2018

HONORS CAPSTONE

LITERARURE REVIEW ASSIGNMENT

WITH MENOTRS

MENTOR’S SIGNATURE:

I have reviewed and discussed this with the student.

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Original academic writing aims to contribute to the body of expert knowledge in one or more academic fields. A scholar is an expert who cares about originality because s/he wants to improve and expand the work that others have already done. This means an expert must be familiar with the existing work in the relevant field(s).

In this assignment, you will work with your mentor to devise an appropriate research approach that will allow you (later) to map out the existing scholarly landscape around your topic of choice. The goal here is not quantity per se (x number of sources) but rather to develop a solid command of what has—and has not—been discovered or argued about your broad topic and why your particular topic has significance.

Although you will certainly be doing research in the library databases shortly, at this initial stage you will simply be crafting a research approach that you will then actually implement in the next stage.

STEP 1: Read the Capstone Research Guide

The research guide contains VERY useful explanations, tailored to the capstone experience, about how to make the most of your research time and most efficiently use the library databases. Moreover, you will be quizzed on this details of this guide in your 401 class.

STEP 2: Describe your research topic (30% of HW grade)

In 3 – 11 sentences of carefully written prose, describe the broad topic that you want to investigate.

STEP 2: Documenting Your Search Approach (70% of HW grade)

In this part of the assignment, you will make clear how you went about finding relevant scholarship.

Remember all the sources you use should be academic–scholarly journals and credible reports

This part of your assignment should identify the search engines and portals you use, and explain what you have found to be the most useful or important databases for the topic

So, first, write a paragraph that explains your choice of both database and search terms. Why did you choose the database(s) your chose given your topic? Which search terms and Boolean Limiters do you plan to use and why?

DO NOT USE “ONESEARCH” WHEN DOING THIS RESEARCH

Include a [table](https://jjhonorsprogram.commons.gc.cuny.edu/wp-content/blogs.dir/3323/files/2017/09/table_five_questions.docx) in this section in which you specify very precisely how you will go about your searches for relevant scholarly information. Build this table as follows:

Column A: List search portals you will use

Column B: Provide search terms and phrases for each portal, keeping in mind that different search engines will require different search phrases. [Be sure to keep in mind the difference between full-text and subject search](http://www.oit.edu/libraries/help/library-guides/keyword-vs-subject) terms

Column C: [Define Boolean limiters,](http://lib.colostate.edu/tutorials/boolean.html)phrases, and other search strategies you used so that each term and portal combination identified at least 50 and no than 100 articles. (In short, how did you keep each search confined to the most relevant articles?) If you find your search query returns more than 100 articles, likely you have not narrowed your search sufficiently.

IF YOU FIND YOU HAVE LESS THAN 50 ARTICLES, EXPLAIN IN A PARAGRAPH OF WRITING HOW AND WHY YOU FEEL YOU HAVE EXHAUSTED ALL POSSIBLE AVENUES OF RESEARCH IN THE LIBRARY’S FINDING AIDS.

Column D: For this step of the process you do not need to list your articles retrieved. BUT YOU WILL BE DOING SO SOON, ONCE YOUR MENTOR HAS PROVIDED FEEDBACK ON YOUR RESEARCH APPROACH

Below is an example of a row from such a table. The portal in question is a database of academic articles available through John Jay Library. Keep in mind that you are looking for academic sources, so not all databases are equally valuable. Some databases, such as EBSCO Complete, will contain both scholarly (peer-reviewed) and non-scholarly sources (e.g., magazines and newspapers). Google will provide plenty of information, but little of it will be academic; Google Scholar, on the other hand, is limited to academic books and articles.

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| A. Portal | B. Search Terms and Phrases | C. Boolean Limiters | D. Articles Retrieved |
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| Anthropology AND urban AND NYC OR Chicago | [Article citation][Article citation][Article citation][Article citation][Article citation][Article citation] |
| NYC AND poverty AND gender | [Article citation][Article citation][Article citation] |