Preparing Your Initial Project Proposals

At the end of the semester, you will submit a full-scale Prospectus of your Project and do a short presentation about your Prospectus in class (see Final Research Project handout for details). But before that, you need to submit an Initial Project Proposal and have it approved. Please do not be confused by the similarity of the terminology: this is a Proposal you need to submit in order for me to approve you to begin working to produce the final research project for this class, which takes the form of a Prospectus for a potential Capstone-scale research project.

Your Initial Project Proposal must address each part of the Proposal format below as specifically and concretely as possible. It should be **1-2 single-spaced pages typed**, and should be **divided into the separate sections outlined below**, each being identified by its own subheading matching the format of this handout below. You also need to **include a separate Bibliography page** listing **at least 5 pertinent outside scholarly sources** ("outside" means obtained through your own research, not common course readings; "scholarly" means peer-reviewed journal articles or scholarly books or book chapters), with full citations using a standard citation system, such as Chicago, Harvard, or MLA.

Research Object. Define your general topic as well as the specific "research object" (RO) you would analyze. What broad aspect(s) of the interrelationship between media & culture are you studying? What specific research object (mediated text(s), technology(-ies), space(s), and/or practice(s)) are you focusing on, and what are your preliminary research questions about the RO?

Framing Theory/Theories. In your project, you are welcome to engage other theories, but here I am asking you to place your project within the discourse of course as a whole by contextualizing the project in relation to the different approaches to using critical media theory presented in Ott & Mack's *Critical Media Studies* and/or the Course PDF Readings. Which of the theories we have studied are you most directly working within to initially frame your project, why, and how?

Analytical Method. What specific methodological design are you working towards at this point? In short: What would you *do* to *analyze* your research object within your theoretical framework(s) that will add to the existing scholarly conversations about your topic, and exactly *how* would you do it?

Preliminary Literature Review. How have you been identifying sources and how will you extend your range and depth of sources to allow you to eventually be able to write a comprehensive literature review for your final project? Which other scholars do you see doing similar and different but related work on your topic, and how does your proposed methodology relate to theirs?

Motivation. It should be a given that you will care about your project (otherwise there is no reason to do it), but it will help to articulate it for yourself (and me) at the outset. What is your personal motivation for doing this project? How are you connected to the topic and research object?