Lack of mental health resources in Michigan. Paper instructions: Introduction/Rationale In many organizations, a formal research proposal, or a less formal research plan, is a necessary precursor to a full-length report, such as an informational report or recommendation report. A research proposal is intended to help you: Find and articulate a problem that can be addressed with research (a problem as it exists for an actual group, company or organization). Develop patterns of inquiry with suitable research questions and methods. Discover your strengths and weaknesses as writers and researchers, so you can budget your time and energy (and assign roles if working in a team), and realistically manage your project expectations. Formally plan your project's lifecycle for collaborating, drafting, sharing findings, getting feedback, revising and editing -- all of which should be established to the expectations of your team and instructor. Assignment Prompt Proposing a research report is a problem solving activity. The research proposal is not meant to propose a final “answer” to a problem. Instead, it is a “promise” to someone that you have a plan to perform useful research and writing about a problem and its potential solutions. “Discovering” a problem to research can be a challenge, and it often requires collaboration among instructors and students to get beyond “tip-of the nose” problems. Problems affecting Detroit and Wayne State are often a good place to start (you can take look at the board of governors’ meeting minutes or the WSU strategic plan, for example), as well as problems related to the use or development of a technology affecting your fields, your institution(s), or your workplaces. While you may format your 3-6 page proposal, in general, as seems logical to you, the following sections are suggested: Summary An Overview of the Problem or Opportunity The Proposed Program or Plan of Work Qualifications and Experience Introduction The introduction includes a strong draft of a problem statement, describing the problem or opportunity you will be addressing with your final report. Problem statements often take time to write well, and it’s possible that it will be significantly revised in the upcoming days and weeks (some technical communications courses spend entire semesters working on articulating problem statements). Good drafts of problem statements show a high level of audience awareness, or a ‘reader-centered’ focus on the problem. In other words, they strive to articulate the problem from your reader perspectives (the readers of your proposal and/or your final report) or stakeholder perspectives on the problem, and they include perspectives on the problem from primary and/or secondary research. You may also consider labeling or categorizing parts of the problem based on your current evaluation techniques or criteria for evaluating the problem (financial, sustainability, staffing, technological improvements, etc.). Problem Statements can include subcategories, such as “Criteria”, “Categories”, “Rearranged and Updated Problem Statements” (if the problem is following a recent report), or “Incomplete Problem Statements”. The introduction contains a Purpose and Audience Statement to articulate the purposes and audience of your proposal and final report. You should also show understanding of your readers’ needs. You should also justify your choice of the genre for the final report you are planning to write (usually an informational report or recommendation report) The introduction contains, if appropriate: a background on the problem, a discussion of your key sources of information, the scope and organization of the remaining proposal, a discussion of any key words or technical terms. “The Proposed Program” or “Plan of Work” This section offers a description of how you will gather and analyze research. It is the section where your readers will justify their decision about whether or not to support (or fund) your proposal. This section should include: Some preliminary research results/findings. Some justification for why you are engaged in forms of inquiry, such as: site work (visiting and observing a site or online activity) interview or survey work data analysis (finding and representing salient data) word work (thorough study of concepts or technical terms) source work (secondary research / 3050 library guides Description of Qualifications: Describes your relevant skills and past work, as well as strengths and weaknesses, and any organizational or departmental resources you have access to. Budget: If appropriate, this section specifies how much the proposed program or work will cost, or (often the case in this class) the budgeting of your time and resources in terms of your project's lifecycle for collaborating, drafting, sharing findings, getting feedback, revising and editing. This should include a timeline of dates and deliverables (including class due dates).