

**University of Washington**  
**Geography 349**  
**Brief 2: project proposal**

Define your topic and the key components. For example, if your topic includes the concept of a “food desert,” “retail improvement,” “at risk,” “online retailing,” “business plan,” etc. – define each concept, using some reference sources.

Define your study area (or areas, if you’re doing comparisons). For this Tuesday, it might be sufficient to suggest how you will identify your study area. [E.g., while it might be possible to find an official City of Seattle designation of “the Ave” or the “U District,” you might have to tell me what indicators you would *use* to define a “low-income area” of Seattle, but not yet have decided which area you’ll focus on.]

Define your study period. For example, if you want to study the effects of some change, you’ll need to select and get data for a period that starts before the change, and extends long enough after the change to have some chance of showing effects. If you’re proposing the location of something in the near future, the most relevant time period may be the most recent year for which you can get relevant data. [That year may be different for different types of data – that’s okay, but your final project report should make note of that.]

Define the key causal relationships. What causes “retail improvement?” “Food deserts?” “High-school dropouts?” What elements of consumer behavior underlie online retailing? This will require a little reading of relevant academic literature. I want you make a start at this by Tuesday – you’ll probably need to do more after that.

You’ll certainly have some references. Read the syllabus to see how it suggests citing and listing references (CSE style, as linked from the syllabus).