Qualitative Research

This research paper assignment is required for this class. Due dates are provided, and your work **must be here** on each date. There will be **NO LATE PAPERS ACCEPTED!**

Choose a topic of interest to you that is currently changing our world, and write a synthesis paper about it. Be sure that the topic is something you are passionate about. Your interest heightens my interest. **Your paper will be a minimum of five to six typed, double-spaced pages.** If your paper is five pages in length, the fifth page must be a **FULL** page. Do not use creative spacing or large font or print. Your font must be **Times New Roman**. The font size is **12**. The font and font size are appropriate for most business settings as well as for a college classroom and applications for jobs. Your margins are set at 1 inch on the sides and 1 ½ inches top and bottom. **You must have a minimum of 5 LEGITIMATE sources,**. Of course, you must carefully follow the MLA (Modern Language Association) format of in-text documentation, and your paper must have a Works Cited page.

Qualitative research is an inquiry that investigates the human experience by exploring a social or human question. Researchers identify their focus for inquiry and work to build a complex, holistic picture of the ―story. To do this, researchers use their focus of inquiry to determine a question or set of questions and self-design a diverse set of research strategies for library and Internet sources and research methodologies for fieldwork (surveys, interviews, observations). This combination of strategies and methodologies allows researchers to gather evidence from multiple, divergent sources which allows them to uncover and critique biases, underlying assumptions, and gaps in the existing body of knowledge. Researchers must closely analyze the evidence to uncover the trends or patterns in the ―found data. These trends or patterns are then synthesized to articulate the findings and their implications or significance.

While there are several genres of qualitative research, students must narrow their investigation by focusing their study on a specific type of qualitative research. The recommended genres include:

**Narrative Study**—studies the stories of individuals. *EX. Physical Appearance and it’s challenges*

**Case Study**—studies an issue through one or more cases in a specific setting. *EX. PTSD*

**Ethnographic Study**—studies the meaning of the behaviors, the language, and the interaction among members of a group. *EX. Drop Outs*

**Phenomenological Study**—studies the meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a phenomenon. *EX. Columbine High School shooting effects*

Qualitative Research Always:

1. Establishes a research focus and question or set of questions.

2. Describes the researcher’s relationship to the participant, setting, and/or culture.

3. Describes the combination of research strategies and methodologies.

4. Discusses the researcher’s findings.

5. Formulates a conclusion that articulates the implications or significance of the research findings.

Students should

* Establish a research focus and question or set of questions.
* Describe the researcher’s relationship to the participant, setting, and/or culture.
* Describe the combination of research strategies and methodologies.
* Discuss the researcher’s findings.
* Formulate a conclusion that articulates the implications or significance of the research findings.
* Attribute and properly cite sources

**Research methodologies** may include:

*Library Resources*

* Scholarly & popular journals
* Magazines
* Newspapers
* Books

*Internet Resources*

* Websites

*Fieldwork*

* Surveys
* Interviews
* Observations

**Fieldwork**

All students will be developing their own field work to further research their chosen topic. This fieldwork will be conducted individually and will consist of surveys, questionnaires, or interviews. Fieldwork allows students to individualize their research and to further develop theories about their implications.

**Primary Source Reading**

In addition to other sources, students will be selecting a non-fiction book to read to supplement the research being done in class. The book must be at least 200 pages long. Books will either need to be checked out of a library, or purchased. If no books exist on a chosen topic, research journals of comparable length will be allowed.

**Academic Integrity**

There will be ABSOLUTELY NO TOLERANCE FOR PLAGIARISM. If you plagiarize any part of your paper, you will automatically receive a “ZERO” with no other options. All research must be cited using MLA format.

**Due Dates**

The paper will be due on **3/18/16. NO EXCEPTIONS!** Here are the following due dates:

**Topics due-1/13**

**Research Question- 1/20**

**Book Selection- 1/22**

**First Works Cited Page-1/26**

**Data Collection- 2/19**

**Formal Outline- 3/4**

**Complete Rough Draft- 3/10**

**Final Paper, including revised works cited page, title page- 3/18**

**A FEW HINTS TO START YOU CORRECTLY:**

1. Encyclopedias are fine for younger students, but you are beyond that age. Therefore, the only references you may use are periodicals, journals, and newspapers from 2006-current. Interviews are also acceptable. Find other people to interview who can provide valuable information.
2. Your paper, of course, must be typed. Although we will proofread in class, also have someone else proofread your final copy for any errors. Careless spelling errors/typos will hurt your grade.
3. Provide enough support for your topic. Without support, your arguments are invalid.
4. A research paper should have some controversy surrounding it. Do not regurgitate or report information. Discuss the topic intelligently and articulately.
5. No personal pronouns, no slang, *thing stuff, a lot, get, got, contractions* allowed.
6. Have fun! I am looking forward to reading your papers!
7. You may not change your topic after 1/22. If you do so, you forfeit your right to have this paper graded.
8. See me for questions in AE or ask during class.
9. A rubric will be provided. If you do not turn in your rubric, I will not grade your paper.

Start Thinking!

What interests me about the human experience?

What do I always wonder about people?

What do I wish I understood better about the opposite gender?

What interests me that I could actually talk to people about and collect data?

**Possible Topics**

Current Events (within the past 5 years)

* Conformity of group pressure
* PTSD
* How labels affect life
* What is normal?
* Physical appearance
* Gender oppression
* Poverty and powerlessness
* Wealth, Power and Privilege
* Marriage and Family
* Turning Civilians into soldiers