

Syllabus

Course Overview

This course presents an overview of the general approaches to research methodology at the graduate level. It deals with the quantitative and qualitative approaches to rigorous scholarly inquiry and the major research methodologies. This course is aimed primarily at social and behavioral studies master's-level learners, although PhD learners who either have not had a graduate-level research course or need to refresh their knowledge and skills may take it as an elective.

This course focuses on the principles and practices of research and their ethical and legal application to the social and behavioral studies fields. You are encouraged to relate your examination of research principles and practices to your specific area of professional practice in the social and behavioral studies fields. What this means is that you will seek out research published in peer-reviewed, scholarly journals in your area of specialization for use in course discussions and assignments.

Course Competencies

(Read Only)

To successfully complete this course, you will be expected to:

- 1 Evaluate challenges, opportunities, and impact of research in social and behavioral studies.
- 2 Analyze basic research methods used in social and behavioral studies field.
- 3 Apply the findings from research to application in the social and behavioral studies field.
- 4 Analyze diverse perspectives of research in a multicultural society.
- 5 Evaluate the ethical and legal ramifications of research practice and research findings.
- 6 Communicate professionally in writing.

Course Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course.

Syllabus >> Course Materials

Required

The materials listed below are required to complete the learning activities in this course.

Library

The following required readings are provided in the Capella University Library or linked directly in this course. To find specific readings by journal or book title, use [Journal and Book Locator](#). Refer to the [Journal and Book Locator library guide](#) to learn how to use this tool.

- Babbie, E. (2016). *The practice of social research* (14th ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.

External Resource

Please note that URLs change frequently. While the URLs were current when this course was designed, some may no longer be valid. If you cannot access a specific link, contact your instructor for an alternative URL. Permissions for the following links have been either granted or deemed appropriate for educational use at the time of course publication.

- [Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative at the University of Miami \(CITI Program\)](https://www.citiprogram.org/). (2012). Retrieved from <https://www.citiprogram.org/>

Suggested

The following materials are recommended to provide you with a better understanding of the topics in this course. These materials are not required to complete the course, but they are aligned to course activities and assessments and are highly recommended for your use.

Optional

The following optional materials are offered to provide you with a better understanding of the topics in this course. These materials are not required to complete the course.

Unit 1 >> An Introduction to Human Inquiry and Social Research

Introduction

Learning about scholarly research in the social and behavioral sciences involves exploring the culture of research, including its language and standards of conduct. This will help you to better understand and evaluate the core concepts and practices that form the knowledge base in your professional area of service and will further enrich your understanding of the legal and ethical considerations when working with the people whom you serve.

To most graduate students, scholarly inquiry and research represent a specialized kind of thinking and behavior. In contrast, most practicing researchers find the principles of inquiry to be natural, easy, and in accord with everyday patterns of logic and reflection. As you complete this course, you will likely begin to experience a shift in your ability to read, understand, and critique research articles. The main purpose of this course is to help you become a critical consumer of research so that you can read and evaluate the validity of studies found in the literature and draw upon this knowledge base in ways that inform your professional effectiveness.

In this unit, you will explore the purpose and role of research, where and how to identify and access published research studies in the literature, and some of the key characteristics and terms associated with research in the social sciences.

As social and behavioral studies professionals, it is imperative to be able to understand the research published in professional journals. In order to select appropriate research from the literature, concentrate your efforts on the scientific literature, which is generally found in journals. Journals, in contrast with magazines, are periodicals devoted to publishing more scholarly articles that generally have undergone a rigorous peer-review and selection process. Though the focus in this course is on research articles found in scholarly journals, it is important that you seek articles in the journals most relevant to your specialization within social and behavioral studies.

Learning Activities

u01s1 - Studies

Readings

Complete the following:

- Use *The Practice of Social Research* text to read the following:
 - Chapter 1, "Human Inquiry and Science," pages 4–30.
 - Chapter 2, "Paradigms, Theory, and Social Research," pages 31–59.
- Review the following resources to help you prepare for the Unit 1 discussion:
 - [How Do I Find Peer-Reviewed Articles?](#)
 - [Evaluating Sources](#).

u01s2 - Finding Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles

Access the following resources for information on locating peer-reviewed journal articles:

- [How do I Find Peer-Reviewed Articles?](#)
- [Peer-Reviewed Articles and How to Find Them](#).

u01d1 - Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles

For this discussion, complete the following:

Use the resources in this unit's study to access the Capella library and locate four peer-reviewed journal articles. **Note:** You do not need to read the whole journal article. Simply practice locating the articles.

- Discuss how you can tell if a journal is peer reviewed.
- Discuss why is it important to select research published in peer-reviewed journals.
- Provide a list of the four peer-reviewed journals you located, including the following:
 - The name of the peer-reviewed journal.
 - The database in which the peer-reviewed journal article is located.
 - The focus of each of the peer-reviewed journals.

Note: Your initial post should be a minimum of 250 words.

Response Guidelines

Review fellow learners' posts and respond to at least one of their posts (100 word minimum response). In your response, do one of the following:

- Ask a probing question.
- Offer a suggestion.
- Elaborate on a particular point.
- Provide an alternative opinion.

Be sure to support your responses with examples from your work life or your course readings. Remember to use APA citations and references when referring to perspectives that are not your own.

Course Resources

[Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide](#)

[How Do I Find Peer-Reviewed Articles?](#)

[Evaluating Source Quality](#)

[Literature Review](#)

[Literature Review Process | Transcript](#)

[What Is the Literature Review?](#)

[Writing a Literature Review \[PDF\]](#)

Unit 2 >> Structuring of Research: Quantitative and Qualitative

Introduction

The pursuit of knowledge and understanding about the phenomena we encounter typically emerges from observations in the world around us and from our interest and experience as social and behavioral studies professionals. Your experiences can stimulate curiosity as you begin to notice problems, issues, unmet needs, or opportunities for change and improvement, thereby motivating you to search for information and solutions. Central to formulating ideas for possible inquiry are a set of focusing sentences that includes a problem statement and research questions that serve to guide your search for information—and ultimately determine the methodological approach and research design you would select should you choose to conduct a study. Part of this search involves looking at the research already completed and published in the literature (in journals, for example), as well as the ability to critically evaluate its validity and usefulness to you in addressing the problem or question you face in your work; this is the essence of being a critical consumer of research. The statement of the problem, which serves to help conceptualize what one seeks to examine and identifies either what is wrong, missing, or unknown about a topic, involves precision in language allowing a comprehensive subject to be stated in a few words.

This unit continues building your knowledge about research methods by examining definitions and basic concepts and by highlighting the need to establish the context into which your pursuit of knowledge fits. You will use your professional observations, as well as published social and behavioral studies research literature, as a basis for articulating a research problem and outlining a plan of study using analysis and critical thinking (that is, assessment). You will apply your knowledge by stating a researchable problem and a research question or questions.

A broad classification of research to be considered in this unit includes the methodological approach used by the researcher. At the outset of planning and conducting a study, the researcher must choose a particular method, or approach, for collecting information. In broad terms, one chooses between either a quantitative or a qualitative methodological approach. Quantitative research uses data collection methods that result in numerical data, which are often translated into descriptive statistics, such as the mean, standard deviation, tallies, and frequencies, which may be presented in tables, charts, or graphs. In contrast, qualitative research is based on nonnumerical data, most often words. For instance, the data resulting from interviews or direct observations would likely include written transcripts of the interview or written notes of the observer. Thus, when reading the methods section of a research article, one must attend carefully to how data were collected from participants.

In this unit, you will continue to build knowledge about research methods by examining the decisions and steps involved in planning a research project. You will compare and contrast quantitative and qualitative approaches, research methods, and research goals. This will enable you to apply your knowledge by determining the feasibility of a research project that you can evaluate for yourself.

Learning Activities

u02s1 - Studies

Readings

Complete the following:

Use *The Practice of Social Research* text to read the following:

- Chapter 4, "Research Design," pages 88–122.
- Chapter 5, "Conceptualization, Operationalization, and Measurement," pages 123–154. This chapter will help you examine the challenges and factors that researchers need to take into account as they get ready to turn their research idea into a feasible study.

Multimedia

Complete the following:

- Click the 4-minute interactive clip on **Quantitative Versus Qualitative Research** to view an animation helping you prepare for your Unit 2 discussion question.
- Click the 20-minute interactive clip on **Creating Research Topic Statements** to learn how the research topic is the first step in a clearly defined literature review (the course project).
- Next, click on the 25-minute interactive clip on **How to Craft a Research Question** to learn more about the process of preparing a topic to be a feasible research study.

Course Resources

Quantitative Versus Qualitative Research

Creating Research Topic Statements

How to Craft a Research Question

u02s2 - Assignment Preparation

For the Unit 3 assignment, you will access and complete a training course developed by the Collaborative IRB Training Initiative (CITI). Please allow the time needed to complete this course. The course consists of several modules, each of which will be followed by a short quiz. The course will take approximately five hours to complete.

u02s3 - Future Assignment Preparation

Access the following resources to learn more about annotated bibliographies:

- [Annotated Bibliography](#) (review the five boxes on the left navigation bar).
- [Annotated Bibliography Example](#).

u02a1 - Topic Selection

For this assessment, complete the following:

- Briefly describe the topic area you are considering for your literature review final project.
 - Construct a 12–15 word title for your topic that summarizes the main idea of the literature review final project in a concise statement. The title will serve as the title of your literature review.
 - The topic needs to address issues in your particular social or behavioral studies field or discipline. The topic is **not** a comparison paper, discussing quantitative and qualitative research.
- In less than one page, complete the following:
 - Provide a clear statement of the problem in 3–5 sentences. Explain the relevance of your chosen research topic to your personal social or behavioral studies field or discipline as a whole.
 - Include a set of research questions you will use to organize and focus your continuing search for information and reading of the literature.
 - Describe the breadth of literature in area of inquiry that you have initially reviewed.

Submission Requirements

- **Written communication:** Written communication is free of errors that detract from the overall message.
- **APA formatting:** Resources and citations are formatted according to current APA style and formatting.
- **Length of paper:** Less than one page.
- **Font and font size:** Times New Roman, 12 point.

Course Resources

[APA Style and Format](#)

u02d1 - Methodological Approaches

Considering the two methodological approaches, qualitative and quantitative, discussed in this unit, answer the following questions:

- What are the two methodological approaches (qualitative and quantitative)?
- What do you see as the main differences between these two methodological approaches?
- What are some of the advantages of each approach?
- What are some of the disadvantages of each approach?
- How might you identify whether a journal article is qualitative or quantitative?

Note: Your initial post should be a minimum of 250 words.

Response Guidelines

Review fellow learners' posts and respond to at least one of their posts (100 word minimum response). In your response, do one of the following:

- Ask a probing question.
- Offer a suggestion.
- Elaborate on a particular point.
- Provide an alternative opinion.

Be sure to support your responses with examples from your work life or your course readings. Remember to use APA citations and references when referring to perspectives that are not your own.

Course Resources

[Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide](#)

[Literature Review](#)

Literature Review Process | Transcript

Unit 3 >> Ethics in Social Research

Introduction

The emergence of a consideration of ethics in research in general and of applied social research, such as human services fields, dates to a time immediately after World War II. The first event was the Nuremberg war crimes trials, which brought to public view the frightful ways that a small group of German scientists had used captives as subjects in often gruesome experiments. Next came the Tuskegee syphilis studies of the 1950s and 1960s. Known, effective treatment for syphilis was withheld from African-American participants who were infected, which also raised issues of racism, discrimination, and the ethical treatment of people from minority-status groups. Both of these events led to the gradual development of a consensus that potential human subjects should be protected from being used as guinea pigs in scientific research.

However, since the latter part of the 20th century, the dynamics of ethical and legal considerations in human research have been evolving into an active role for the participants. By convention, there are several major tenets of ethics in research. The first is voluntary participation; individuals should not be coerced into participating in research. Second is informed consent; those who participate in research must be informed about the procedures and risks involved in the research study and must give their consent to participate. Third, participants should not be placed in a situation in which they might be exposed to a risk of physical or psychological harm. Fourth, privacy for those who participate in research must be assured. With confidentiality, identifying information is not revealed to anyone not directly involved in the actual research study. Anonymity is a stricter standard of privacy.

One way to monitor research ethics and sensitivity to multicultural issues is through an institutional (or internal) review board (IRB), sometimes still referred to as a *human subjects board* or a *human subjects review*. The IRB is a panel of individuals that reviews proposed research with respect to each of the key ethical considerations. The IRB judges whether the study meets ethical standards and decides whether additional steps and actions need to be taken to assure the safety and rights of participants. Also implied in the function of IRBs is defending the organization and the researcher against legal issues arising from ethical violations.

Learning Activities

u03s1 - Studies

Readings

Complete the following:

Use *The Practice of Social Research* text to read the following:

- Chapter 3, "The Ethics and Politics of Social Research," pages 60–85.

Multimedia

Complete the following:

Click **The Tuskegee Experiment** to watch a video about the formal apologies that President Bill Clinton made regarding the Tuskegee experiments.

Course Resources

The Tuskegee Experiment

u03s2 - Future Assignment Preparation

Access the following resources to learn more about annotated bibliographies:

- [Annotated Bibliography](#) (review the five boxes on the left navigation bar).
- [Annotated Bibliography Example](#).

u03a1 - CITI Report

Complete the CITI Program training course on vulnerable research groups. To take the course, access the **CITI Program** link in the Resources and follow the registration steps in the **iGuide: CITI Registration Instructions** link, which is also in the Resources. The Collaborative IRB Training Initiative (CITI) developed this course.

The course consists of 11 modules, each of which may be followed by a short quiz. The course will take approximately five hours to complete. Before you begin the CITI training, you may want to print the "iGuide: CITI Registration Instructions" in the Resources. When you get to the screen "select your curriculum-Capella University" in these instructions, choose "Group 2 Learners." Once you select "Group 2 Learners," look for "my report" to open all 11 modules to complete.

Upon completion, you will be notified that a completion report has been created for you. Be sure and save the completion certificate to your computer when you are finished. You need to turn in a copy of the certificate. CITI does not cost anything to take. If you are being asked to pay for CITI, back out of the program and contact your instructor.

To receive credit, submit a copy of your completion certificate to this assignment.

Course Resources

[How to Register on CITI \[PDF\]](#)

[Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative at the University of Miami](#)

u03d1 - Ethical and Legal Issues in Social Research

For this discussion, complete the following:

Provide two references in your posting: one from the textbook and one from a peer-reviewed journal article. You may reference other sources as well, provided you have met this requirement. Make sure to list your citation.

- What are the legal and ethical issues associated with research in the social or behavioral studies fields? Discuss them.
- Is it the role of social and behavioral studies professionals to serve as stewards for fair, ethical, and socially just treatment of people who represent diverse perspectives?
- Do you feel that social and behavioral studies professionals should be advocates for people who tend to be marginalized by society?

Note: Your initial post should be a minimum of 250 words.

Response Guidelines

Review fellow learners' posts and respond to at least one of their posts (100 word minimum response). In your response, do one of the following:

- Ask a probing question.
- Offer a suggestion.
- Elaborate on a particular point.
- Provide an alternative opinion.

Be sure to support your responses with examples from your work life or your course readings. Remember to use APA citations and references when referring to perspectives that are not your own.

Unit 4 >> Modes of Sampling: Sampling and Experiments

Introduction

Research methods provide a logical framework by which information is gathered, organized, analyzed, and interpreted to reach a conclusion or to address a problem. Planning a research project involves deciding which research methods and which type of design to use. The purpose and goals of a research project should guide this process. In this unit, we will introduce basic methodological aspects of conducting research (including the research proposal) and also begin to examine the concepts of validity and credibility used to evaluate the quality of a study's findings. In later units, you will examine in greater detail the specific research methods and designs for qualitative and quantitative research methodologies.

The methods of research are the procedures used to carry out the plan—the *what* and *how* of research. The choice of method is a key element in what is called *design of research*; it plays a major role in determining what kinds of information are gathered, how they are collected, from whom or what they are collected, and how they are organized and analyzed. Ultimately, the methods by which information is collected, and how it is managed, determine whether the data is quantitative (that is, numeric) or qualitative (that is, nonnumeric—words and images).

The research methods and the design of the study influence the kinds of conclusions one is able to draw from the findings of a study, as well as the degree to which these findings can be generalized to other people or settings. The concepts of validity, credibility, and reliability refer broadly to the kinds of conclusions one can draw from a particular study and to other aspects associated with the quality, confidence, and strengths and limitations one has in a study's findings.

The forum in which a research plan is developed is typically the research proposal, which serves to communicate to others, for instance, an IRB, your intended actions and a supporting rationale for a research project.

You must make decisions about each methodological component, such as how to select participants for the study, what kinds of treatment or conditions participants will experience, how to collect and analyze data, et cetera, contribute to the overall design. What guides the selection of methods, and the overall design, is the intended purpose and goals of the study; thus, design could be considered the *what* and *why* of research.

One of the first decisions and tasks a researcher faces following the initial framing of the problem, research questions, and hypothesis (if one is used) is choosing who (or what) will serve as the data source. If the study involves live participants, one must determine who is available and what criteria will be used to select participants, as well as consider the various legal and ethical ramifications. Practical limitations for many research projects prevent examination of an entire population of people. Because many studies would like to draw conclusions about a particular population, one hopes to select a smaller, more manageable representative sample of this population. As you will read in your studies, how this sample is selected determines the degree to which it truly does represent a larger population, as well as the degree to which the findings from a study conducted on the smaller sample can be generalized (meaning one can assume the same results would be found if you studied the entire population). The generalizability of a study relates directly to external validity. The more representative a sample is of some larger population, or of some particular setting or condition, the greater one can generalize the findings from the study to the larger population and the higher the external validity.

In most quantitative studies, the ideal sampling procedure involves randomly selecting people from the entire population. In reality, this is rarely possible, thereby leaving the researcher to use some sampling procedure, each of which may have strengths and weaknesses that can reduce, limit, or pose a threat to the study's external validity. In qualitative research, the decisions about who or what to study are different because generalizing to some larger population is frequently of less concern.

Learning Activities

u04s1 - Studies

Readings

Use *The Practice of Social Research* text to read the following:

- Chapter 7, "The Logic of Sampling," pages 182–220.
- Chapter 8, "Experiment," pages 224–245.

Multimedia

Complete the following:

- Click **Research Continuum** to view an interactive illustrating the various types of research on a continuum of objectivity and subjectivity.
- Click **Research Methodologies Comparison Table** to view an illustration that compares the differences between quantitative and qualitative research methods.
- Click on the 20-minute video clip, **Elements of Sampling Plans**, to view a media piece on considerations for selection of a sampling strategy.

Course Resources

Research Continuum

Elements of Sampling Plans

[Research Methodologies Comparison Table](#) | Transcript

u04s2 - Discussion Preparation

Refer to the following library guides as you prepare for the first discussion in Unit 4.

- The [Research Guide - Psychology](#) library guide will help you search journal articles by methodology.
- The [Persistent Links and DOIs](#) library guide will help you find the persistent link to list for your discussion question and reference page for final project.
- The [Databases by School](#) library link will help you search journal articles by school.

Course Resources

[Research Methodologies Comparison Table](#)

u04s3 - Future Assignment Preparation

Access the following resources to learn more about annotated bibliographies:

- [Annotated Bibliography](#) (review the five boxes on the left navigation bar).
- [Annotated Bibliography Example](#).

u04d1 - Quantitative Study Review

For this discussion, complete the following:

Go to the Capella library and choose one peer-reviewed journal article (quantitative) that could be used as your first reference in your Unit 5 assignment, "Project Outline and Annotated Bibliography," and your Unit 9 assignment, "Literature Review." Provide the following information:

1. A summary of the article.
2. Research question(s) and/or hypothesis(es).
3. Independent and dependent variable(s).
4. Who were the participants of the study?
5. Sampling methods used to select participants.
6. Test used.

Note: Use the resources in the study section of this unit to obtain the persistent link for your article. List the persistent link in your discussion question. Cite all sources in APA style and provide an APA-style reference list at the end of your post. Your initial post should be a minimum of 250 words.

Response Guidelines

Review fellow learners' posts and respond to at least one of their posts (100 word minimum response). In your response, do one of the following:

- Ask a probing question.
- Offer a suggestion.
- Elaborate on a particular point.
- Provide an alternative opinion.

Be sure to support your responses with examples from your work life or your course readings. Remember to use APA citations and references when referring to perspectives that are not your own.

Course Resources

[Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide](#)

[APA Style and Format](#)

[Literature Review](#)

[Literature Review Process | Transcript](#)

[What Is the Literature Review?](#)

[Writing a Literature Review \[PDF\]](#)

u04d2 - Sampling Method

For this discussion, respond to the following prompt:

- What is important to consider when choosing a sampling method?

Note: Your initial post should be a minimum of 250 words.

Response Guidelines

Review fellow learners' posts and respond to at least one of their posts (100 word minimum response). In your response, do one of the following:

- Ask a probing question.
- Offer a suggestion.
- Elaborate on a particular point.
- Provide an alternative opinion.

Be sure to support your responses with examples from your work life or your course readings. Remember to use APA citations and references when referring to perspectives that are not your own.

Course Resources

[Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide](#)

[Literature Review](#)

Literature Review Process | Transcript

[What Is the Literature Review?](#)

[Writing a Literature Review \[PDF\]](#)

Unit 5 >> Modes of Observations: Survey and Field

Introduction

Quantification (assigning numbers to convey meaning) is what we impose on our observations in certain circumstances as a way of mathematically exploring certain types of relationships, patterns, or trends in collected data. In its purest form, qualitative research preserves nonnumerical data, such as that collected by observation, photographs or images, interviews, or from existing documents, in its original form, most frequently as words. On occasion, collapsing qualitative data into categories or themes and counting the frequencies of observations within each category is helpful in organizing, analyzing, interpreting, and communicating the information.

Qualitative research is a broad term that encompasses a variety of approaches to interpretive research. The philosophical foundations of qualitative inquiry are more closely aligned with humanistic and social constructivist traditions that hold that meaning is constructed by people in context, thus allowing for different interpretations of reality. It can be historical, sociological, political, educational, and much more. This unit covers five of the more common qualitative designs: case study, ethnography, phenomenology, grounded theory, and content analysis. Historical research and program evaluation research can be considered forms of qualitative research. Action research, which has roots in advocacy and critical approaches to research, will be introduced.

In this unit, you will take an in-depth look at qualitative research methods and designs, building on the more general knowledge developed up to this point. Your reading in the literature will focus on qualitative studies on the topic you are pursuing for your final project, as well as an examination of how one views the world through the lens of qualitative research. You will be able to apply your knowledge of qualitative research by drafting a hypothetical qualitative research plan that you can evaluate for yourself.

Qualitative research tends to follow an inductive reasoning process, frequently based on observations of real people in natural settings. It is more concerned with description and the subjective nature of lived experiences rather than the quantification of experience for purpose of applying statistical procedures.

Learning Activities

u05s1 - Studies

Readings

Complete the following:

Use *The Practice in Social Research* text to read the following:

- Chapter 9, "Survey Research," pages 246–286.
- Chapter 10, "Qualitative Field Research," pages 287–321.

Multimedia

Complete the following:

- Click **Quantitative Versus Qualitative Research** to help you access your understanding of the topic.
- Click **Qualitative Versus Quantitative Quiz** to take an interactive quiz to check your understanding of the differences between qualitative and quantitative research methods.

Course Resources

u05s2 - Discussion Preparation

Refer to the following library guides as you prepare for the first discussion in Unit 5:

- The [Research Guide - Psychology](#) will help you search journal articles by methodology.
- The [Persistent Links and DOIs](#) library guide will help you find the persistent link to list for your discussion question and reference page for final project.
- The [Databases by School](#) library link will help you find journal articles by school.

u05s3 - Future Assignment Preparation

Access the following resources to learn more about annotated bibliographies:

- [Annotated Bibliography](#) (review the five boxes on the left navigation bar).
- [Annotated Bibliography Example](#).

u05a1 - Project Outline and Annotated Bibliography

You will expand the topic you selected in Unit 2 to create a concept outline and an annotated bibliography for your course project. Submit both the outline and the annotated in one Word document to the assignment submission area. See specific directions for each section below:

Outline Instructions

A simple, indented outline structure organized by the concepts will greatly facilitate your work in producing the final literature review, as the outline can be easily mapped to headers and text in your literature review.

Use resources you select from the Capella University Library view of the history of thought and current thinking in the field. The outline should include the topic and the problem and research questions. Include past and current research as well as any identified gap in the research area for the particular topic you have chosen. Identify but do not elaborate or define each concept; you will do that with narrative in the next assignment. Please note that your outline does not have to be annotated.

Annotated Bibliography Instructions

The annotated bibliography must reference a minimum of four peer-reviewed journal articles and one dissertation. You may reference other resources, provided the prior criteria have been met.

In the annotated part of the bibliography, include:

1. The complete citation of each reference source, presented in APA format.
2. An annotation of each reference source that includes a brief written description and evaluation of the reference (approximately 50 words) together with its relationship to the literature review topic.

Submission Requirements

- **Written communication:** Written communication is free of errors that detract from the overall message.
- **APA formatting:** Resources and citations are formatted according to current APA style and formatting.

- **Font and font size:** Times New Roman, 12 point.

Course Resources

[APA Style and Format](#)

[Annotated Bibliography Example](#)

u05d1 - Qualitative Study Review

For this discussion, complete the following:

Go to the Capella University Library and choose one peer-reviewed journal article (qualitative) that could be used as your first reference in your Unit 5 assignment, "Project Outline and Annotated Bibliography," and your Unit 9 assignment, "Literature Review." Provide the following information:

1. The article abstract.
2. Research question(s).
3. Who were the participants in the study?
4. Sampling method used to select participants.
5. Data collection methods.

Note: Use the resources in the study section of this unit to obtain the persistent link for your article. List the persistent link in your discussion question. Cite all sources in current APA style and provide an APA-style reference list at the end of your post. Provide **two** references from the textbook in your posting. Your initial post should be a minimum of 250 words.

Response Guidelines

Review fellow learners' posts and respond to at least one of their posts (100 word minimum response). In your response, do one of the following:

- Ask a probing question.
- Offer a suggestion.
- Elaborate on a particular point.
- Provide an alternative opinion.

Be sure to support your responses with examples from your work life or your course readings. Remember to use APA citations and references when referring to perspectives that are not your own.

Course Resources

[Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide](#)

[APA Style and Format](#)

[Literature Review](#)

[Literature Review Process](#)

[What Is the Literature Review?](#)

[Writing a Literature Review \[PDF\]](#)

Unit 6 >> Modes of Observation: Unobtrusive and Evaluation Research

Introduction

Quantitative research methodology generally begins with the deductive-reasoning process to identify and solve problems or concerns derived from one's professional work in the social or behavioral studies fields. Numerical values are assigned to data, and statistics are used to gain further understanding of the research problem, answer research questions, or test hypotheses.

Nonexperimental research deals with quantification of observations. This unit discusses the types of quantitative study that fall under the broad heading of descriptive quantitative research. This type of research involves either identifying the characteristics of an observed phenomenon or exploring possible correlations among two or more phenomena. In every case, descriptive research examines a situation as it is, what was labeled an investigation in Unit 6. It does not involve changing or modifying the situation under investigation, nor is it intended to detect cause-effect relationships. Examples of descriptive research that yield quantitative data are correlation studies, developmental designs, observation studies, and survey research.

Experimental research deals with quantification of observations or self-reported measures, as well as random selection and assignment of subjects to two or more groups over which the researcher has control. Contemporary terminology is to use treatment group rather than experimental group, the rationale being that both treatment and control are part of the total experiment. Leedy and Ormrod (2005) classify experimental designs as pre-experimental, true experimental, quasi-experimental, and factorial.

In this unit, you will take an in-depth look at quantitative research methods and designs and the philosophic assumptions underlying this approach, building on the more general knowledge developed up to this point. Your reading in the literature will focus on quantitative studies on the topic you are pursuing for your final project, as well as an examination of how one views the world through the lens of quantitative research.

Learning Activities

u06s1 - Studies

Readings

Complete the following:

Use your *The Practice of Social Research* text to read the following:

- Chapter 11, "Unobtrusive Research," pages 322–350.
- Chapter 12, "Evaluation Research," pages 351–377.

u06s2 - Discussion Preparation

Refer to the following library guides as you prepare for the first discussion in Unit 6:

- The [Research Guide - Psychology](#) library guide will help you search journal articles by methodology.
- The [Persistent Links and DOIs](#) library guide will help you find the persistent link to list for your discussion question and reference page for final project.
- The [Databases by School](#) library link will help you find journal articles by school.

u06d1 - Unobtrusive Measures in Qualitative Research

For this discussion, complete the following:

Go to the Capella University Library and choose one peer-reviewed journal article (qualitative) that could be used as your first reference in your Unit 5 assignment, "Project Outline and Annotated Bibliography," and your Unit 9 assignment, "Literature Review." Provide the following information:

1. The article abstract.
2. Research question(s).
3. Who were the participants of the study?
4. Sampling method to select participants

5. Data collection method or methods.

Note: Use the resources in the study section of this unit to obtain the persistent link for your article. List the persistent link in your discussion question. Cite all sources in current APA style and provide an APA-style reference list at the end of your post. Your initial post should be a minimum of 250 words.

Response Guidelines

Review fellow learners' posts and respond to at least one of their posts (100 word minimum response). In your response, do one of the following:

- Ask a probing question.
- Offer a suggestion.
- Elaborate on a particular point.
- Provide an alternative opinion.

Be sure to support your responses with examples from your work life or your course readings. Remember to use APA citations and references when referring to perspectives that are not your own.

Course Resources

[Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide](#)

[APA Style and Format](#)

[Literature Review](#)

[Literature Review Process | Transcript](#)

[What Is the Literature Review?](#)

[Writing a Literature Review \[PDF\]](#)

u06d2 - Quantitative Evaluation Research

For this discussion, complete the following:

Go to the Capella University Library and choose one peer-reviewed journal article (quantitative) that could be used as your first reference in your Unit 5 assignment, "Project Outline and Annotated Bibliography," and your Unit 9 assignment, "Literature Review." Provide the following information:

1. The article abstract.
2. Research question(s) and/or hypothesis(es).
3. Independent and dependent variable(s).
4. Who were the participants in the study?
5. Sampling methods used to select participants.
6. Test used.

Note: Use the resources in the study section of this unit to obtain the persistent link for your article. List the persistent link in your discussion question. Cite all sources in current APA style and provide an APA-style reference list at the end of your post. Provide **two** references from the textbook in your posting. Your initial post should be a minimum of 250 words.

Response Guidelines

Review fellow learners' posts and respond to at least one of their posts (100 word minimum response). In your response, do one of the following:

- Ask a probing question.
- Offer a suggestion.
- Elaborate on a particular point.
- Provide an alternative opinion.

Be sure to support your responses with examples from your work life or your course readings. Remember to use APA citations and references when referring to perspectives that are not your own.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

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[Literature Review](#)

Literature Review Process | Transcript

[What Is the Literature Review?](#)

[Writing a Literature Review \[PDF\]](#)

Unit 7 >> Qualitative and Quantitative Data Analysis

Introduction

The data gathered using both qualitative and quantitative methods must be organized, analyzed, and interpreted before one can draw conclusions, state findings, or begin to understand the meaning and implications of a study's results. While the macro process of data collection, organization, analysis, and interpretation is similar for both methodological approaches, the specific tools and techniques for data analysis of numerical (quantitative) and nonnumerical (qualitative) data differ dramatically, along with some of the underlying assumptions underlying these techniques.

The primary purpose of this unit is not to teach you detailed techniques used to analyze qualitative or quantitative data but rather to introduce you to some of the varied methods for data analysis so you can better evaluate the strengths and limitations of various research designs. It is important to recognize that few, if any, studies are perfect in all respects, as trade-offs are made in balancing costs, access to participants, timelines, and other factors.

Learning Activities

u07s1 - Studies

Readings

Use *The Practice of Social Research* text to read the following:

- Chapter 13, "Qualitative Data Analysis," pages 381–410.
- Chapter 14, "Quantitative Data Analysis," pages 411–431.

u07s2 - Discussion Preparation

Complete the following:

Use the following library guides as you prepare for the first discussion in Unit 7.

- The [Research Guide - Psychology](#) library guide will help you search journal articles by methodology (quantitative or qualitative).
- The [Persistent Links and DOIs](#) library guide will help you find the persistent link to list for your discussion question and reference page for final project.

u07a1 - Draft of Literature Review

For this assignment, complete the following as you prepare and submit your first draft of your final literature review:

- Explain why you have selected the topic and its relevance to the human behavior field.
- Examine different perspectives on the issue. Rather than simply providing a summary of each article, make sure you are synthesizing the information and organizing the content in relevant themes (trends).
- Include past and current research in your literature review. Identify any gaps you have noticed with the published research.
 - Provide details on the proposed solution to the problem or issue represented by the articles you reviewed, along with an evaluation of any potential ethical concerns in conducting the research that was addressed or not addressed.
 - In your presentation of literature and examination of the topic, you must provide a clear and concise discussion of how research either has been or ought to be used to examine the multicultural perspective of those typically underrepresented in our society, such as those whose racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, gender, or other demographically-associated factor is outside the mainstream of white, male, or middle-class America.

Required Components

Your final literature review must include the following components (put them as headings in your literature review):

- Title page.
- Introduction (including a clear statement of the problem [research question]).
- Main body.
- Conclusion.
- References list.

Submission Requirements

- **Written communication:** Written communication is free of errors that detract from the overall message.
- **APA formatting:** Resources and citations are formatted according to current APA style and formatting.
- **Number of resources:** Four peer-reviewed journal articles and one dissertation. Other references are fine, but you **must** have four peer-reviewed journal articles and one dissertation.
- **Length of paper:** 10–15 typed double-spaced pages, including title page and reference list.
- **Font and font size:** Times New Roman, 12 point.

This is your first completed draft of your Literature Review assignment. The draft should just require minor tweaks before submitting the final version in Unit 9.

Course Resources

[APA Style and Format](#)

u07d1 - Dissertation Study Review

For this discussion, complete the following:

1. Open the "Look at Databases A-Z" Capella library page linked in the Resources. Scroll down to the dissertations links.
2. Choose one dissertation to use in your references for your Literature Review final project.
3. Document the following information from Chapter 3 of the dissertation.
 - a. Type of research method (quantitative or qualitative) and design used.
 - b. Purpose of the study.
 - c. Research question or questions or hypothesis or hypotheses (or both).
 - d. Sampling methods used to select participants.
 - e. Data collection methods.
4. Answer how the researcher in this study evaluated the data for their study. Explain why you feel their methods provided a high or low quality analysis. Why or why not?

Note: Use the resources in the study section of this unit to obtain the persistent link for your article. List the persistent link in your discussion question. Cite all sources in current APA style and provide an APA-style reference list at the end of your post. Provide **two** references from your textbook in your posting. Your initial post should be a minimum of 250 words.

Response Guidelines

Review fellow learners' posts and respond to at least one of their posts (100 word minimum response). In your response, do one of the following:

- Ask a probing question.
- Offer a suggestion.
- Elaborate on a particular point.
- Provide an alternative opinion.

Be sure to support your responses with examples from your work life or your course readings. Remember to use APA citations and references when referring to perspectives that are not your own.

Course Resources

[Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide](#)

[Databases A–Z](#)

[Literature Review](#)

[Literature Review Process | Transcript](#)

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[Writing a Literature Review \[PDF\]](#)

Unit 8 >> Quantitative Analysis: Multivariate and Statistical Analysis

Introduction

Various approaches and methods are available for collecting data. The concepts of reliability (for example, interrater, test-retest, et cetera) and validity (for example, content, construct, face, criterion-related, et cetera) relate to the quality of the data collected by the researcher. It is important to keep in mind that the overall quality of a study (and the confidence one can hold for the results and findings) is directly related to the quality of the data. In quantitative studies, one hopes to see the researchers have used a previously developed and validated measurement tool or survey. In qualitative studies, one looks to see what methods the researcher used to assure that the data accurately reflects, captures, or portrays the reality, experiences, and perspectives of those being studied, such as using more than one data source and looking to see if similar results are found in both (that is, *triangulation*).

Learning Activities

u08s1 - Studies

Readings

Use *The Practice of Social Research* text to read the following:

- Chapter 15, "The Logic of Multivariate Analysis," pages 432–449.
- Chapter 16, "Statistical Analyses," pages 450–485.

u08d1 - Health and Psychosocial Instruments

The Health and Psychosocial Instruments database includes information on nearly 15,000 measurement instruments (for example, questionnaires, index measures, rating scales, projective techniques, and tests) in the field of psychosocial sciences, health, education, and organization behavior. The purpose of this exercise is to access the resource and locate information on an instrument. You will not evaluate the instrument, itself. To complete this discussion:

- Open "Databases A – Z," linked in Resources.
- Scroll down and choose "Health and Psychosocial Instruments."
- Run a search in your area of interest.
- Click on the title of the measurement instrument from the results list to see more information about it.
- For additional help, review the first three pages of the "Database Guide," linked in the Resources.
- Respond to the following:
 - What is the name of the instrument?
 - Who are the authors who first used the instrument?
 - What is the purpose of the instrument?
 - Is there a population or age group that the instrument is aimed toward?

Note: Your initial post should be a minimum of 250 words.

Response Guidelines

Review fellow learners' posts and respond to at least one of their posts (100 word minimum response). In your response, do one of the following:

- Ask a probing question.
- Offer a suggestion.
- Elaborate on a particular point.
- Provide an alternative opinion.

Be sure to support your responses with examples from your work life or your course readings. Remember to use APA citations and references when referring to perspectives that are not your own.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

[Databases A – Z](#)

[Database Guide: Health and Psychosocial Instruments](#)

[Literature Review](#)

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u08d2 - Mental Measurements Yearbook

The Mental Measurements Yearbook is a comprehensive guide to over 2,000 testing instruments in the areas of psychology, education, business, and leadership. Entries include publisher, test purpose, price, edited reviews, and available purchase information. The guide simultaneously searches *Tests in Print*. The purpose of this exercise is to access the resource and locate information on an instrument. You will not evaluate the instrument, itself. To complete this discussion:

- Open "Databases A – Z," linked in Resources.
- Scroll down and choose "Mental Measurements Yearbook."
- Run a search in your area of interest.
- Click on the title of the measurement instrument from the results list to see more information about it.

- For additional help, review the first two pages of the "Database Guide," linked in the Resources.
- Respond to the following:
 - What is the name of the instrument?
 - Who is the publisher of the instrument?
 - What is the purpose of the instrument?
 - How do you purchase the instrument?
 - Is there a population or age group that the instrument is aimed toward?

Note: Your initial post should be a minimum of 250 words.

Response Guidelines

Review fellow learners' posts and respond to at least one of their posts (100 word minimum response). In your response, do one of the following:

- Ask a probing question.
- Offer a suggestion.
- Elaborate on a particular point.
- Provide an alternative opinion.

Be sure to support your responses with examples from your work life or your course readings. Remember to use APA citations and references when referring to perspectives that are not your own.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

[Databases A – Z](#)

[Database Guide: Mental Measurements Yearbook](#)

[Literature Review](#)

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[Writing a Literature Review \[PDF\]](#)

Unit 9 >> Reading and Writing Social Research

Introduction

Methods can be thought of as the *what* and *how* of conducting research, including the various strategies, procedures, and tasks one conducts when doing original research. Methods include such things as sampling procedures and the various ways to collect, organize, analyze, and interpret data. A study's research design can be considered the *what* and *why* and is dependent on the choice of a particular set of methods which are driven by the study's purpose and goals.

Scholar-practitioners are those who seek to improve their professional effectiveness by reading and critiquing research found in the literature. It is essential to understand how various methodological components of a study contribute to its design, which in turn impacts the study's overall validity and credibility. Those who plan and carry out research projects must also understand the factors underlying their study's design so that they can make informed decisions about which methods to employ and how these influence the strengths, limitations, and validity of the project.

It is beyond the scope of this course, which focuses primarily on helping you become a critical consumer of research found in the literature, to provide you with in-depth training on the procedures used to analyze either quantitative or qualitative data. Note, however, that your ability to critically evaluate research will only be enhanced the more you study either approach through more advanced coursework or continued self-directed learning. Should you choose to conduct a formal research project in your future, you will be encouraged to examine the particular methodological approach in greater depth to prepare you for such an undertaking.

Learning Activities

u09s1 - Studies

Reading

Use your *The Practice of Social Research* text to read the following:

- Chapter 17, "Reading and Writing Social Research," pages 486–508.

u09s2 - Discussion Preparation

Refer to the following library guides as you prepare for the first discussion in Unit 9:

- The [Persistent Links and DOIs](#) library guide will help you find the persistent link to list for your discussion question and reference page for course project.
- The [Databases by School](#) library link will help you find journal articles by school.

u09a1 - Literature Review

The purpose of a literature review is to evaluate and integrate research related to your topic to establish a research-based framework, define key terms, and position your work in the ongoing academic conversation. Writing a literature review helps you to build essential skills to critically read and analyze literature and identify key concepts and themes related to your professional areas of interest.

For this assignment, complete the following:

- Select a problem or issue within the field of human behavior. Explain why you have selected the topic and explain the relevance to human behavior field.
- Examine different perspectives on the issue. Rather than simply providing a summary of each article, make sure you are synthesizing the information and organizing the content in relevant themes (trends).
- Include past and current research in your literature review.
 - Identify any gaps you have noticed with the published research.
 - Provide details on the proposed solution to the problem or issue represented by the articles you reviewed, along with an evaluation of any potential ethical concerns in conducting the research that was addressed or not addressed.
 - In your presentation of literature and examination of the topic, you must provide a clear and concise discussion of how research either has been or ought to be used to examine the multicultural perspective of those typically underrepresented in our society, such as those whose racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, gender, or other demographically-associated factor is outside the mainstream of white, male, or middle-class America.

Required Components

Your final literature review must include the following components. Put them as headings in your literature review:

- Title page.
- Introduction (including a clear statement of the problem [research question]).
- Main body.
- Conclusion.
- Reference list.

Submission Requirements

- **Written communication:** Written communication is free of errors that detract from the overall message.
- **APA formatting:** Resources and citations are formatted according to current APA style and formatting.

- **Number of resources:** Four peer-reviewed journal articles and one dissertation. Other references are fine, but you **must** have four peer-reviewed journal articles and one dissertation.
- **Length of paper:** 10–15 typed, double-spaced pages, including title page and reference list.
- **Font and font size:** Times New Roman, 12 point.

Course Resources

APA Style and Format

u09d1 - Multiple Perspectives

For this discussion, complete the following:

1. Answer if it is good to look at several different databases in researching your topic. Each subject's database has a different slant looking at the same topic. For example, looking at the topic of sexual abuse, the research would have different perspectives presented by counseling, criminal justice, and nursing.
 - a. Databases by subject in Databases A-Z in the Capella library.
 - b. Counseling, psychology, or social work.
 - c. Business.
 - d. Education.
 - e. Public service leadership (criminal justice, nursing, et cetera).
2. Take your topic into two different **subject** databases (for example, business, counseling, public leadership) in the Capella library. **Do not just use EBSCOhost or ERIC, you must use a subject specific database.**
 - a. Identify the subject you researched with your topic.
 - b. Explain that subject's slant to your topical discussion.
 - c. Summarize their article and results.
3. Identify the second school in which you did your research topic. What was that school's slant to your topical discussion?

Note: Your initial post should be a minimum of 250 words.

Response Guidelines

Review fellow learners' posts and respond to at least one of their posts (100 word minimum response). In your response, do one of the following:

- Ask a probing question.
- Offer a suggestion.
- Elaborate on a particular point.
- Provide an alternative opinion.

Be sure to support your responses with examples from your work life or your course readings. Remember to use APA citations and references when referring to perspectives that are not your own.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

Literature Review

Literature Review Process | Transcript

What Is the Literature Review?

Writing a Literature Review [PDF]

Unit 10 >> Course Reflection

Introduction

Pursuing graduate education is an action step designed to achieve the goals that each person sets for professional and personal development. At this point in the course, the final content units have been completed.

Self-reflection and self-assessment are part of the professional's repertoire of academic skill sets. Using self-reflection, it is likely that each learner can address needs to develop and fine tune academic skills that will be needed throughout a curriculum of study. In this unit, the "wrap-up" process is initiated and the course is brought to closure. The last steps in the course process include forwarding your learning activities, as outlined in the syllabus, to the instructor and completing the course evaluation, which is delivered via e-mail.

It is now time to reflect back on your course experience. This course has been designed to challenge and engage you and impact your professional life. In wrapping up the course, you are again asked to reflect on how you have developed as a graduate student.

Learning Activities

u10d1 - Scientific Merit in Research

For this discussion, answer the following:

- How would you reflect on the concept of scientific merit in research (advancing the knowledge base by researching the missing piece in the literature gap)?
- Why do you think it is important for research to have a high degree of scientific merit?
- Have your thoughts on both scientific merit and ethical standards changed by taking this course?

Note: Please provide two references in your posting, one from the textbook and one from a peer reviewed journal article. You may reference other sources as well, provided you have met this requirement. Make sure to list your citation.

Response Guidelines

Respond to the posts of one of your peers. In your response, do one of the following:

- Ask a probing question.
- Offer a suggestion.
- Elaborate on a particular point.
- Provide an alternative opinion.

Be sure to support your responses with examples from your work life or your course readings. Remember to use APA citations and references when referring to perspectives that are not your own.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

[Literature Review](#)

[What Is the Literature Review?](#)

Literature Review Process | Transcript

[Writing a Literature Review \[PDF\]](#)

u10d2 - Reflection

For this discussion, complete the following:

- Post a brief summary of three major insights that reflect your learning experience while participating in this course. You may refer to theories, concepts, or research knowledge—or how you would apply course content and experiences to your world of work.
- Describe how you have grown personally as a result of completing this course.
- Describe how you have grown professionally as a result of completing this course.

Response Guidelines

Respond to the posts of one of your peers. In your response, do one of the following:

- Ask a probing question.
- Offer a suggestion.
- Elaborate on a particular point.
- Provide an alternative opinion.

Be sure to support your responses with examples from your work life or your course readings. Remember to use APA citations and references when referring to perspectives that are not your own.

Course Resources

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