HED 612

Final Project Next Steps

**Part 1: Finalize your research question and create analysis versions of X and Y**

1. What is your research question?
2. Why is this research question important for policy and/or practice? [think about an argument that would be compelling for a top journal in \*your\* field]
3. What is your independent variable of interest (X)?
4. What is your dependent variable (Y)?
5. What dataset(s) will you use to answer your research question?
6. What specific “input” variable(s) will you use to create your X variable?
   1. Show output for summary statistics for this variable(s) to confirm that the variable(s) is not suppressed
   2. Show output that will confirm whether or not the variable has missing observations
7. Create an “analysis version” of your X variable
8. What specific “input” variable(s) will you use to create your Y variable?
   1. Show output for summary for this variable(s) to confirm that the variable(s) is not suppressed
   2. Show output that will confirm whether or not the variable has missing observations
9. Create an “analysis version” of your Y variable

**Part 2: Write an outline for your final research paper**

1. Put research question at the top of your outline
2. Outline must not exceed two pages (excluding references)
3. Your outline should have the following major sections: Introduction; literature review; [policy background, optional]; conceptual framework; methods; data and variables; results
   1. Note: you may omit a section if that section is not used in your field (e.g., “conceptual frameworks” not common in psychology)
4. For each major section, you outline should give me a sense of what you are trying to accomplish and give me a sense of your strategy for accomplishing this
   1. Can’t just say something generic like “set the hook”; rather, state your strategy for how you are going to set the hook
   2. No need for complete sentences
5. Can use indentation to show sub-headings within sections
6. Section on lit review should provide at least five references of empirical research published in a journal
7. Outline doesn’t need to be very detailed; I am more interested in the overall logic and structure of your paper

**Part 3: Write a draft of your introduction and literature review**

1. I obviously don’t expect you to have a fully developed literature review for this paper [there’s not enough time] but make an attempt to understand what literature you should be drawing from and how does your study make a contribution to this literature
2. If you have the time, write a draft of your conceptual framework. If not, skip it and only write up a paragraph on what theories/concepts you would draw on to investigate your research question.

**Part 4: Write a draft of methods section and create up at least 3 analysis version “control variables”**

1. Follow empirical strategy of Cabrera, Milem, Jaquette, and Marx (2004)
   1. Explain the “golden standard” of program evaluation research
   2. Explain why that’s not possible
      1. Hint: Use the “counterfactual” concept (see lecture 1)
   3. Explain Omitted Variable Bias

**Part 5: Write a draft of your results section**

1. Include a table showing descriptive statistics for all variables used in your regression
2. Include a table showing regression results
   1. Use stargazer to produce “standard” formatted regression results