

Developing a hypothetical research study through scaffolding:
An approach used in a graduate
Clinical Mental Health Counseling research course

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“Why do I have to take a
“I took research once, it's so
research hates research, want to do
confusing.”
is counsel people?”

Background and Rationale

GOAL: Develop a final research assignment that doesn't suck



Bonus for Faculty:
spend less time
grading!

What prompted this assignment change?

1. move away from the traditional, daunting, 15-page research paper.
2. address AI concerns experienced in higher education.
3. mentor students in the development of a hypothetical research study.

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Course Structure:

- Private University, South Florida
- CACREP, CMHC Graduate Program
- 16-week Course
 - Synchronous, online
 - In-person

Assignment Details and Instructions

Academic Research Poster

Research Design Project/Research Poster:

This research project will be the culmination of all your work completed throughout the semester. Throughout the course you will have the opportunity to explore the literature and decide on a *hypothetical*, ethical, and realistic research study you would potentially be interested in conducting. It is recommended to complete all assignments with this final paper in mind as to not duplicate your efforts and to receive feedback throughout the semester on the mini-assignments. Please review the [Lynn Library](https://lynn-library.libguides.com/Academic_Posters/Sample_Posters)  (https://lynn-library.libguides.com/Academic_Posters/Sample_Posters) for additional information on developing research posters, and review various [sample templates](https://lynn-library.libguides.com/Academic_Posters/Lynn_Sample_Templates)  (https://lynn-library.libguides.com/Academic_Posters/Lynn_Sample_Templates). This final project has two parts and should include the following:

Part 1: Research Poster (must be submitted as a pdf)

- **APA Title Line** with research project title, name of researcher, university
- **Introduction/Background:** This is an introduction to the research topic, include brief literature support
 - **Problem Statement:** Concise sentence that describes the problem
- **Literature Review:** Presents what is known about the topic by summarizing and synthesizing current

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Weekly Scaffolded Assignments:

- Topic Idea Selection
- Literature Review (weekly articles)
- Variable Selection
- Participants
- Methods (Qual / Quant)
- Instruments
- Data Analysis

Student Feedback:

Sought feedback during last class discussion and via an anonymous form

- “...the fact that the research was not "real", felt confusing sometimes.”
- “I preferred the research project over a research paper. I was able to be creative and choose my research topic.”
- “so much better than a research paper, it was different and an important skill to know for the future as well.”
- “it gave me the opportunity to be creative.”

What's Next?

What did I learn?

- Students...
 - enjoyed being creative and exploring a topic in which they were interested.
 - have difficulty thinking in the abstract/hypothetical.
 - preferred to have a poster, rather than a 15-page research paper.

Next Steps...

- Try it again!
- Dedicate more time to teaching how to develop an academic research poster.
 - Providing examples didn't suffice.
- Reiterate this is a hypothetical research
 - perhaps change it to a proposal?

Questions and Discussion

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