Research Study and Research Study Portfolio

Students in the Child Growth and Development class are required to conduct a modified research study during the semester. The purpose of the study is to gain insight and perspective into the physical, social, moral and/or cognitive development of children by examining children directly in their natural environments in the light of critical theories of child development.

The research study is designated modified for several reasons.

1. Students have insufficient time to select a valid sample population for the study. Therefore, they will have to be satisfied to work with a single child or group of children conveniently available.
2. Populations of children used in the study will not be large enough for making large-scale generalizations. Instead, students will have to be satisfied to gain perspective and insight in a specific context.
3. The time for collecting data is short. Students will need to design studies that can be implemented in one or two sittings. It is not reasonable to conduct a longitudinal study (over time) because there are only a few weeks available for collecting data.
4. Students will not be able to control all conditions during the study. Access to children is carefully protected, and students in the class are required to respect all conditions imposed during the study by those people responsible for the well being of the children.

Students will be given guidance throughout the semester as they propose, conduct, and report findings on these studies. The following criteria are offered as a “starting point” for the research studies.

A. Students may work alone or in a small research study cooperative group of 2 for the purpose of conducting the study.
B. Students will choose a child/early adolescent or group of children/early adolescents from infancy through age 14 to observe/study during the course.
C. Students will develop a research study based on the child(ren) selected.
D. Students will submit a Research Study Portfolio that documents the six critical elements of the research study.
E. Students will submit individual elements of the Research Study portfolio from time to time in order to document progress and to gain instructor feedback/guidance/support. Dates for submitting individual elements will be posted on the course calendar.
F. Students are required to meet with the course instructor at least once in a face-to-face conference to receive feedback during the development of the research study proposal
G. Students are required to meet with the course instructor at least three days prior to the research study presentation to gain approval for the presentation
H. All six individual elements of the study must be included in the submission of the final Research Study Portfolio.

The Research Study Portfolio will consist of six elements (see details on the following pages) that must be collected and presented in a coherent whole to the course.
instructor no later than December 6, 2017. The portfolios submitted must include a table of contents that provides navigation to the following six required elements.

I. ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY. Students are expected to construct an annotated bibliography of substantive, authoritative, and relevant reading. The annotated bibliography must

   A. Include a minimum of eight (8) authoritative sources specifically related to the research study – one may be the course text – additional sources are required for an additional researcher on research teams. See Research Team Instructions at the end of this document.
   B. Include at least two “primary” texts [Ex. If research is based on Piaget, READ Piaget!]
   C. Include at least two current [2000 or later] relevant research studies derived from the theoretical concepts of the research study – from a peer-reviewed journal.
   D. Include at least one document located using an electronic database (for example, ERIC) – this can be a source that also satisfies C.
   E. Include at least one “authoritative” online reference – what constitutes an authoritative online reference will be discussed in class
   F. Include and annotate all of the sources listed in the “Works Cited” section of the research paper. It can also include whatever additional sources that you may have read while deciding on a research study question or while gaining background knowledge for your research study but are not cited in your final paper.

The submission of the Annotated Bibliography: Completed annotated bibliographies are composed of a set of individual annotations that meet all of the above criteria and are organized and appropriately formatted. Education majors and concentrators are required to use the APA style for the annotated bibliography; however, non-majors may use the MLA or Chicago style. The annotated bibliography is submitted at midterm and again, in its complete form, as part of the research study portfolio. No matter which style the student chooses for the format of the annotated bibliography, the style must be consistent throughout the research study portfolio.

For more information on constructing the Annotated Bibliography, go to http://dante.udallas.edu/edu3327/annotated_bibliography.htm

For more information about the submission dates for annotations and the Annotated Bibliography, go to http://dante.udallas.edu/edu3327/Spring_2017/Reading_Schedule_S2017.pdf

II. THEORETICAL FOUNDATION: Students are expected to develop a theoretical foundation for their research study – based on substantive and authoritative information. The Theoretical Foundation portion of the Research Study is designed to provide substantial evidence that the student has selected, collected, recorded, and synthesized critical and authoritative information relevant to the key theorist(s), theory and research upon which the Research Study is framed. The Theoretical Foundation consists of six critical components. Brief descriptions of the requirements are provided with links for additional information relevant to each component.
A. **Introduction.** The Theoretical Foundation begins with an introduction. The introduction must state the purpose of the research study or of the problem driving the research study and include a relevant connection to the work of the key theorist(s) in the field of child growth and development whose theory/research will serve as the framework for the study and for investigating and interpreting the data collected during the research study.

1. The introduction is ordinarily a single paragraph that clearly establishes the purpose of the study and the key research questions that drive the investigation.
2. It establishes a theorist and his/her theory along with the most specific concepts that will be investigated.
3. **The Introduction MUST include at least one citation / reference to a primary text.**

B. **Overview of Key Theorist and Theory.** This portion of the Theoretical Foundation must offer an overview of the key theorist(s) whose theory/research supports the research study and critical insight into his/her scientific work.

1. This section of the Theoretical Foundation is NOT intended to serve as a vehicle for simply developing a biographical sketch of the theorist although some biographical information is appropriate. (For example, birth and death dates of the theorist, names of significant people who worked with or influenced the theorist, countries of origin and education that may have impacted the theorist’s work all help to situate a theorist in a context; however, this type of information should not be the focus or all that is included.

2. This section of the Theoretical Foundation should be one or two paragraphs in length and include an overview of the work of the key theorist(s). Here, the researcher(s) is expected to identify the broad category (e.g., cognitive development, moral development, etc.) into which the theorist’s work falls and a broad description of all of the contributions of the theorist(s) to the field.

3. **The Overview MUST include citation(s) / reference(s) to primary text(s).**

C. **Comprehensive summary of Theory.** This section of the Theoretical Foundation should be the most substantial (and lengthy) section [2-3 pages]. It must include a comprehensive summary of the theoretical work of the key theorist relevant to the research study. N.B. The information included in this section must be directly used to support the development of the Data Collection Instrument and Data Analysis Rubric / Interpretation Tool / Technique used in the research study.

1. The comprehensive summary must integrate and develop the specific area of the theorist’s work that supports the research study.

2. In offering detailed explanation of the theoretical work, the researcher(s) is expected to include and develop critical terms and concepts (from the Glossary of Critical Terms) and to include and develop significantly more detail than what is available in the Crain text – mainly from primary texts.

3. **This portion of the Theoretical Foundation must include multiple citations / references – again, mainly from primary texts.**
D. **Research Study Summaries.** This section of the Theoretical Foundation must offer coherent summaries of at least two research studies derived from the theoretical concepts of the key theorist – and relevant to your own research study.

1. The researcher(s) is expected to include the following information in each summary of a research study: (1) research question and the purpose of the study; (2) hypothesis tested; (3) participants involve – number, age, and gender; (3) brief description of the study procedure; (4) results/conclusions of the study; and (5) implications of the study. Each summary should be written as a single – but substantial – paragraph.

2. **The researcher(s) MUST include citations and references to actual studies.**

E. **Connection between Theory and Study.** This section of the Theoretical Foundation must offer a coherent, well-reasoned argument that connects the theoretical foundation to the student’s research study. In this section, students are expected to specifically state and justify a hypothesis for each research question, using concepts and explanation specifically derived from the theoretical foundation.

1. The researcher(s) is expected to synthesize information from the parts B through E of the Theoretical Foundation to identify key points around which to develop an argument in support of the study hypotheses so as to connect the research study to the theoretical foundation.

2. **The researcher(s) MUST include citations and references to both primary and secondary sources in the justification.**

F. **Glossary of Critical Terms.** Each research study must include a glossary of critical terms primarily from the key theory/theorist with a clear, personally worded definition and an example. The glossary should include terms and concepts beyond those included in the Crain text, showing evidence of careful, substantive reading and research. This glossary must be submitted with the Research Study Portfolio as an appendix.


III. **IRB APPLICATION & APPROVALS:** Students are expected to complete an IRB Application and gain approval for conducting their research studies prior to data collection.

The IRB Application / Registration is a formal process driven by the laws and the professional ethics associated with doing research involving human subjects and, in particular, with vulnerable populations such as children.

There are seven critical steps involved in completing and submitting the IRB Application / Registration and gaining approval for the research study required in the Child Growth and Development class. They are as follows:

A. Filling out IRB Application
B. Development of Consent Letters
C. Development of Assent Forms
D. Earning the Certificate of Completion for “Protecting Human Research Participants” from the National Institute of Health (NIH).

E. Submitting the completed IRB Application with consent letters and assent forms to B. Khirallah for feedback and Khirallah approval

F. Submitting the Khirallah-approved IRB — as a single, continuous document — see N.B. below G — to the UD IRB for approval

G. Submit the approval letter received from the University of Dallas IRB to B. Khirallah. Data collection CANNOT BEGIN BEFORE SUBMISSION OF THIS APPROVAL LETTER to B. Khirallah.

N.B. The University of Dallas IRB will ONLY accept the IRB Application/Registration as a SINGLE, CONTINUOUS document. This means that you should put your application, consent letter(s), assent form(s), and NIH certificate(s) at the end of the application as part of the same document. DO NOT submit separate attachments. Combine everything into a single document.

FILLING OUT THE ACTUAL IRB APPLICATION FORM: Below is a copy of the actual IRB application with notes and examples to help you fill out your own application. Follow the prompts carefully.

See a sample Application for Prior Approval of Research at http://dante.udallas.edu/edu3327/Research_Study/Filling_Out_IRB_Application.docx

IV. DATA AND TREATMENT OF DATA. Students are expected to collect, submit, analyze, and evaluate data using a method, procedure, and instrument(s) defined in the IRB with specific evidence that the method, procedure, and instrument(s) are derived from the theoretical foundation. What this means is that when students submit copies of the method, procedure, and instrument(s) used in collecting, analyzing, and evaluating data, they MUST connect information in those documents with quoted and/or paraphrased and CITED theoretical information from primary and secondary texts found in the annotated bibliography. This section of the portfolio must include the following:

A. **ALL RAW DATA** that was collected during the research study in its ORIGINAL FORM. This means that all data collected directly from children must be submitted exactly as collected, including handwritten notes, pictures, audio tapes, video tapes, etc.

B. A blank copy of the data collection instrument with all instructions used for its implementation.

C. A data analysis explanation as to how the data collected will be analyzed. Researchers must include a copy of any rubric, scale, list of words, or other evaluation tool used for analyzing and treating the data collected. Students are welcome to use quantitative or qualitative statistical procedures learned in other classes to treat and analyze data collected. In such cases, students will be expected to describe the statistical procedure used and explain its purpose. No matter the tool selected or constructed, its selection and/or construction should be done IN ADVANCE of data analysis and evaluation and should be explicitly connected to research study theory / theorist – with citations / references.

D. A clear explanation of the “theory-based process” used to analyze and evaluate the data for each problem addressed. The “process” must be logically and
conceptually connected to theoretical concepts in the particular research study. The explanation MUST EXPLICITLY show the connection between the data collection instrument AND/OR the data analysis/evaluation tool and MUST INCLUDE CITED theoretical information from primary texts. Students can show the connections using a variety of techniques, including well-positioned INSERTED comments [using the Comment bubbles available in Word or other word processing software] or annotations, color-coded charts, footnotes, etc. The researcher should include in the explanation how “difficult” data was analyzed and evaluated, if the researcher had to work with any such data from the study.

E. ALL ANALYZED DATA RESULTS emerging from implementing the “theory-based process” with the tools/instruments created/selected.

F. ANSWERS TO ALL RESEARCH QUESTIONS BASED ON RESULTS. Students must include each research question posed by the study with an answer and an explanation AND a GRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION of the data in support of the answer.

V. RESEARCH PAPER: CONNECTING THEORY TO PRACTICE. Students are expected to submit a well-written, polished research paper that connects the implemented research study with the theoretical foundation. This section of the portfolio explains and discusses the research study, its implementation, and findings in the context of the theory selected as the foundation for the study. NO first person is used in the paper. The paper will usually be about 20+ pages in length and should include the following:

A. **Introduction.** The paper begins with a brief description of the problem. It goes on to include the actual research question(s) posed for the study and introduces the connection between your research study and key aspects of the theory/research that serves as the theoretical framework for the study. This information will come directly from the Theoretical Foundation, part II of the Research Study Portfolio. The Introduction MUST include at least one citation / reference to a primary text.

B. **Theoretical Foundation.** This is an extremely important portion of your paper. It should also be the most substantive (and perhaps longest) section of the paper as it offers a synthesis of the reading you did when constructing an understanding of the theory and research used to build your study. If the Theoretical Foundation, Section II of the Research Study Portfolio, has been carefully done, students can basically insert that section of the portfolio into the paper – being sure to adjust tenses and transitions. This portion of the paper MUST include numerous citations to references listed in the Annotated Bibliography – as indicated in the directions to the Theoretical Foundation. Make sure that all citations refer to texts included in the Annotated Bibliography. In addition, make sure that you have included relevant and substantive material quoted or paraphrased from primary texts and relevant research studies.

C. **Setting and Participants.** This portion of the paper offers a description of the setting (context) in which you did your research and provides a profile of the children with whom the researcher worked. Describe carefully the location and conditions of the study. Then describe the participants – their ages, genders, grade levels, and any other relevant data. Be sure to avoid using any confidential information in this section that would connect the specific location or specific children to the study. It would be appropriate to include pictures in this section of
the paper; however, special consent is required for pictures of children’s faces or pictures of recognizable locations.

D. **Study Method / Procedure.** This portion of the paper offers the specific procedure used to implement the study and collect data. In other words, what did you do? Include in this section any relevant connections between the procedure / method and the theoretical foundation. (Information for this section can come directly from the IRB (and consent letters), the Data and Treatment of Data, Section IV of the Research Study Portfolio, and from the Theoretical Foundation, Section II of the Research Study Portfolio. In writing this section of the paper, be sure to tell the “story” of the encounter with the children. Mention any problems or unusual circumstances that occurred.

E. **Research Findings.** This portion of the paper explains the results of the study based on the data collected during the study and then analyzed. In other words, this section of the paper answers each of the research questions of the study using the results of the data analysis. It includes the graphical representation(s) for each research question that were created for the Data and Data Treatment section of the Research Study Portfolio. In this section of the paper, it is essential to include and refer to graphic representations of the results.

F. **Implications / Questions.** This section of the paper is as important as the Theoretical Foundation section. Here, the student is expected to discuss the results of the study and what those results mean relevant to the Theoretical Foundation of the study. This part of your paper must be well thought out. It must include implications of your research for education (or psychology or medicine or parenting) and also reflect the researcher’s growth in understanding key aspects of the Theoretical Foundation as well as growth in understanding the growth and development and education of children. This section should also include NEW THOUGHTFUL QUESTIONS which have emerged from the study – both those relevant to the theoretical foundation and others that may be connected to other known theories and/or research (from class). In writing this portion of the paper, the student MUST connect implications, insights, and questions with the Theoretical Foundation, citing primary texts, secondary sources, and research. In addition, the student MUST ALSO connect insights gained from the research study with particular aspects of the study (observation data, results, setting, etc.) to demonstrate a clear synthesis of all elements relevant to the research study. The best studies will show evidence of additional reading stimulated by new questions that arose from the results of the study. This section of the paper may include a table/graph or other representation of data in order to make a point. It is important to offer a constant interplay among the theory, the data, and researcher insights. This section of the paper MUST include citations / references to both primary and secondary sources.

G. **Evaluation:** This is an important element of the paper. In this section, the researcher(s) needs to discuss problems encountered during the research study and ways to improve the study. The evaluation should be at least one and no more than two word-processed pages. The research study evaluation MUST address the following: 1) did the research study answer all of the research study questions? 2) did the study results substantiate the hypothesis – or not, 3) what were the strengths and weaknesses of the research study, and 4) what changes would improve the study if it were to be done again. In discussing each point, the student is expected
to provide explicit evidence to substantiate responses, citing information from the Theoretical Foundation or information / data gained during the study.

**H. Works Cited:** DO NOT CONFUSE WORKS CITED WITH THE ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY, which is a separate element of the Research Study Portfolio. The Works Cited is simply a section of the paper that comes at the very end of the paper. In this section, the student MUST offer a bibliographic list – without annotations -- for all of the authoritative sources cited in the paper. Students should be mindful that the format selected for citing references within the paper must be consistent with the format for providing bibliographic information at the end of the paper.

**VI. RESEARCH STUDY PRESENTATIONS:** Students are expected to offer a 25-minute substantive oral presentation of the research study with participant handouts. All materials used in the presentation must be included in the portfolio. The following are required:

A. Students MUST provide a handout to the class that includes a brief abstract of the study, key terms with definitions and major theory points. I recommend that you construct a PowerPoint or a Web Page to support the organized and coherent flow of your presentation. If you need technology help, I am more than willing…as long as it is not “totally” last minute. Many students may wish to use copies of their PowerPoints as class handouts.

B. Class presentations will begin March 29 and end April 28. Students may schedule presentations at any time during the semester by submitting a request to the instructor. Presentation dates will be determined on a first-come, first-serve basis. Mrs. Khirallah will assign presentation dates for those students who have not scheduled their presentations by February 10, 2017. Presentations must be kept to 25 minutes per person! If there are people working together as a team, the team may have up to 50 minutes. Rehearse your presentations well in order to keep to the time.

C. Students must receive approval to present at least two days prior to scheduled presentation date. Approval will be granted based on the quality of research study and materials prepared.

D. **It is important to note that a student may not earn an A in this course if he/she does not present a research study in class during a scheduled presentation time.**

**ABOUT SUBMITTING THE RESEARCH STUDY PORTFOLIO**

**FORMAT.** Elements in the Research Study Portfolio may be constructed in a variety of formats. I will accept materials online, on disk, on CD-ROM, or on paper. The individual student is required to determine the most appropriate means by which to organize and link the materials turned in. In the case of online materials, students are required to submit disks containing all files and/or documents. All written work (no matter its format) should be polished, proofread, and typed and should represent the student’s best thinking and organization. Final grades will be based upon the considerations and weights listed in the Research Study Rubric. NO MATTER THE FORMAT, RESEARCH STUDY PORTFOLIOS MUST INCLUDE A TABLE OF CONTENTS. Go to
RESEARCH TEAM INSTRUCTIONS: REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS WORKING TOGETHER IN TEAMS (HIGHLY RECOMMENDED)

Students who decide to work in teams to complete the research study are expected to meet the following additional requirements:

E. A research study team may consist of no more than two students.
F. As part of the Research Study, the team must develop a Chart of Responsibilities that clearly identifies what each team member has contributed. The Chart of Responsibilities must be submitted at Midterm and with the Research Study Portfolio.
G. Each team member is required to submit an individually constructed Annotated Bibliography that meets all of the requirements for the Annotated Bibliography. Each Annotated Bibliography MUST include at least six unique sources cited in the research paper, including at least one unique primary text, one unique research study, and one unique authoritative online source as well as unique secondary sources cited in the paper. Thus, the Research Study Portfolio MUST contain two distinct Annotated Bibliographies, a separate annotated bibliography for each member of the research team. Each Annotated Bibliography must be CLEARLY LABELED WITH THE STUDENT’S NAME AND OFFER A MINIMUM OF SIX UNIQUE ANNOTATED SOURCES which are cited in the research paper. While research team members may include common sources in their annotated bibliographies, they MAY NOT include common annotations. Each team member is required to write his/her own annotations.
H. The Research Paper portion of the Portfolio has eight sections. Each team member is required to write at least two (2) sections of the Theoretical Foundation (as defined in the criteria for that section) AND at least 3 additional major sections of the research paper. The Chart of Responsibilities MUST detail which sections and portions were written by each team member.
I. Each team member must take an active role in the collection and/or treatment of data – and the Chart of Responsibilities MUST detail what each team member did to support the collection and/or treatment of data.
J. Each team member must take an active, speaking role in the class presentation.
K. Each team member is responsible for understanding all aspects of the project – and MUST BE ABLE to respond to questions over both theory and collected data.
L. Each team member MUST submit the Team Assessment Form – and use it to assess self and his/her team member. Click here to access the form, Or, go to http://dante.udallas.edu/edu3327/Research_Study/Team_assessment.doc