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First Year Seminar Honors 100

Research Essay

Research Leads to New Beginnings

 When people think of the word research many think of a scientist or someone of high intelligence, but anyone can do research. Research can vary from proving a theory to finding new information about something that sounds interesting to you. Research is everywhere and with today’s technology it makes research even more accessible. This unit included what I learned about research, both information literacy and information synthesis, and lastly what my future holds with research.

 In this past unit we discussed and read a lot about research and how it is beneficial. Research has many key components to it including a hypothesis/question, background information, test (survey/experiment), analyze data, and conclusion/report. In *On Being a Scientist: A Guide to Responsible Conduct in Research: Third Edition* by the Committee on Science, Engineering, and Public Policy, it says that researchers need to learn how to properly use data in order to conduct good research. This necessarily means that the research needs to meet certain standards to be considered ethical. These standards are being honest, consent (usually through a IRB), and respect for others through giving credit and citing sources where needed.

Research can be very beneficial in many ways. One way is that research is beneficial is because other people’s research can be used as background information for someone else’s research or experiment. Also doing the same research as someone else the two people can compare data and try and come up with a analysis of the data together in collaboration. Also research is beneficial for the basic fact of learning something new, the feeling of accomplishment and spreading those findings to other people.

People who are information literate according to Patricia Seen Breivik are people who know and can search for certain information they are looking for and can pick out the certain information that addresses a certain problem or issue. In every research study done there needs to be prior research on the topic and being able to swift through information and pick out key statements or information that addresses the topic can be very challenging but with practice and time it gets to be easier. Information synthesis correlates with information literacy in a way that information synthesis gathers this information and evaluates it to put it in a form that can be presentable. For example information literacy and information synthesis could be forming a research paper, gathering prior knowledge, evaluate, and present it in the final form of a paper. Gathering research and knowing how to present it has been helpful for me in the past and will in my future.

In the future I plan on doing undergraduate research for one of my psychology professors, Dr. Panahon. I was introduced to this opportunity by Dr. Panahon but here at MSU we have the URC or the Undergraduate Research Center. The URC helps students get connected on campus to professors or apply for grants to fund their research projects. These research opportunities will look great on graduate school applications as well on a job resume. These research opportunities can set me apart from other candidates who have the same grades or a similar background. As well, these research opportunities can expand and challenge my academic success by learning something new and learning different skills along the way.

 In conclusion, research is very important and is used throughout others’ lives as well as my own. Through this unit I expanded my knowledge about research, information literacy as well as information synthesis and found out what my future may potentially hold with research. I am not a scientist nor do I tend to be one, but anywhere you may go in life research is always present.

Works Cited

Breivik, Patricia Senn, “Century Learning and Information Literacy.” *Taylor and Francis,* vol. 37, no. 2, Apr.2005, pp. 20-27., www.jstor.org/stable/40178010

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