

# ***BE THE EXPERT ON YOUR RESEARCH TOPIC***

## ***PART 2: WRITING A LITERATURE REVIEW***

**DUE: JUNE 10, 2016 AT 11:59 PM**

### **SUBMISSION ON BLACKBOARD**

Turn in your Literature Review document (as either a Word or pdf file type) to your SURF GA via Blackboard. Use the file name structure **LastName\_FirstName\_LitReview**. Your SURF GA will be evaluating the quality and completeness of your literature review.

### **PURPOSE**

Your literature review is all about summarizing the relevant previous work (which you found last week for *Part 1: Conducting a Literature Search*), to give a foundation to your research project. This also helps build your credibility for your research area, and is a key step in becoming an expert for your topic (in addition to doing the research project itself). Keep in mind that what you write in this review will be a component of your final research paper (due at the end of SURF).

Three examples of literature reviews are available on Blackboard, via the Assignments, Seminars, and Activities page. Click on the Literature Review link and the example literature reviews can be found in the Helpful Materials folder, along with complete copies of the journal papers from which the literature review examples were derived. The Helpful Materials folder also contains some supplemental presentation slides that may help you write your literature review.

### **INSTRUCTIONS**

#### **Task 1: Write your Literature Review**

In 500 words (minimum), discuss your **10** articles (from your literature search last week) using the general structure below. Be sure to **use in-text citations throughout** your literature review. You may copy a format shown in one of the literature review examples (see the Helpful Materials folder on Blackboard), or another format from any professional journal of your choice. You should have an in-text citation for all of your references (at least 10). Additionally, every in-text citation will also have a corresponding full citation listed in a “References” section (which you will include below your literature review), using a professional format consistent with your in-text citations.

Overview:

- Briefly introduce your research topic and what will be explored in your project.  
Note: This is called the “Problem Statement,” and will be discussed in more detail in our Abstract Workshop later on in the program.

Body:

- State the history and development of previous studies that your work builds from

- Discuss any alternative solutions or methods (to the same or similar problem that your research aims to solve)
- Discuss any other aspects of previous studies that you find relevant to your research
- Your literature review must *tell a story*. To help do this, organize your discussion topically, and in chronological order (or as close to it as you can get). You have quite a bit of freedom in your choice of organization of the previous work. The only strict criteria are that you're discussion flows in a logical manor, and reads like a story (as if you were explaining to someone in person about all of the past related work done on your research topic). Some journals allow you to write in the first person (e.g. using "we" and "our"), but otherwise your writing style should be formal. Again, defer to a professional format of your choice (consistent with your chosen citation format).
- Use in-text citations everywhere! All statements that refer to previous work should be followed by an in-text citation. Since this is the main content of the literature review, in-text citations should be found frequently and throughout your review.

#### Conclusion:

- Summarize and highlight the importance of and/or need for your research (i.e. what is the significance of your project, what gap(s) in previous work does your project aim to fill, and/or how does your project contribute something new to the field that hasn't already been done?)

#### References:

- Include a reference section below your literature review. This section is a listing of the full citation for each of your 10 (or more) references.
- All references listed in the reference section should also have an in-text citation somewhere in the literature review.
- Use a format from a journal of your choice (but it should be consistent with the journal format used for your in-text citations). You may follow one of the formats from the provided literature review examples (see the Helpful Materials folder on Blackboard).

### **Task 2: Mentor Check**

Have your graduate mentor and/or faculty advisor read the "Overview" portion (likely found in the first paragraph) of your literature review. Have them check the content and verify that your understanding of your project is correct. (It's very important to catch any misunderstandings early on!)

You should also discuss any research ideas you have at this point with your graduate mentor or faculty adviser. Based on what you've read for your literature review, what are **your** ideas regarding what research you could do to contribute something new to the field? (I.e. in addition to what you have already been asked to do by your adviser, what do **you** think you could do for your project? Are there other gaps in previous work that your project could fill?) This is your chance to bring your own ideas into the goals of your research project, and you should discuss these ideas with your faculty adviser or graduate mentor. If your mentors agree to your suggestions, be sure to include any additions made to your project in your literature review.

**As part of your literature review document that you will be submitting on Blackboard, include a summary of the feedback that your mentor gives you.** Include this information below your responses for Task 1 in a section titled "Mentor Check".