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**Research Proposal: Literature Review**

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1. For your final research proposal, you will need to write a short literature review based upon three peer-reviewed, scholarly journal articles. Please note, this will not be a separate graded assignment, it will be included as part of your final research proposal.
2. It is highly recommended that you begin your search of the literature as soon as possible, rather than waiting until the end of the semester. It is also highly recommended that if you are unsure about whether the articles you wish to use for your literature review are appropriate, that you run them by the instructor. The Criminal Justice Abstracts database is a good place to start looking for literature. While it does not contain full text versions of the articles, it will provide you with full citations and abstracts for any journal articles you might be interested in, and you can easily search for the journal articles in other databases.
  - If you download articles from online databases, you should ALWAYS download the full text PDF version of the articles. PDF versions of the articles will contain the correct pagination (i.e., match the original journal article). HTML versions of journal articles will not have the correct pagination, and may differ from the original article.
  - You may bring a printed copy of the article to show the instructor, or e-mail a PDF version of the article to the instructor for review.
  - Do not e-mail the instructor a link to an article; you must download a copy to be sent as an attachment.
  - Keep in mind that you may not find articles that perfectly address your chosen topic, this is not uncommon. The articles you choose need to be logically related to your topic, and may address only part of your topic.
3. Draft a 3-6 page literature review on the topic that you wish to study. Your literature review must contain reviews of three peer reviewed, scholarly journal articles. Two of the articles **must be** empirical in nature, meaning that they contain the following elements: introduction, literature review, methodology (methods), results (analysis), a discussion (conclusions), and references. The third journal article may be a theoretical study if you wish. Proper paragraph and sentence formation, spelling, mechanics, and grammar will count! Be sure to proofread your work carefully.
4. **Do not:** (1) number your article summaries, (2) write out the full title of the article (this is not necessary as a proper APA in-text citation will suffice), (3) use the first name of the author(s), (4) bold anything, (5) use a font larger than 12 point, or (6) use Arial font.
5. A review of the literature is meant provide a partial survey of previous research studies that have investigated your topic. It should begin with a short (1 or 2 paragraphs – no more than half a page) introduction, followed by relatively brief but thorough summaries of prior research studies (1 -2 pages each). Each review should include: (1) what the study was about, (2) information about the sample, (3) the methods employed, and (4) relevant findings. Each article summary should be followed by its own critique that addresses its importance to your study (i.e., what does it contribute to your study), or perhaps what it lacks, plus a statement about how your study will address any shortcomings. Article summaries should be presented in consecutive order (i.e., one after another). A cohesive, summary paragraph that highlights the most important information derived from the article summaries should be included at the end of the literature review. Example literature reviews will be e-mailed, they are strictly meant to serve as a reference.
6. A separate list of references will need to be provided as part of your final research proposal.