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Assignments

Assignments are designed to assist students understand the research process and develop their research proposals. These assignments are described below. Due dates for each assignment are given in the schedule of lectures and readings. Assignments *must* be turned in on time. Late assignments will be penalized (2 points per calendar day for assignments; 5 points per calendar day for the research proposal).

1. *Library Research Assignment.* (30 points)

- a. **Brief statement of the topic area for your research proposal.** Describe the general area of interest that you will address when you develop your research proposal. If your topic area requires a specialized subject population, describe this population and discuss how these individuals would be accessed for research. (one or two paragraphs). (5 points)
- b. **Search Strategies**
 - (1) **Identify 5-6 keywords and subject terms** (from the *Thesaurus of Psychological Index Terms*) that could be used to construct searches of electronic data bases. (3 points)
 - (2) **Indicate how many hits combinations of these terms produced when you conducted your searches.** You should search for additional terms or refine your search strategy if your searches produces too few or too many hits. (3 points)
- c. **Annotated Bibliography**
 - (1) **Identify one current review article on your topic area (within the last 5 years).** (3 points)
 - (2) **Identify one article that discusses methodological issues related to research in your topic area.** This article might address a measurement issue related to your topic (e.g., information about the reliability and validity of a test instrument, presentation of normative data for stimulus materials), a discussion of special design problems encountered in your research area and how to address these problems, or a discussion of statistical techniques for analyzing the type of data generated). *Psychological Bulletin* frequently publishes articles that are methodological critiques of research methods currently in use for a topic area. *Psychological Methods* publishes articles on statistical procedures for data analysis. (3 points)
 - (3) **At least 10 scholarly sources that you believe will be useful for your proposal.** These are intended as “starter” sources for your reading. You will be expected to consult additional sources discovered as you learn more about your topic. A typical literature at the graduate level will cite 15-30 scholarly works. Provide the full citation using correct APA style and give a brief annotation about the content: identify the problem studied, the variables manipulated and measured, a brief summary of the findings, and why you think this article is relevant to your topic. (10 points)

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- (4) **3 “near misses.”** These are sources that look promising when they show up in a data base search but are found to not actually be suitable as sources for your proposal. Provide the full citation using correct APA style and explain why you thought the article might have been useful and why you decided it was not. (3 points)

The bibliography should be prepared using APA format for citations.

2. ***Integrative Journal Summary.*** (25 points)

Select two related articles that report empirical findings from your annotated bibliography. Write a 2-3 page paper based on these two articles in which you do the following:

- a. Identify the research problem that the two studies addressed. (Related articles will address similar research questions.) (5 points)
- b. Give a brief summary of how each study approached the research problem, including a discussion of how the authors manipulated variables to create a meaningful comparison to answer the research question, the dependent measures used, and the important findings were used to support the answer they provide for the research question. (10 points)
- c. Describe how the two studies are related. Studies might be related in a variety of ways. For example, one study might support the findings of the first study and show how they might be extended to a new domain. Or one study might identify a problem in the way the first study was carried out and provide evidence that different outcomes and conclusions emerge when different procedures are used. (5 points)
- d. Evaluate the relative merits of the two studies and suggest how the combined findings should be interpreted. Support your assertions. (3 points)
- e. Provide the full APA citation for the articles using correct APA format in a Reference section. (2 points)

Attach photocopies of the articles summarized (these will be returned).

Journal Reaction Papers should be typed and should be approximately 2-3 pages in length. Summaries must only follow APA format for citation of references and use of language. Other APA guidelines are not relevant for these summaries.