PSYC 2301 Core Essay: Peer-Reviewed Research vs. Popular Press

A vast amount of resources are available to access the world of psychology. One credible source of information for an academic audience exists in peer-reviewed research. Peer-reviewed publications or scholarly publications are written, reviewed, and approved by the experts in a particular field of psychology. One can be assured of their scientific quality (i.e., application of the scientific method). Researchers advance the field of psychology by asking meaningful research questions, drawing conclusions, making implications for positive change, and need for future studies, all through experimentation. Scholarly articles, past and the most recent, can be accessed through the ACC Library database.

Non-scholarly articles or articles from the popular press are another resource used to learn about psychology. However, research findings are usually synthesized to inform, educate and even entertain the general public.

Hence, the purpose of this 2-3 page essay assignment provides students the opportunity to use the ACC Library database to access a peer-reviewed article as well as explore psychology articles in the popular press. Additionally, students will read and think critically about each source, summarize information, and apply APA 7th ed formatting guidelines.

This is a major essay assignment and serves as **an exam** grade. Please read and follow directions, carefully!

Part 1: Locate a peer-reviewed article using the ACC Library database. Choose a topic in psychology or neuroscience that interests you or that you find relatable. Select one article. The article must be a correlational or experimental study, *not* a case study, *not* a literature review, *not* a meta-analysis, and *not* descriptive research. The article must have each of the following sections: Introduction, Method, Results, Discussion or Conclusion. The Librarian or your instructor should confirm that the article meets the criteria.

- In the POD, click Library
- Under Research Tools, click "The EBSCO Databases via Texshare"
- Academic Search Complete, select Alvin Community College, password Tx77511
- Before entering search terms, select the following filters:
    - Full-text
    - Number of pages – less than 20
    - Scholarly peer-reviewed journals
    - Start year 2011 & End year 2021

Part 2: Keeping with the same topic, select one article from the popular press. Use the links below to conduct your search:

- Psychology Today https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/news
- Time https://time.com/tag/psychology/
- Science Today: Psychology News https://www.sciencedaily.com/news/mind_brain/psychology/
- US News Psychology https://www.usnews.com/topics/subjects/psychology
- New York Times https://www.nytimes.com/topic/subject/psychology-and-psychologists

Part 3: Familiarize yourself with American Psychological Association (APA) 7th edition student paper formatting. What is it? Where did it come from? https://apastyle.apa.org/about-apa-style There are many APA tutorials on YouTube. Be sure that APA 7th ed is included in the search. The most reliable source for APA help is https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines . You will use APA format to compose your essay. A sample student paper is found at

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/apa_sample_paper.html

Part 4: Compose your essay according to the following guidelines:

Paragraph 1 –

What prompted your personal interest in this topic?

Refer to the scholarly article. Briefly introduce the topic based on research presented in the Introduction. What was the purpose of the study? Explain the hypothesis / hypotheses in your own words? Remember, even when paraphrasing, an in-text citation is required!

Paragraph 2 –

Summarize the Method section of the article. Aim to use your own words. There is a 10-word limit for quoting directly. Be sure to include the following information:

Sample size (how many participants were included in the study)?

General participant information (age, gender, ethnicity, where were they recruited from, etc)?

Did participants receive informed consent?

Describe the control and experimental / treatment groups.

Paragraph 3 –

Examine the Discussion / Conclusion section of the scholarly article. What was the outcome of the study? Were the hypotheses supported or not? Perhaps one or some of the hypotheses were supported, but not all. Explain. What limitations did the author(s) mention about the study? In what way can this research benefit others (this may be the author's or your own ideas or a combination – in-text citations help readers tease apart your own ideas from the author's).

Paragraph 4 –

Summarize the non-scholarly article. There is a 10-word limit for quoting directly.

Paragraph 5 –

Describe similarities and differences between the scholarly and non-scholarly article.

Paragraph 6 -

Which article did you enjoy reading, the most? Why?

For what purposes might you recommend each article to someone else?

Did the articles motivate you to continue learning about the topic?

How could you get involved to promote awareness of your topic? Share your ideas.

Before submitting your essay:

- Have you proofread for casing, grammar, spelling errors and indented each new paragraph?
- Is the essay double spaced with one-inch margins all-around? Is the font APA 7th ed. approved?

- Is there a reference to align with each in-text citation and vice versa?
- The ACC Learning Lab is here to help with writing / proofing your essay. Email directly for appointment: LearningLab@alvincollege.edu Remember to schedule in advance, avoid waiting until the last minute.

Grading Rubric

Content expectations:

Paragraph 1 _____ (10%)

Paragraph 2_____ (10%)

Paragraph 3 _____ (10%)

Paragraph 4 _____ (10%)

Paragraph 5 _____ (10%)

Paragraph 6 _____ (10%)

APA formatting:

Title page _____ (10%)

References page _____ (10%)

In-text citations _____ (10%)

In-text citations align with References & vice versa _____ (10%)

Deductions

Essay does not meet the 2-3 pages in length _____ (-20%)

More than 3 casing, grammar, or spelling errors _____ (-15%)

Quotations exceed the word limit _____ (-10%)

Essay includes only one source _____ (-50%)

Comments: