

Research Proposal/Prospectus

Note: It is every student's responsibility to read the original paper description and evaluation/rubric criteria.

Rationale/Paper type

This assignment will teach students about the research process of scientific inquiry and methodology. In future jobs, students will be asked to evaluate or develop a proposal in their field therefore this assignment will provide excellent practice. Students are required to integrate the knowledge learned from the textbook in order to effectively develop a cohesive research proposal. Students will propose a study by using a research proposal format.

Paper Theme: Given the lack of diverse voices in research, this research proposal theme will be focused on difference. Students will select a marginalized social identity group and develop a study that will address a communication current issue that will bring about social change or solutions.

Learning Objectives: This assignment will satisfy the following course learning objectives below.

- Develop critical thinking skills through reflection
- Develop Rhetorical Knowledge
- Awareness of diversity & social justice beyond tolerance
- Articulate and apply concepts, theories, and ideas of conflict
- Conduct Analysis
- Writing
- This assignment satisfies the following Department of Communication Studies learning outcomes: Writing, concepts, critical thinking, and ethics.

Procedure

The overall research paper will be developed in several stages (research rationale, peer draft, final draft). Every draft is different therefore please pay close attention to the criteria. Dr. Perry may add updates to this assignment. Students must integrate all comments noted on the assignment description, PowerPoint, and rubric/evaluation criteria.

Audience: The audience of this paper will be Communication scholars and other researchers interested in the area of communication cultural studies.

Overall Process:

Students must revise each draft based on feedback from their peers and Dr. Perry. The final revised draft will be submitted to Dr. Perry and all earlier drafts (see syllabus for dates). APA is the writing format that must be utilized throughout your papers. The APA text also provides a discussion on how to write key areas of your paper. All work turned into Dr. Perry must be accompanied in a two-pocket folder. Please arrange drafts in order that they have been received.

Page limit of the entire paper: 8-10 pages not including the title page, abstract, references, and appendices. Please read APA for specific guidelines. Also see the original paper guidelines.

Number of Sources: 1. Review the APA manual regarding "levels of headings", "citing sources", "title page layout". 2. All sources except the historical background should be current research completed within the last 5 years. The majority of sources must come

directly from Communication journals. The overall paper should not have more than 5-6 non-Communication journal sources. For the final paper, students should have at least 15 Communication journals cited or more. 3. There should be evidence demonstrating that students read and applied the literature review lecture, literature review links provided on CANVAS, chapter 2 on literature review, chapter 1 regarding what we study, etc.

Logistics: The introduction will be 1 page or two paragraphs. The literature review must be three pages (include the historical background which is 1 paragraph. Do not use our textbook as a cited resource. For all drafts please include a pocket folder with all contents. Do not integrate direct quotes. Include a reference section. Be sure to use current research (research within the last 5 to 10 years except the historical background). A few older sources may be used but please talk with Dr. Perry for permission. The background is the main section that will consist of older sources. Please keep this section to one to two paragraphs.

Review Process & Submission Format: After each draft has been reviewed complete the **writer feedback form** (be sure to have a separate one for each reviewer). Complete the peer review sheets and record all feedback. (Forms will be available via CANVAS).

Evaluation Criteria: Dr. Perry will post the evaluation criteria via CANVAS. Part of your evaluation criteria will come directly from the paper description assignment.

Format: For your paper, **do not use the roman numerals below**. Instead follow the APA format for headings, layout, etc. Please submit your evaluation form with your paper.

Resources & assistance: The WWU library has online assistance for research. The WWU Writing Center has online assistance for ideas.

I. Title Page

- **Title Page:** Develop a title page with all the components required based on APA. Include the header, running head, title of your paper, author, date, institution, etc.

Title of your paper:

- Include a title (Center the title of your paper)

II. Abstract

- Review APA for the main components of an abstract. Develop a term section and only list your terms.

III. Introduction (1 page)

The questions below are here to help you develop your introduction. See APA for how to develop an introduction. The problem, thesis, significance, and purpose must be written in at least two to three paragraphs. **DO NOT LABEL THE PROBLEM, THESIS, SIGNIFICANCE, OR PURPOSE.** Please include the thesis and statement of problem in the same paragraph. Follow the order below. Only label the introduction, the literature review, the historical background, paper headings (the headings that you develop), methodology (also include the individual sub-headings of the method section), etc.

Note: The terms and theoretical framework will be integrated throughout your literature review therefore do not have a separate section for them as you did in paper part 1. If you review the class samples, please do not follow the format because it has changed. Pay attention to how the paper is written.

Thesis Statement/Problem Statement: Use one sentence declaring your overall argument

- It is the stand that the writer intends to take within the paper
- It is the main idea of your entire paper
- What is your academic argument?
- It is a declaration of your belief. Throughout the paper you will have arguments to support this thesis statement.

Statement of Problem/argument (cite sources to support your point)

- What is the problem or issue?
- Why does this study of literature need to be investigated?
- What have others noted about this problem?
- What has been neglected in previous research? Who says this area has been neglected and needs further study? Has previous research been inadequate in some way? Have results been flawed, inconclusive?

Significance (cite sources to support your point)

- Why is this problem/issue important to explore? Explain and cite.
- Who can benefit from this paper and how?
- Do you want to extend a theory? Explain.
- Do you need to further explore a theory? Explain.

Purpose

- What is the purpose of the study?
- What is this study going to do about the problem discussed?

Literature Review (3 pages)-- See Canvas notes regarding how to write a literature review. Your literature review must include and address the following elements:

Background: Include a brief historical background regarding your topic. This must be one-two paragraphs only.

- ❑ **First**, students should briefly explain the historical perspective, what has happened or what is happening? How were/are people historically oppressed or marginalized? Why? **Secondly**, examine the current state of the cultural group and the oppression they currently experience.
- ❑ **Transition**—Restate your thesis statement. Be sure to provide transitional phrases that bring us to the current issue. Provide a statement that overviews the main headings/areas of your paper.

Continue literature review and include headings

Write a transitional phrase to your research question/hypothesis. For example (do not copy my question): “Since little research has been conducted in this area, the researchers posed the following question:”

IV. RQ or Hypothesis: (write out the RQ or Hypothesis)

V. Methodology (LABEL AND CENTER THIS HEADING)

Methodology

Quantitative or Qualitative (separate heading) **CITE SOURCES.** Select a method. Be sure to cite your sources

- Justify which one you will use for your study. State why?
- Discuss positives and negatives of this type of method.
- Does the method chosen accurately represent the variables? How?
- Will the method selected answer the RQ/Hyp?
- Be sure to cite your sources.

Method Selection (separate heading) **CITE SOURCES:** *Please provide a heading for the specific method that you have selected. Select one of the following method’s: survey, ethnography, content analysis, participant observation, non-participant observation, naturalistic study (observational research), etc. Be sure to cite your sources. Discuss your specific method chosen and provide a justification of why this is the best method for your study. Be sure to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the method. Justify how you will make up for such weaknesses.

- The method selected.
- Strengths regarding the method and cite your sources.
- Weaknesses of your specific method.
- Limitations of the method and how you will make-up or address the limitations. Be sure to cite your sources. Limitations of the study: overall discuss the limitations of your study design. What are some weaknesses of your data collection, sampling method, etc.?

Variables (separate heading) **CITE SOURCES:** Be sure to clearly discuss each independent and dependent variable.

Conceptual Definition (combine conceptual definition and operational definition in one section)

- Clearly conceptualize your independent and dependent variables. “Are these definitions concise and understandable? Are adequate definitions provided for any abstract terms” (Stout, 2008, paper #2, p. 1). This can be accomplished in a few sentences.
- Be sure to cite your sources.

Operational Definition

- Clearly operationalize your independent and dependent variables. “Are possible means of measuring the variables identified? Is there a good conceptual fit between the operational and conceptual definitions? Are these definitions concise and understandable?” (Stout, 2008, paper #2, p. 1). This can be accomplished in a few sentences.
- Be sure to cite your sources.

Setting & Sample (separate heading. Include the setting and sample in the same section):

Setting

Describe the setting of the study and provide a justification. Tell us where the information will be collected (e.g. the site or event of where the study will take place).

Sample/Participants

- ❑ Describe your sample/participants and their characteristics. In your description discuss: the age, gender, occupation, etc. Tell us everything about your sample/participants.
- ❑ Why are they the best for this particular study? Discuss why you specifically selected this sample/participants for your study.
- ❑ Who will be observed in your study, who will answer specific questions, or who will fill out the particular survey, etc.
- ❑ Indicate the number of participants who will be involved in the study and why?

Procedures (center this heading)

This section clearly describes how the data will be collected and analyzed. This section may also contain a discussion of training for interviewers or experimenters, instructions to participants, and any issues/problems that may need to be addressed. You will also discuss if there will be a pilot study test, reliability checks, and equipment used. Be sure to cite your sources for justifications.

Data Collection (main heading) **CITE SOURCES****Sampling technique** (sub-heading). see Ch. 7) **CITE SOURCES**

Select and discuss the sampling technique that will best assist you in collecting your data. Be sure to justify why you selected this sampling technique, etc. Is this the best sampling technique for your study? Why? Cite your sources.

Method of gathering (sub-heading). **CITE SOURCES**

Discuss the materials that you will need for your study. Be specific (e.g. consent forms, interviewer script for consent/format, telephone calls, demographic form, interview protocol, etc.). Clearly discuss the materials. What kinds of observations will you undergo? Make a note that the instrument will be located in the appendices (for paper 3).

Validity & Reliability (main heading). **CITE SOURCES**

Combine validity and reliability but discuss each separately.

Validity See Ch 6.

- ❑ Discuss how your methodology is valid. How does your study specifically address validity? What will you do to ensure validity? Be sure to discuss the validity of your instrument, etc.?
- ❑ Think of internal and external validity.
- ❑ Are threats to validity addressed?

Reliability See Ch 6 .

- ❑ Discuss how your methodology is reliable. Be sure to discuss the reliability of your instrument, etc.?
- ❑ Do the research steps ensure reliable (consistent) data collection? What steps will you need to take to ensure reliability? How does your study specifically address reliability?

Ethics (main heading) **CITE SOURCES**

- ❑ What ethical concerns will be important to your study? How will you inform participants of the true nature of the study? Will participants be debriefed? Why and how will they be debriefed? Will you give a copy of the consent form to the participant with your contact information and the director of WWU human subjects board? Review WWU policy regarding

human subjects and the content related to ethics. You may use WWU consent forms and procedures. Attach them to the appendices when submitting them to Dr. Perry.

- Benefit/harm
- Confidentiality, anonymity,
- Consent, potential harm/threats, deception

Hint: Clearly justify everything, use your sources, cite your sources and have fun with the paper!

Discussion & Implications

Discussion (CITE)

(cite references to support your argument but do not re-write your literature review. This is a critical perspective. You are bringing everything together and discussing the bigger picture).

- Restate your research question or hypothesis.
- Discuss the need for your study and the importance of your research question or hypothesis. Note how there is a gap in the literature and your study can fill this gap.
- What does it all mean? What does the big picture look like?
- Which scholars make significant contributions to your area of study? Explain.
- You completed your literature review now it is time to focus on key scholars. Discuss similarities, differences, and contradictions that you found among the scholars in your paper.

Implications (NO CITATIONS)

- Answers the question, So what? So what does all of this mean?
- Who should benefit from your study?
- Who should be concerned about this study? Why?
- Discuss implications for practice (educators, trainers, professional development, practitioners etc.).
- Discuss implications for policy makers
- Discuss implication for researchers (what should future researchers do?)

Conclusion

Conclusion (NO CITATIONS)

- Summarize the purpose of your paper.
- Summarize the main points of your paper?
- Your final thoughts and what makes your study important
- End with impact

References

References (not included in the page count)

Include a reference page. Use APA format. You need to have journal articles and books (not including the textbook) supporting your methodology.

Appendices (not included in the page count) Be sure to include a table of contents for the appendices. Cite anything that you did not create.

- Include the consent form
- Include demographic form
- Discuss your Instrument(s) and your rationale. Briefly discuss your potential instrument that you will use to collect data. Why did you select this instrument or scale rather than others? How many questions will you ask? What type of questions will you ask? How will your

variables be measured (e.g. scale items, interview protocol, questionnaire, etc.). Specifically discuss how you will go about administering your instrument. Justify all points.

- Include the actual instrument

CANVAS Submission:

Note: Canvas content without all required printed and digital documents will not be evaluated for a final grade. For the final paper, please save each document using the titles and order below:

- Please save each document using the titles and order below. It is required for students to clearly differentiate between drafts, peer responses, and individual feedback form.
- Include via CANVAS: Only one partner needs to submit all the material be
 - a) One copy of the final paper 3
 - b) Research rationale
 - c) Paper draft 1, completed peer response, completed feedback form
 - d) Paper draft 2, completed peer response, completed feedback form
 - e) Paper draft 2, completed feedback form after the Research & writing studio