

Reflection

Previous to taking Sociology 345 Social Research and Program Evaluations I did not have many classes that involve research to this degree. I learned various research skills throughout this class that have really changed my academic research process. One of them being while gathering my sources pull quotes and cite them accordingly on my notes. I did that with each of my sources pulling all of the most valuable information and documenting where in the sources it was located to get a strong outline done for my future research paper. Another thing that I learned was the benefit of writing something like we did in chunks and rereading it multiple times to edit it to the final copy. The way our class was set up gave us ample time to do various corrections from rereading our sections of the paper or getting our instructors input on our work.

A huge part of academic research is gathering credible sources for your topic. Before this class that was not my strong suit due to lack of experience and applications in my college career requiring this level of sources. I used the Longwood librarians as a resource to look over my sources and make sure everything was applicable for my project. Before doing this research paper I never utilized that resource and I learned how useful it is to get a professional set of eyes on your sources. Like I stated previously, I also organized all of my sources and the valuable information together with the page numbers to make sure everything got cited correctly and have an easier time putting all my information together.

Throughout research it doesn't always go to plan. One big problem our classes faced was a lack of responses to our surveys. As we learned in our class when researching people there is a risk of no participation. We decided to use what little surveys we received as well as past years data on the relatively same research to find trends and accurate data for our research. I also faced

some issues with finding sources as well as citing them properly. Due to those issues I got a professional look at my sources and citations at the Library.

Throughout this semester and class I have gotten a really good taste of academic research. It really showed me how much time, effort, and persistence it takes to get good research done. I have definitely grown as a researcher through this process. I also really enjoyed seeing something real life and taggable to come out of my hard work. Academic research gives a meaning and purpose to the work you have to do because there is a visible outcome which really helps when spending so much time on something.