
Research Paper

Student pairs will collaboratively write a research paper examining a particular topic related to crime control and/or prevention strategies, and how those strategies relate to data, theory, and policy. The paper is to be scholarly in nature (i.e., not a “reflection” paper). The purpose of the paper will be to demonstrate a critical and analytical understanding of the interplay amongst a variety of factors which have contributed to current crime control/prevention strategies, crime control policy, and policy implications. The integration of at least one theory is required. The course textbook may be used as a source; however, outside scholarly research must be integrated in a substantive manner.

General Formatting Requirements

1. A cover page
2. Abstract (about 150 words)
3. Running Head (upper left-hand corner of the header)
4. Page numbering (upper right-hand corner of the header)
5. 1” margins on all sides
6. Strict double-spacing (no additional space before or after each line)
7. Times New Roman font
8. All text (with the exception of headings within the body of the paper) should be left-justified (i.e., do not “Justify” the text of your paper as the spacing will be off).
9. Written in formal English, with college-level writing mechanics and APA-style formatting, inclusive of in-text citations and references
10. Direct quotes are largely discouraged; however, a maximum of 3 will be allowed. Each direct quote used is limited to a maximum of fifteen words, and of course, must be properly cited in APA format.

Paper Length and Source Requirements

1. The paper must meet the minimum requirement of twelve pages in length (not inclusive of the cover page, abstract, or references).
2. Only scholarly sources will be accepted, inclusive of: the assigned course textbook; other textbooks; and scholarly journal articles (both theoretical and empirical in nature).
3. The minimum number of sources required is eight (inclusive of the textbook). Five of the eight sources must be empirical journal articles.

Potential Topics

Student pairs must choose a relatively specific topic that can be adequately covered in 12-14 pages. Your textbook will serve as the best starting point for exploring potential topics.

Paper Structure: The structure the paper will include four main sections.

- I. Introduction
 - A. Introduce specific topic to be analyzed
 - B. Provide any relevant historical information pertaining to the respective issue(s), theory (or theories) and policy. Remember that at least one theory must be incorporated into your paper.
 - C. Thesis statement – The thesis statement should be a concise and declarative statement illustrating your assessment of the issue (i.e., what you have to say about your chosen topic, what is your position?)
 - D. Briefly describe your plan of action to analyze your chosen topic, and underscore your thesis (i.e., lay out a “road map” for the reader).
- II. Literature Review (The following describes an integrated literature review)
 - A. Provide an in depth analysis of your chosen topic, identified in the introduction, utilizing information garnered from scholarly sources, combined with your own original thoughts (i.e., critical analysis)
 1. Summarize prior research
 2. Critique prior research
 3. Present pertinent conclusions (in brief) – more substantive conclusions will be addressed in Part III of your paper
 - B. Provide a summary that will naturally lead into your Conclusions.
- III. Conclusions
 - A. Summarize your assessment of the issue (i.e., chosen topic); the utility of existing theory and data; and the efficacy or futility of current policy in place to address the issue.
 - B. Reference back to substantive examples from your sources
 - C. Provide your concluding thoughts on:
 1. What policy changes need to be made, and what the implications of those changes might mean with respect to better addressing the issue
 2. Future research needs
- IV. References (APA-style references for all scholarly sources used in your paper)