Research Study and Research Study Portfolio

An Excellent tutorial covering various aspects of the research process is available at http://gemini.lib.purdue.edu/core (requires you to create an account or login anonymously)

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 five 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 five individual elements of the study must be included in the submission of the final Research Study Portfolio.
The Research Study Portfolio will consist of five elements (see details below) that must be collected and presented in a coherent whole to the course instructor by the due date indicated in the Instructional Framework. The portfolios submitted must include a table of contents that provides navigation to the following five required elements.

I. **ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY.** Students are expected to construct an annotated bibliography. The annotated bibliography must

A. Include a minimum of eight authoritative sources specifically related to the research study – one may be the course text – two additional sources are required for each additional researcher on research teams. Thus, a research team of two will require a minimum of ten (10) sources.

B. Include at least two “primary” texts [Ex. If research is based on Piaget, READ what Piaget wrote!]

C. **Include at least two current [2000 or later] relevant research studies derived from the theoretical concepts of the research study – from a peer-review journal**

D. Include at least one document located using an electronic database (for example, ERIC) – this can be a document that also satisfies C. Please include a printout of the database search results in your portfolio.

E. Include at least one “authoritative” online reference – what constitutes an authoritative online reference will be discussed in class

F. Include all of the sources listed in the “Works Cited” section of the research paper plus 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 have organized and appropriately formatted. Students are encouraged to use the APA style for the annotated bibliography; however, students may use the MLA style. The annotated bibliography is submitted 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.

The submission of individual annotations: Students are required to submit individual annotations according to the following schedule to show evidence of ONGOING, SYSTEMATIC construction of understanding relevant to the research study.

For more information on constructing the Annotated Bibliography, go to [http://dante.udallas.edu/edu5357s/annotated_bibliography.htm](http://dante.udallas.edu/edu5357s/annotated_bibliography.htm)

For more information about the required submission dates for annotations and the Annotated Bibliography, go to [http://dante.udallas.edu/edu5357s/Reading/Reading_Schedule.htm](http://dante.udallas.edu/edu5357s/Reading/Reading_Schedule.htm)
II. RESEARCH STUDY PROPOSAL.

The Research Study Proposal describes in detail the proposed investigation. It is divided into two essential parts. Each part is further divided into critical components. The completion of all critical components in both parts is required. The completion of Part II relies on the completion of Part I.

PART I: IRB Application/Registration. – This part MUST be approved by Mrs. Khirallah before it is submitted to the University of Dallas Institutional Review Board (IRB). Part I includes the following

A. A completed, approved (by B. Khirallah) IRB Application
B. (NIH) Certificate of Completion for “Protecting Human Research Participants”.
C. Consent Letters – for parents, school administrator, etc.
D. Assent Forms – for children involved in study

PART II: Theoretical Foundation – This part goes to B. Khirallah ONLY

E. Purpose of Research and Research Question(s) that drive the study.
F. Partial Annotated Bibliography (minimum 5 entries)
G. Preliminary List of Critical Terms – relevant to theoretical foundation
H. Introduction to the Theoretical Foundation
I. A Data Collection Instrument
J. Analysis Criteria / Rating System / Rubric

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.

University of Dallas Policies on Research Involving Human Subjects – Click Here or go to http://dante.udallas.edu/edu3327/Research_Study/2009IRBPolicy_FacSen.pdf

III. DATA AND TREATMENT OF DATA. Students are expected to collect data using the methods, procedure, and instrument(s) indicated in the research proposal. This section of the portfolio must include the following:

A. Raw data that was collected using the collection instrument defined in the research proposal (this is the data collected directly from children)
B. A rubric, scale, list of words, or other appropriate tool for analyzing and treating data created IN ADVANCE of data analysis to guide the analysis of data. Some students may want to apply statistical procedures learned in other classes. Students may use either quantitative or
C. A clear explanation of the research-based “system” and tool used to analyze and evaluate the data for each problem addressed. The “system” must be logically and conceptually connected to theoretical concepts in the particular research study. The researcher MUST include in the explanation how “difficult” data was categorized.
D. Carefully analyzed data collected using the process and instrument created/selected – organized and graphically represented.
IV. RESEARCH PAPER: CONNECTING THEORY TO PRACTICE. This section of the portfolio is the research paper that discusses “your” research findings in the context of the theory selected as the foundation for the study. Ordinarily, no first person is used in the paper. The paper will usually be from 10-15 pages in length and should include the following:

A. An introduction with a brief description of the problem….and your hypothesis. This information may come directly from your proposal. This portion of the paper may or may not include references.

B. Theoretical Foundation. This is an extremely important portion of your paper. It should be a synthesis of the reading you did to construct an understanding of the theory and research used to build your study. Be sure that this portion includes appropriate citations to references. This information will come from the annotated bibliography and notes taken on your reading. It is absolutely essential that you cite primary texts, secondary texts, and relevant research studies in this section.

C. A description of the setting (context) in which you did your research. Describe carefully the conditions of the study. It would be appropriate to include pictures in this section of the paper.

D. A Description of the general procedure used to collect data. In other words, what did you do? Be sure to explain the theoretical concepts that support your procedure. (This information can come from your proposal and data treatment section.) Also in this section, describe what happened during the project – the “story” of the encounter with the children. Mention any problems or unusual circumstances that occurred.

E. Research findings and questions arising from the study. Here describe the data collected and what the data means in terms of the theory. In this section of the paper, it is important to include and refer to graphic representations of the data included in the data treatment section.

F. Implications from research and their specific connection with theory. This part of your paper must be well thought out. It should include implications of your research for education (or psychology or medicine or parenting) and also reflect the researcher’s growth in understanding with regard to the development/education of children. This portion of the paper MUST cite references from reading as well as examples from the data collection 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. It may include a table/graph or other representation of your data in order to make a point. In this portion of your paper, there is a constant interplay between the theory and the data and researcher.

G. Evaluation of the Study: This is an important element of the paper. In this section, the researcher(s) need 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 three word-processed pages. The research study evaluation must include discussion of a) degree to which the study results substantiated the hypothesis – or did not substantiate the hypothesis, b) strengths and weaknesses of the research, and c) changes that would improve the study if it were to be done again. Be sure to provide evidence for your comments based on theory and data collected.
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 section comes at the end of the paper where you provide complete bibliographic information for the authoritative sources cited in the paper. Be sure that the format selected for citing references within the paper as well as the format for providing bibliographic information at the end of the paper is consistent.

V. RESEARCH STUDY PRESENTATIONS: Students will offer a 25-minute substantive oral presentation of the research study. All materials used in the presentation must be included in the portfolio.

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.

B. Class presentations will begin July 24 and end July 25. 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 July 12. Presentations must be kept to 50 minutes per person! If there are people working together as a team, the team may have up to 100 minutes. Rehearse your presentations well in order to keep to the time.

C. Students must receive approval to present at least three days prior to scheduled presentation date. Approval will be granted based on the quality of research study and materials prepared. 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 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.
A SPECIAL NOTE TO STUDENTS WORKING TOGETHER IN TEAMS (HIGHLY RECOMMENDED)

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

A. A research study team may consist of no more than three students.
B. As part of the Research Proposal, the team must develop a chart of responsibilities that clearly identifies the roles and responsibilities of each team member.
C. The Annotated Bibliography must include a minimum of ten sources for 2-person teams and a minimum of twelve sources for 3-member teams. Each team member must read and annotate a minimum of five individually-selected, unique sources. In addition, team members must read and annotate at least five common sources. Thus, the Research Study Portfolio will contain a separate annotated bibliography for each member of the research team.
D. Each team member must write a portion of the research paper.
E. Each team member must take an active role in the collection and/or treatment of data.
F. Each team member must take an active role in the class presentation.
G. Each team member is responsible for understanding all aspects of the project – and can respond to questions over both theory and collected data.
H. Each team member submits/writes separate evaluations of the research study (See part IV. G related to criteria for writing the research study paper).
I. Each team member submits an Assessment Form for self and an Assessment Form for each team member. Click here to access the form. Or, go to http://dante.udallas.edu/edu3327/Research_Study/Team_assessment.doc