

## **INSTRUCTIONS FOR ASSIGNMENT 2: RESEARCH PROJECT (Conjar - Educational Psychology)**

### SUGGESTED TOPICS (Choose one or submit your own)

1. Read and review a book or article related to educational psychology. Evaluate the work by utilizing writings on the same topic, personal insights and experiences, and related material from class.
2. Discuss the opposing views regarding heredity and IQ scores.
3. Describe and evaluate "time-out" and other methods for controlling behavior in the classroom.
4. Trace the history of compensatory education programs and evaluate their effectiveness.
5. Present guidelines and techniques for designing good achievement tests.
6. Explore the issues surrounding grading in schools.
7. Discuss teaching strategies for a particular educational environment of your choice.
8. Explore the influence of the courts on the schools.
9. Explore desegregation issues and the busing issue.
10. Discuss the effects of the "changing American family" on education.
11. Demonstrate or experiment with Piagetian methods of evaluating cognitive development.
12. Explore special educational issues or problems, which tend to be associated with a particular age group (e.g. adolescence).
13. Discuss relevant issues regarding the culturally different child in the classroom.
14. Interview schoolteachers, counselors, administrators, etc. to find their current roles in education.
15. Present information on cognitive styles and their effects on learning.
16. Describe and evaluate non-traditional and alternative education programs.
17. Compare education in the United States with education in another country.
18. Describe education of gifted and talented students.

### **CURRENT ISSUES IN EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY**

19. Describe the current level of violent acts committed in schools and efforts to stop them.
20. Explore the role of sex and AIDS information or drug information in the classroom.
21. Discuss the current state of education in the United States and the outlook for the future.
22. Explore the effects of technology on education.
23. Examine the teacher's role in the diagnosis, treatment, and education of the child with attention deficit hyperactive disorder.
24. Present strategies for adapting the classroom to meet the needs of the exceptional student.
25. Examine the controversy concerning various inclusion and mainstreaming programs underway in public schools.
26. Analyze the effectiveness of various initiatives to improve education such as "No Child Left Behind."
27. Define critical thinking and explain its importance in education.
28. Present an overview of the diagnosis and treatment of various learning disabilities.
29. Present arguments pro and con concerning the acceptance of Ebonics as a separate language.
30. Evaluate research on the "Gender Gap" in Education.

Projects may be written papers (5-6 pages) or oral presentations (10-15 minutes). Written Papers or Oral Presentation Outlines must be typed, double-spaced using a standard word processor application.

## FORMAT FOR WRITTEN RESEARCH PROJECT (5-6 pages typed, double-spaced)

1. **Clearly identify your reference sources in both the text of your paper and on the reference list or bibliography.**

Any name that appears in the reference section or bibliography must also appear in the text of your paper (if you use APA style) or in the footnotes. Your textbook can serve an excellent example of proper writing and clear reference citations. If a reference is not cited anywhere in your paper, then you either didn't use any information from that source (in which case it should be removed from the list) or you used the information without giving credit. Always identify the source of any information used in the paper that is not your own. Using another person's work without giving credit is plagiarism.

Examples

Correct: *Several studies have shown a relationship between self-esteem and school success (Purkey, 1970; Metcalfe, 1981; Reynolds, 1980).* [Assuming that you found all three studies and that they are listed in your reference section]

Correct: *According to Borich and Tombari (1997), several studies show that self-esteem is related to school success.* [Assuming that the Borich and Tombari book is listed in your reference section]

Incorrect: *Studies show that self-esteem is related to school achievement.* [A statement of this kind on your paper with no reference would be considered plagiarism]

Incorrect: *Mason (1998) reported that self-esteem is related to school achievement.* [A statement of this kind on your paper with no listing for Mason (1998) in your reference section would be considered plagiarism]

**Reminder: Do not put any source on your reference list that does not appear in the text of your paper.**

2. **Limit the use of direct quotations. Put reference material in your own words and credit the source.**

The purpose of this research project is to help you develop communication skills in the topic area of Educational Psychology. A “cut and paste” paper is extremely uninteresting and even difficult to read because the writing style will change every time the reference source changes. Unless you have a particularly memorable quote the caliber of “Ask not what your country can do for you...” put the reference material in your own words. **And remember, whenever you use information from any publication, you must identify the source, even when you put it in your own words. Plagiarism will result in a failing grade on this assignment.**

3. **Include at least two references from peer-reviewed scholarly publications.**

The HCC librarian can help you find peer-reviewed scholarly journals that provide up-to-date and accurate information in the field of Educational Psychology. Many of these professional journals are available on line. See the Questions and Answers section below for instructions on how to retrieve full text scholarly journal articles on line. Other scholarly journal articles can be retrieved by the Librarian within a few weeks. Your instructor also has a list of scholarly publications.

4. **Try to find original sources of information; but if you can't, be sure to clearly indicate when you are using a secondary source.**

If you reference an author's name in your paper and that author's name is not in your reference section, then the information is suspect. If you obtain information from a secondary source, (e.g. one author's report of another author's findings), you must accurately and honestly indicate where you got the information. So if you report Anderson and Watley's findings based on information obtained in a book by Bormann, you must use a secondary source citation.

Example:

In your paper you would write: *According to Bormann (1996), Anderson and Watley's study showed that children in Asia develop conservation skills earlier than children in the United States.*

Your reference section would have Bormann, but not Anderson and Watley.

5. **Include at least four reference sources.**

One of the key objectives of this course is to expose you to research in the field of Educational Psychology. Even if you opt to interview individuals in the field of education, you will need to survey some published research in order to interpret and evaluate the interview data. All reports must have at least four references including at least two from scholarly publications.

6. **Proof read your written paper carefully to be sure it is clear and contains no grammar, spelling, or typing errors.**

If you find any errors in your final draft, correct them by hand before you submit the paper. If the corrections are legible and the number or errors is small, no points will be deducted. However, uncorrected errors will result in a loss of points.

7. **Put yourself into the paper.**

A research paper is a chance for you to collect, organize, and interpret information from a variety of sources so that the final product is unique and personal. Your own opinions, interpretations and experiences will help to make your paper more interesting and meaningful to the reader/evaluator. Just please make sure that you provide some support for the opinions expressed in the paper.

8. **Be resourceful.**

In past semesters, students have interviewed a school superintendent, a recipient of a teacher of the year award and other individuals who provided profound insights on Education. Other students have utilized surveys, the Internet, educational films and other unique sources of information to bolster their papers. Be creative in your information gathering.

9. **Avoid general encyclopedias.**

Encyclopedias provide general information on all topics. In fact, they can be described as collections of research papers on every imaginable topic. This information can help to provide background on a topic, but for a research paper, you should be finding the original articles and studies on which the encyclopedia entries were based. There are however some specialized encyclopedias related to Educational Psychology that would be appropriate to utilize for a research paper reference. See the librarian for these items.

10. **Limit the use of popular magazines.**

Popular magazines such as Time and Newsweek often have very useful information that can enhance a research paper; however you must be aware that reporters have varying levels of expertise and can not be expected to provide information as accurately as scholars in a particular field of study. The librarian or HCC Library web site can help you find scholarly journals that provide up-to-date and accurate information in the field of Educational Psychology.

11. **When in doubt, ask the instructor.**

Avoid the anguish of having to redo a paper by submitting your rough draft on time and sharing any concerns or questions with the instructor prior to the due date.

## FORMAT FOR ORAL RESEARCH PROJECT (10-15 minutes)

- 1. Prepare your final outline with references and submit it to the instructor immediately before your report.**

The outline should consist of a listing of major points presented and a list of references used in your talk. Detailed paragraphs and descriptions are not necessary in the outline. The reference list must include all information necessary for your instructor to locate the publication cited. The citations used in your textbook can serve as clear examples of the proper format for references. Make sure that your outline contains no errors in grammar or spelling.
- 2. Include at least two references from peer-reviewed scholarly publications.**

The HCC librarian can help you find peer-reviewed scholarly journals that provide up-to-date and accurate information in the field of Educational Psychology. Many of these professional journals are available on line. See the Questions and Answers section below for instructions on how to retrieve full text scholarly journal articles on line. Other scholarly journal articles can be retrieved by the Librarian within a few weeks. Your instructor also has a list of scholarly publications.
- 3. Include at least four references.**

One of the key objectives of this course is to expose you to research in the field of Educational Psychology. Even if you opt to interview individuals in the field of education, you will need to survey some published research in order to interpret and evaluate the interview data. Your listeners have a right to know where you obtained your information. Make a point of identifying the source of information whenever you make claims based on research studies.
- 4. Proof read your oral presentation outline carefully to be sure it is clear and contains no grammar, spelling, or typing errors.**

If you find any errors in your final draft, correct them by hand before you submit the paper. If the corrections are legible and the number or errors is small, no points will be deducted. However, uncorrected errors will result in a loss of points.
- 5. Speak loudly and clearly.**

A confident delivery will have a positive impact on your grade.
- 6. Get the class involved in your presentation.**

Arouse curiosity, ask questions, prepare a handout, etc. to keep your audience involved.
- 7. Put yourself into the presentation.**

A research presentation is a chance for you to collect, organize, and interpret information from a variety of sources so that the final product is unique and personal. Your own opinions, interpretations and experiences will help to make your project more interesting and meaningful to the listener/evaluator. Just please make sure that you provide some support for the opinions expressed in the project.
- 8. Use audio/visual resources if possible.**

Notify the instructor the week before your report if you need PowerPoint, a VCR, overhead transparency projector, printed handout or another resource. Also feel free to use the chalkboard. A lengthy video would not be appropriate in a 10-15 minute report, but you may use an excerpt from a video as long as it is cued up ahead of time.
- 9. Use your time effectively.**

Time is a most precious resource in Education. Budgeting time effectively is a necessary skill for all teachers. If your report exceeds 20 minutes, you will not be permitted to finish. Help your audience by presenting material in a logical order. Begin with an introduction to alert students to what they will be learning. Allow time at the end to summarize major points and answer questions. Oral presentations cannot be rescheduled. **If you miss your scheduled oral presentation, you will be allowed one extra week to complete a written paper in its place.**

## REFERENCE FORMATTING INFORMATION FOR ALL RESEARCH PROJECTS (ORAL AND WRITTEN)

### Both Oral and Written Projects Must Have Reference Lists.

See Examples for each type of reference. Please note that the focus is on clarity and completeness--not the form. You may use either APA or MLA format. See the examples below of Works Cited entries that contain the necessary information.

#### Journal Article

[Author][Title][Journal Name][Year] [Volume Number][Issue Number][Page Numbers]

Ziemann U, Paulus W, Rothenberger A. Decreased motor inhibition in Tourette's disorder: evidence from transcranial magnetic stimulation. *American Journal of Psychiatry* 1997; 154 (5): 1277-84.

#### Book

[Author] [Title] [City of Publication] [Publisher] [Year]

Hollander E. *Obsessive-compulsive related disorders*. Washington DC: American Psychiatric Press, 1993.

#### Article Within A Book

[Author] [Year][Article Title] [In][Editors' Names][Title of Book] [City of Publication] [Publisher]

Archan, E. (1989). Lecture preparation guidelines. In R.E. Slavin, C.J. Whitehouse, & N.J. Nance (Eds.), *Teaching in a college setting*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon

#### Unpublished Paper

[Author] [Year, Month] [Title] [Presentation Information]

Alexander, P.A. (1994, April). Classroom strategies for students with learning disabilities. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Baltimore.

#### Organizational Document With No Specific Author Listed

[Organization Name] [Year] [Title] [Location of Publication]

American Psychiatric Association, (1994), *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders* (4th ed.). Washington, DC

#### Pamphlet Published By An Organization

[Organization Name][Year] [Title] [Location of Publication]

United Cerebral Palsy Association. (1993). *Cerebral Palsy: Facts and figures*. Washington, D.C.

#### Web Page Article - Note: An Internet index or contents page (e.g. [www.time.com](http://www.time.com)) is not acceptable.

[Author/editor] [Year] [Title] [Type of Medium, e.g., "Online" or "CD-ROM"] [Site/Path/File Name] [Date You Accessed the Page]

Sanders, A. J. (1998). An Early fragment from central Nepal [Online]. <http://www.ingress.com/~astanart/pritzker/pritzker.html> [1995, June 8].

## Journal Article Published On The Web

[Author] [Year] [Title] [Journal Title] [Type of Medium, e.g., "Online" or "CD-ROM"] [Volume Number] [Issue Number] [Page Numbers or indication of length if listed] [Site/Path/File] [Access date].

White, L., (1995). Review of the book Inclusion models in education: A new approach. Journal of the education of persons with disabilities. [Online], 2(1), 3 paragraphs.  
[http://www.uidaho.edu/11/UI\\_gopher/library/egj03/carriv01.html](http://www.uidaho.edu/11/UI_gopher/library/egj03/carriv01.html) [1995, June 21].

## Newspaper Article Published On The Web

[Author] [Year, month day] [Title] [Newspaper Title] [Type of medium, e.g., "Online" or "CD-ROM"] [page numbers or indicator of length] [Site/Path/File] [Access date].

Cheelnam, R. (1997, December 11). School violence is on the rise. Baltimore Sun, [Online], p. 29SA(22 paragraphs). <http://www.sunspot.net/articles/941205/today/violence.html> [1999, February 16].

## Additional Questions and Answers

*How do I find articles from scholarly journals?*

Go to the HCC Library web site at <http://www.harford.edu/Library>. Select one of the "Online Databases." I recommend "Ebscohost." Input your HCC Library Card number if prompted. Click "Enter." Select all databases relative to Education and click "Continue." Type in your keywords and select "Full Text" and "Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals."

*Why do I need to find articles from peer-reviewed scholarly journals?*

General Encyclopedias and Popular magazines such as Time and Newsweek often have very useful information that can enhance a research project; however you must be aware that reporters have varying levels of expertise and can not be expected to provide information as accurately as scholars in a particular field of study. Books can be valuable, but the time interval between the finished manuscript and the actual release of the printed book can often be a period of two years. Peer-reviewed scholarly journals will provide the newest and most accurate research.

*What if there is no author listed?*

If there is no author listed, you would use the name of the organization that produced the document. If you can't determine the organization, chances are the document is incomplete or contains serious flaws. If you are absolutely certain of the document's credibility, type the words "no author listed" in parentheses on the reference.

*How can I be sure that the information I find on the Internet is accurate?*

You must be very careful to check the accuracy of information from any source when you are writing a research paper. Some excellent tips for judging the accuracy of web pages can be found at the Widener "Evaluating Web Resources" Web Site. The address is:  
[www.widener.edu/Academics/Libraries/Wolfgram\\_Memorial\\_Library/Evaluate\\_Web\\_Pages/659/](http://www.widener.edu/Academics/Libraries/Wolfgram_Memorial_Library/Evaluate_Web_Pages/659/)

*May I use information from an interview or conversation on my paper or oral presentation?*

Absolutely! The reference would consist of the individual's name, title, and date of the interview. (For example: Fredricks, Lorrie. History teacher at Joplin High School. Personal Communication February 4, 2007.)

## **Research Project Scoring Guide: (100 Points)**

### **Written Project**

#### Content (60 Points)

##### *Title*

The title was relevant and consistent with the material presented.

##### *Introduction of Topic*

The topic was introduced in an effective manner. The opening generated interest, provided adequate background for understanding the material, and clearly indicated the direction of the research.

##### *Presentation of Key Points*

The author presented evidence to support claims made. Reference material was credible and clearly interpreted. The paper was logical and organized. The presentation was balanced and contained opposing views where appropriate. Personal opinion was delivered appropriately and supported by the information presented. The author presented information of local interest if pertinent. Personal experience, if applicable, was also used effectively. Course concepts were utilized where appropriate.

##### *Closing*

The paper came to a logical conclusion based on the material presented. Major points were summarized effectively. The final part of the paper gave the reader a sense of closure.

#### Form (40 Points)

##### *Writing Style*

Language use was accurate, concise and grammatically correct. Sentences were well constructed and paragraphs were well developed. The author captured and maintained the reader's attention.

##### *Use of Sources*

In text citations were clear. Source material was effectively paraphrased and direct quotations were kept at a minimum. The Works Cited page contains all of the necessary information. All in text citations had a corresponding entry on the Works Cited page. All entries on the Works Cited page had at least one corresponding in text citation. The paper contained at least four reference sources including two from peer-reviewed scholarly publications. **Please note that plagiarism will result in a failing grade on this project.**

##### *Revision and Response*

Project topic and preliminary reference list were completed and submitted on time. The sample draft and revised reference list were submitted on time. The final project and reference list were completed and submitted on time. Font size (10-12 Pt.) and margins (1-1.25 in.) were appropriate.

## **Oral Presentation (100 Points)**

### Content (60 Points)

#### *Information Presented*

Presentation was well focused and organized. Topic was clearly stated. Points were clearly made and supported by evidence presented. There were smooth transitions and the report followed a logical sequence. Personal opinion was delivered appropriately and supported by the information presented. The speaker presented information of local interest if appropriate pertinent. Personal experience, if applicable, was also used effectively. Course concepts were utilized where appropriate. Questions from the audience were competently handled.

#### *Materials and Creativity*

The presenter captured the attention of the audience with an original presentation. The student used visual materials and/or technology to support the information presented.

#### *Use of Sources*

Reference information was intelligently chosen and well integrated into the report. Sources were cited during the talk where appropriate. There were at least four reference sources including two from peer reviewed scholarly journals.

### Form (40 Points)

#### *Speaking Skills*

The student spoke loudly and clearly, made frequent eye contact and gave a confident delivery. The speaker engaged the audience in the presentation. The student spoke extemporaneously and rarely read directly from notes.

#### *Use of Time*

The student effectively utilized the allotted time. The amount of time remaining after the presentation was appropriate to allow for a question or two from the audience.

#### *Outline*

The outline was clear and contained all key topics and complete bibliographic information for all works cited. The outline was concise and grammatically correct.

#### *Revision and Response*

Project topic and preliminary reference list were completed and submitted on time. The sample outline and revised reference list was submitted on time. The final outline and reference list were submitted in full just prior to the oral presentation. Font size (10-12 Pt.) and margins (1-1.25 in.) of the outline were appropriate.