

Infusing Undergraduate Research in Social Sciences/Criminal Justice

I. Infusing Undergraduate Research in Social Sciences/Criminal Justice.

- a. Rudes, D. S., Portillo, S., Sloas, L. B., & Hutzell, K. (2014). Students as scholars & writers: Teaching & assessing undergraduate writing in a capstone course. *Journal of Criminal Justice Education*, 25(1), 54-68.
 - i. This paper presents an innovative approach for engaging and assessing undergraduate students in the writing process. Through an iterative, intensive course design that includes both in-classroom and online teaching, our Capstone course integrates writing instruction as students learn a new topic, gather and analyze data, and write a research paper complete with an introduction, literature review, findings section, and discussion/conclusion. Based on five semesters of observations, survey data, content analysis, and student reflective writing, we discuss the processes students undergo while learning to research and write as social science scholars. We find student outcomes beyond what we initially expected.
- b. Portillo, S., Rudes, D. S., Sloas, L. B., Hutzell, K., & Salamoun, P. (2013). Students as scholars: Integrating independent research into undergraduate education. *Journal of Criminal Justice Education*, 24(1), 68-96.
 - i. Undergraduate programs across the country are working to develop students as scholars, integrating independent scholarly experiences into traditional undergraduate classroom environments (see, e.g. George Mason University's Students as Scholars Quality Enhancement Plan; Boston University's Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program; University of Houston's Learning through Discovery; University of Michigan's Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program; etc.). Scholars and universities have touted the benefits of engaging students in research experiences for students as well as faculty. However, there is little empirical work exploring how undergraduate students adapt to their new role as scholars. In this paper, we explore the process of students integrating research into their undergraduate classroom experience. Based on participant observation and pre and postsemester survey data, we discuss the process of students learning as scholars in a capstone Criminology, Law & Society course. We focus on how students gathered and analyzed data and integrated their research experience into their overall learning for the course. We find the process of research reinforces the learning objectives of the course.
- c. Jean, B., & Sloas, L. (2020). The Roles and Responsibilities of the Participating Team Members in Drug Treatment Courts. *FAU Undergraduate Research Journal*, 9, 15-20.
 - i. Drug treatment courts, a concept that began in Miami-Dade County, Florida in 1989, has spread and flourished throughout the United States and several other countries (Winick, 2002). This fast-growing and popular type of problem-solving court focuses on supporting and guiding a participant toward a specific goal, such as living a substance-free life. Drug treatment courts are a vital alternative to the criminal justice system.

1. Research-Based Course Activities

Use a bulleted list to describe specific course activities that can be infused into your undergraduate courses. Use subheadings to indicate the level of research (e.g., exposure, skill-building, intensive). In your description of the course activity, be sure to include sufficient detail so the novel reader is clear about the type of course (e.g., large lecture, lab-based required, elective), and estimated enrollment. Consider including diagrams, flowcharts, etc.

- Skill-building
 - Students will read and take notes on academic articles. A briefing templated will be provided to students to extract pertinent information from the articles (e.g., research question, methods, results, policy implications).
- Skill-building
 - Students will learn the process of qualitative research by practicing interviewing techniques and observations.
- Exposure

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- Students will be exposed to a set of research questions. They will choose one to answer during the course of the semester.
- Intensive
 - Students will learn the process of writing a literature review. In-class discussion and practice will be done. A literature review matrix will be provided to students to help sort components of a literature review. This will assist them in synthesizing information across multiple sources.
- Skill-building
 - Students will learn the process of analyzing qualitative data. An open-coding process will be used of student interview notes and observation notes to develop themes centered around their research question.
- Intensive
 - Students will learn to write the findings section of their research paper. They will be exposed to examples in class and then practice this using an iterative process.

2. Assessing Undergraduate Research and Inquiry Activities

Use a bulleted list to describe how the research-based course activities will be assessed in your course.

3. Skill-building
 - a. Students will read and take notes on academic articles. A briefing template will be provided to students to extract pertinent information from the articles (e.g., research question, methods, results, policy implications).
 - i. will be assessed using a writing lab component to the course.
4. Skill-building
 - a. Students will learn the process of qualitative research by practicing interviewing techniques and observations.
 - i. will be assessed using a writing lab component to the course.
5. Exposure
 - a. Students will be exposed to a set of research questions. They will choose one to answer during the course of the semester.
 - i. will be assessed using a writing lab component to the course.
6. Intensive
 - a. Students will learn the process of writing a literature review. In-class discussion and practice will be done. A literature review matrix will be provided to students to help sort components of a literature review. This will assist them in synthesizing information across multiple sources.
 - i. will be assessed using a writing lab component to the course.
7. Skill-building
 - a. Students will learn the process of analyzing qualitative data. An open-coding process will be used of student interview notes and observation notes to develop themes centered around their research question.
 - i. will be assessed using a writing lab component to the course.
8. Intensive
 - a. Students will learn to write the findings section of their research paper. They will be exposed to examples in class and then practice this using an iterative process.
 - i. will be assessed using a writing lab component to the course.

II. Student Resources

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- a. Denney, A. S., & Tewksbury, R. (2013). How to write a literature review. *Journal of criminal justice education*, 24(2), 218-234.
 - i. Learning how to effectively write a literature review is a critical tool for success for an academic, and perhaps even professional career. Being able to summarize and synthesize prior research pertaining to a certain topic not only demonstrates having a good grasp on available information for a topic, but it also assists in the learning process. Although literature reviews are important for one's academic career, they are often misunderstood and underdeveloped. This article is intended to provide both undergraduate and graduate students in the criminal justice field specifically, and social sciences more generally, skills and perspectives on how to develop and/or strengthen their skills in writing a literature review. Included in this discussion are foci on the structure, process, and art of writing a literature review.

III. Contact Dr. Sloas (lsloas@fau.edu) for additional information about this course/discipline area.