**Paper Assignment #1**

For each paper assignment, you will be given a topic. You will then write a one-page opinion piece, and a one-page design for an experiment to test your ideas. Subsequently, you will read a short section from the textbook and two journal articles on the topic. You will then write a 4-6 page paper in which you summarize and evaluate the research described in the journal articles, discuss the differences between the research methods you proposed and those used in the articles, and discuss the differences between your initial opinion and the research findings.

Each paper will be worth 100 points. Primarily, I will be grading the assignment based on the accuracy and thoughtfulness of your answers. However, I will also consider grammar, punctuation, spelling, and proper citation of sources. You should use the feedback you receive on the first paper to help you improve for the second paper.

**Topic #1: Does cell phone use impair driving?**

**Part 1**

Important: Please do not read the assigned articles before completing Part 1.

1. Write an opinion piece. Do you think that using a cell phone whilst driving is dangerous? Support your opinion with reasons for your belief. (1 page)
2. How would you test the claim that cell phone use whilst driving is dangerous? Describe how you might conduct a research study to answer this research question. (1 page)

**There will not be a separate due date for Part 1. However, you will find the assignment easier to manage if you complete Part 1 before moving on to Part 2.**

After you have written your opinion piece and designed a research study, read the following passage from the textbook to introduce yourself to the topic:

**Part 2**

Read the following empirical journal articles:

Strayer, D. L. & Johnston, W. A. (2001) Driven to distraction: Dual-task studies of simulated driving and conversing on a cellular telephone. *Psychological Science, 12*, 462-466.

Strayer, D. L. & Drews, F. A. (2007) Cell-phone–induced driver distraction. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 16,* 128-131.

\* Use the skills you learned in the library session to access the articles. You may also search for other articles on the topic if you wish, and refer to these in your paper. At a minimum, you must read the two journal articles listed above.

Write 4-6 pages in which you:

* 1. Summarize the research presented in the 2 assigned journal articles
  2. Evaluate the research presented in the 2 journal articles.
  3. Discuss the differences between the research methods you proposed and those used in the 2 articles.
  4. Discuss the differences between your initial opinion and the findings from the research presented in the 2 articles.

**Format:**

1. The entire paper (i.e., parts 1 and 2 together) should be 6-8 pages, typed and double- spaced, with 1-inch margins. Give your paper a title.

2. Ensure that Part 1 of your paper covers A-B above, and that Part 2 of your paper covers points a-d listed above.

3. Referencing: Be sure to cite your references. Cite where you got your information within the body of the paper. **Do not use direct quotes**. You are to use the standard APA reference form within the body of the paper (i.e., cite a source using the author’s last name and the year the article was published).

Examples:

Young (2006) claims that drug addiction may begin as a voluntary behavior, but may end up as a physiological dependency.

Drug addiction is thought to begin as voluntary (Young, 2006).

**A note on plagiarism**

Your answers must reflect your own writing. Be very careful not to commit plagiarism. Plagiarism is claiming someone else’s work as your own. In order to avoid plagiarism, you MUST CITE YOUR SOURCES. This means that when you discuss another person’s work, you have to give them credit. In psychology, this means that after you discuss someone else’s work, you need to list their last name(s) and the year that the paper or book that they wrote was published in parentheses. You will see numerous examples of this in the articles that you read.

However, it is important to keep in mind that although citing sources can help you avoid plagiarism, you must also be careful not to simply restate or reword sentences from the articles to include in your paper. This is also plagiarism. A good rule of thumb is not to use more than 5 words in order from a particular article. **DO NOT USE DIRECT QUOTES IN YOUR PAPER EVEN IF YOU CITE THE AUTHOR.** It is important for you, as a psychology major, to develop the skill of summarizing research articles in your own words. **If you have a question about what constitutes plagiarism or how to cite sources, please see me**. Plagiarized assignments will receive a grade of ‘F.’

For each paper assignment, you will be given a topic. You will then write a one-page opinion piece, and a one-page design for an experiment to test your ideas. Subsequently, you will read a short section from the textbook and two journal articles on the topic. You will then write a 4-6 page paper in which you summarize and evaluate the research described in the journal articles, discuss the differences between the research methods you proposed and those used in the articles, and discuss the differences between your initial opinion and the research findings.

Each paper will be worth 150 points. Primarily, I will be grading the assignment based on the accuracy and thoughtfulness of your answers. However, I will also consider grammar, punctuation, spelling, and proper citation of sources. You should use the feedback you receive on the first paper to help you improve for the second paper.

**Topic #2: Does racial diversity affect the complexity of our thinking?**

**Part 1**

Important: Please do not read the assigned articles in Part 2 before completing Part 1.

1. Write an opinion piece. Do you think that discussing an issue or solving a problem in a group with racially diverse members will lead to more sophisticated thinking about the issue/problem? Support your opinion with reasons for your belief. (1 page)
2. How would you test the claim that group diversity leads to better thinking? Describe how you might conduct an experimental research study to answer this research question. (1 page)

**There will not be a separate due date for Part 1. However, you will find the assignment easier to manage if you complete Part 1 before moving on to Part 2.**

**Part 2**

Now read the following 2 empirical journal articles:

Antonio, A. L., Chang, M. J., Hakuta, K., Kenny, D. A., Levin, S. L., & Milem, J. F. (2004). Effects of racial diversity on complex thinking in college students. *Psychological Science, 15*, 507-510.

Sommers, S. R., Warpa, L. S., & Mahoneya, C. C. (2008). Cognitive effects of racial diversity: White individuals’ information processing in heterogeneous groups. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 44*, 1129-1136.

Use the skills you learned in the library session to access the articles. You may also search for other articles on the topic if you wish, and refer to these in your paper. At a minimum, you must read the two journal articles listed above.

Write a 4-6 pages in which you:

* 1. Summarize the research presented in the articles.
  2. Evaluate the research presented in the articles.
  3. Discuss the differences between the research methods you proposed and those used in the articles.
  4. Discuss the differences between your initial opinion and the findings from the research presented in the articles.

**Format:**

1. The entire paper (i.e., parts 1 and 2 plus self assessment-see below) should be 7-9 pages, typed and double- spaced, with 1-inch margins. Give your paper a title.

2. Ensure that Part 1 of your paper covers A-B above, and that Part 2 of your paper covers points a-d listed above.

3. Referencing: Be sure to cite your references. Cite where you got your information within the body of the paper. **Do not use direct quotes**. You are to use the standard APA reference form within the body of the paper (i.e., cite a source using the author’s last name and the year the article was published).

Examples:

Antonio et al. (2004) randomly assigned participants to one of four groups.

The participants demonstrated more complex thinking when assigned to a group with diverse members (Antonio et al., 2004).

Write an additional page in which you describe how the feedback given to you on your previous paper has affected how you improved your current paper. What have you done differently? What have you kept the same?

Please return your first paper alongside this paper for comparison purposes.

Checklist:

\_\_\_ One page opinion piece

\_\_\_ One page study proposal

\_\_\_ 4-6 pages covering points a-d.

\_\_\_ One page reflection on how you improved your second paper based on feedback on your first paper

\_\_\_ Your original paper on cell phones (Both will be returned to you)

**A note on plagiarism**

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However, it is important to keep in mind that although citing sources can help you avoid plagiarism, you must also be careful not to simply restate or reword sentences from the articles to include in your paper. This is also plagiarism. A good rule of thumb is not to use more than 5 words in order from a particular article. **DO NOT USE DIRECT QUOTES IN YOUR PAPER EVEN IF YOU CITE THE AUTHOR.** It is important for you, as a psychology major, to develop the skill of summarizing research articles in your own words. **If you have a question about what constitutes plagiarism or how to cite sources, please see me**. Plagiarized assignments will receive a grade of ‘F.’