RESEARCH STUDY PROPOSAL.

The Research Study Proposal describes in detail the proposed investigation. It is divided into two essential parts. Part II is further divided into 5 critical components.

I. Theoretical Foundation
   A. Partial Annotated Bibliography (minimum 5 entries)
   B. Preliminary List of Critical Terms – relevant to theoretical foundation
   C. Introduction to the Theoretical Foundation
   D. A Data Collection Instrument
   E. Analysis Criteria / Rating System / Rubric

II. IRB Application/Registration.

The information below is provided to help you complete Part I and Part II of the Research Study Proposal. Please read this information carefully so as to develop an effective proposal. Historically, students with more effective proposals have produced more effective studies and have earned higher grades.

I. Theoretical Foundation: The Theoretical Foundation for the research study provides preliminary – but not complete – evidence of the theory and/or research that drives and supports the Research Study. Complete evidence will be included in the Research Study paper. The Theoretical Foundation portion of the Research Study Proposal consists of five critical components. Requirements and links for additional information relevant to each component are described below.

1. Partial Annotated Bibliography. It must include a minimum of five authoritative sources with at least two primary texts. The Annotated Bibliography ultimately must include a minimum of eight sources, including two primary texts, for researchers working alone, 10 for researchers working as a team of two, and 12 for researchers working as a team of three.

   A. Be sure that you know the difference between the "Annotated Bibliography" – a required segment of the Research Study Portfolio and the "Works Cited" section of the Research Study paper. Both are required, and they have some relationship to one another. However, they are not identical, and they are found in different sections of the Research Study Portfolio. Click here for more information.

   B. Be sure to read the information about Course Reading and its relationship to the Annotated Bibliography. Click here for more information.

An excellent example of a Partial Annotated Bibliography can be found in the Montessori sample project proposal. Access the entire proposal at http://dante.udallas.edu/concesmontessori/Research_Proposal1.pdf
2. A Preliminary List of Critical Terms
   A. You must create a preliminary list of vocabulary terms specific to the theorist and theory/concept(s) serving as the foundation for the research study. You will find these terms, especially, when reading and studying primary texts relevant to your research study. You may also find them in secondary texts, research articles, or online; however, in those cases you will want to find the associated primary text references and then seek out more accurate or comprehensive information and/or definitions in the primary text(s).
   B. Terms do not have to be defined at this point; however, the researcher(s) MUST define terms from this list that are used in any part of the Research Study Portfolio submitted at the end of the course. In the Research Study Portfolio, the List of Critical Terms will appear as part of the Data Collection / Treatment section.

   An excellent example of a Preliminary List of Critical Terms can be found in the Montessori sample project proposal. Access the entire proposal at http://dante.udallas.edu/concesmontessori/Research_Proposal1.pdf

3. An Introduction to the Theoretical Foundation for the study
   A. The introduction should be two to three paragraphs (about one to two word-processed pages) that clearly establish a theorist and the specific concepts that serve as the foundational framework for the research study.
   B. The introduction is expected to briefly show evidence that the student has done some preliminary reading (in at least one primary text) and can situate the research within a broad theoretical framework and then identify the key concepts that drive the investigation.
   C. The introduction is NOT intended to serve as a vehicle for simply developing a biographical sketch of the theorist although some biographical information may be 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 all that is included in the introduction. Important biographical information can be expanded, as needed for understanding, in the final paper.)

   An excellent example of an Introduction to the Theoretical Foundation for a study can be found in the Kohlberg sample project proposal created by Cassie Fredendall and Debra Naukam. Access the entire proposal at http://dante.udallas.edu/fredendall/child_growth/ChildGrowth/CGDMoralityProposal.doc

4. Data Collection Instrument. This instrument may be in any of a number of formats. It may be a survey, questionnaire, set of multiple choice items, list of interview questions, a sheet of drawing paper, etc. It is the actual, ready-to-use tool that will be used to collect data from the study participants. The instrument may be developed or selected from reading/research. Whether it is developed or selected, it MUST provide explicit reference (YES, a citation) to the theoretical foundation of the study, preferably from a primary text.
A. Whatever materials the researcher(s) plans to use for collecting information from the children must be included here. For example, if you plan to interview students, please provide a list of the questions as well as the document that you plan to use to record responses. If you plan to use a tape recorder to record responses, please provide the questions and indicate that responses will be collected in taped recordings. If you plan to use a video camera to collect data, provide a script of the questions and indicate that you will collect the answers on video recordings. If you plan to ask children to write answers to questions, then have the actual questionnaire developed – one that is ready to be given directly to the students with instructions, spaces for responses, lines for writing responses, etc.

B. This data collection instrument must be appropriate for collecting the data that you need.

C. During the reading phase of the research study, the researcher(s) may discover useful instruments that theorists or past researchers (including those whose research studies are used as Sample Research Studies) employed in their own research. If so, you are encouraged to evaluate those instruments for use in the study. The researcher(s) may decide to use them as is, or the instruments may be modified in some way to better suit the study. In cases where the researcher(s) modify the instruments, they must be able to justify the modifications – theoretically and/or practically.

An excellent example of a Data Collection Instrument used for a study can be found in the Kohlberg sample project proposal created by Cassie Fredendall and Debra Naukam. Access their questionnaire at [http://dante.udallas.edu/fredendall/child_growth/Kohlberg_dilemmas.htm](http://dante.udallas.edu/fredendall/child_growth/Kohlberg_dilemmas.htm)

[IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT THIS EXAMPLE: This data collection instrument does not offer a citation to Kohlberg. Your data collection instrument should cite specific reference to the theoretical foundation.]

5. **Analysis Criteria / Rating System / Rubric.** This tool(s) will guide the analysis and evaluation of data collected – and will be based EXPLICITLY on the theoretical foundation. In other words, it MUST cite an authoritative source (preferable a primary text).

A. The researcher(s) will select and/or develop an analysis criteria, a rating system, a rubric or a scoring guide that will be used to determine the meaning (interpretation) of the data collected in terms of the theoretical foundation.

B. The system for treating the data collected must be based EXPLICITLY on the study’s theoretical foundation, and it MUST justify that connection by EXPLICITLY CITING the relevant source material in a primary text and/or a other authoritative source.
An excellent example of rubrics used to analyze data for a study can be found in the Kohlberg sample project proposal created by Stephanie Cain and Sylvia Tellez. Access their rubrics and all of their data and data analysis by clicking on the links below:

◆ **Kohlberg Rubric** --

◆ **Gilligan Rubric** --

◆ **Data** – On this page, look for links to data that show how data was treated to get study results

**For other Sample Research Studies, click here...** The sample proposals found here provide excellent insight into the development of Part II of the Research Study Proposal, the Theoretical Foundation. It is important to note that the sample proposals do not offer specific samples of Part I: The IRB Application/Registration process for review by the University of Dallas IRB. Please be sure to note the differences. Prior to Spring 2010, proposals were not subject to IRB approval.

II. **IRB Application/Registration.** For information about completing this portion of the Research Study Proposal, go to the instructions for this part of the proposal process.

Both parts of the Research Study Proposal must be completed and approved by the necessary parties BEFORE data collection can begin. Individual appointments for proposal discussion/support/approval can be made with Mrs. Khirallah.

**REMEMBER:** Data collection may NOT begin until both Part I and Part II of the Research Study Proposal have been completed, submitted, and approved by the course instructor and the University of Dallas IRB. Only Part II will be submitted to the University of Dallas IRB.