be spent and whether you will spend the money on items that they are willing to fund. As a result, you should read the proposal guidelines carefully to determine what you can and cannot include. Some agencies will not fund salaries, for example. If your budget requests salary information not only will you not receive that amount but you risk the funder questioning your entire proposal. Budgets are about more than money. They are about ethos--demonstrating that you are responsible and professional, that you understand your project/program and can link funds to specific aspects of it, that you understand the funder, and have taken the time to pay attention to the details of the proposal process and guidelines.

Submit to [Doc Sharing](#) a draft of the budget section of your proposal. Be sure to upload your file to the Draft Budgets category. Use the following naming convention for your file:

LastnameBudgetDraft.doc

Your budget should include:

- a breakdown of how the funding will be spent, if received
- a justification which links the budget amounts to the objectives of the proposal

Keep in mind, this is a draft. The purpose of a draft is to receive feedback so that you can revise and improve the final version. Therefore, grading will be based on:

- submission of a draft that demonstrates time and effort to your research and writing
- a submission that is limited in content or formatting or that appears to have been hastily written to meet a deadline will receive 0 points

Part 7: Peer Review (due April 3rd; 5 pts)

Review the drafts of 2 other students, as assigned. A guide will be posted in BB to use to review the drafts.

Part 8: Proposal Draft (due April 17th; draft: 5 pts, memo: 5 pts)

Submit to [Doc Sharing](#) a **final draft of a full proposal**. Be sure to upload your draft to the Draft Complete Proposals category. And use the filename convention: LastnameFullDraft.doc

Your draft should demonstrate that you have considered the reviews from your peers and revised accordingly. Remember, however, that the content and formatting of your proposal is ultimately your responsibility.

Keep in mind, this is a draft. The purpose of a draft is to receive feedback so that you can revise and improve the final version. Therefore, grading (5 pts) will be based on:

- submission of a draft that demonstrates time and effort to research and writing
- a submission that is limited in content or formatting or that appears to have been hastily written to meet a deadline will receive 0 points

In addition, submit [via the Dropbox](#) a memo in which you describe your revision process and how you have used (or not used) feedback given on previous drafts. In asking you to write about your revisions and how you've used feedback, I'm asking you to evaluate and assess your own writing process. That means the focus of this memo is YOUR work, what it is you learned from feedback, and how it helped you revise. The focus should not be a critique of your peers. This portion of the assignment is worth 5 pts

Part 9: Peer Review (due April 24th; 5 pts)

Review the drafts of 2 other students, as assigned. A guide will be posted in BB to use to review the drafts.

Part 10: Final proposal (due May 1st; 25 pts)

Submit via the Dropbox your **final complete proposal**, ready for submission.

Grading will be based on:

- Complete, clear, and persuasive proposal
- Formatting based on the funding agency guidelines
- Mechanics