

Progressive
Assignment:
Research
Proposal



John Gerring's
Homily on Finding
a Topic for a Social
Science Research
Project

Study the tradition

Begin where you are

Get off your home turf

Play with ideas

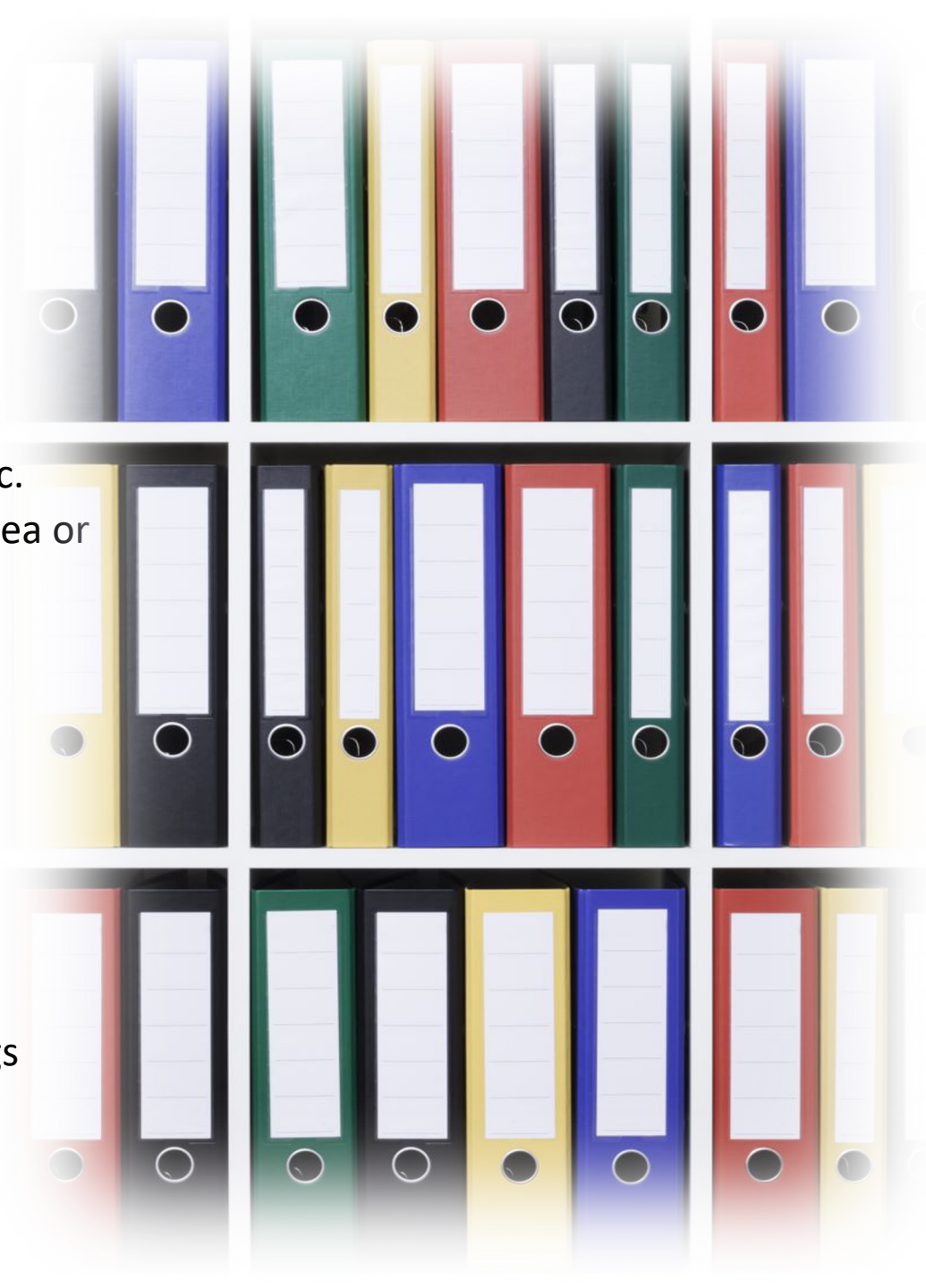
Practice dis-belief

Observe empathetically

Think ahead

Things Good Research Proposals Have

- Begin with existing research or findings (properly cited)
 - For academic (scientific) studies, these should be in journals or appropriate places
 - For policy studies, should be based on policy findings, statistics, etc.
 - For other studies, should be based on some sort of a number or idea or observation
- Explain importance of what you are doing
 - Why should we care?
 - Why does it matter?
- Explain implications
 - How could your data be used
 - What would we know (that we currently don't know) if the findings come out a certain way
 - What can we do based on your study? (Next steps)



Understanding Hypotheses

Hypotheses

- **Hypothesis:** a tentative assumption made in order to draw out and test its logical or [empirical](#) consequences
- [From Merriam-Webster Dictionary]

Relationships Between Variables

- Directional Relationships
 - Related, but we don't know what direction
 - Positive [An increase in A leads to an increase in B]
 - Negative [An increase in A leads to a decrease in B]
- Not related
- Causation vs Correlation

More Specifically

- **Falsifiable.**
- Hypotheses must be **internally consistent**, that is that they must be proving what they claim to be proving and must not contain any logical or analytical contradiction
- Hypotheses must have **clearly defined outcomes** (dependent variables) that are both dependent and vary based on the dependent variable.
- Hypotheses must be **general** and should aim to explain as much as possible with as little as possible. As such, hypotheses should have as few exceptions as possible and should not rely on amorphous concepts like 'national interest.'
- Hypotheses must be **empirical statements** that are propositions about relationships that exist in the real world.
- Hypotheses must be **plausible** (there must be a logical reason why they might be true) and should be specific (the relationship between variables must be expressed as explicitly as possible) and directional.

Hypothesis Testing in Research

- We develop hypotheses because they are plausible, and usually based on previous research.
- We don't believe, or accept hypotheses, until there is strong evidence that it is true
 - This is analogous to the US legal system:
 - Presumption of innocence
 - Need to be convinced beyond reasonable doubt

The Null Hypothesis

- We specifically design a null hypothesis to contrast with our “working” or “research” hypothesis.
- Null hypothesis: Generally “no difference” or the opposite of what we are trying to prove.

A large crowd of stylized human figures in various colors (dark blue, brown, light blue) is shown. The central figure is light blue and has its arms raised, standing out from the rest of the crowd. The text "Group Activity" is overlaid in white on the central figure.

Group Activity

Groups

- **Group 1: Can Apple's \$3,499 Vision Pro Headset Win Over Wary Consumers? Company's first new product in nearly a decade receives pushback from some app developers [Wall Street Journal]**
- **Group 2: Some Republicans Fear Taylor Swift Could Influence the Election for Biden [USA Today]**
- **Group 3: Will Lawmakers Really Act to Protect Children Online? [New York Times]**
- **Group 4: HUHS Removes Mental Health Care Visit Limits for Student Health [The Crimson]**



TECHNOLOGY

Can Apple's \$3,499 Vision Pro Headset Win Over Wary Consumers?

Company's first new product in nearly a decade receives pushback from some app developers

By [Aaron Tilley](#) [Follow](#)

Updated Jan. 30, 2024 at 12:57 pm ET



Resize



211



Gift unlocked article



Listen (6 min)



Group 1

Apple's Vision Pro sold out after going up for preorder earlier this month. PHOTO: PHILIP PACHECO/BLOOMBERG NEWS

Some Republicans fear Taylor Swift could influence the election for Biden. Here's why.



Trevor Hughes
USA TODAY

Published 7:48 a.m. ET Feb. 1, 2024 | Updated 10:30 a.m. ET Feb. 1, 2024



Conspiracy theories about Taylor Swift and the Super Bowl captivate conservative America

Pop star Taylor Swift, who has encouraged her fans to vote for Democrats, has been the focus of right-wing conspiracies.

Group 2

Will Lawmakers Really Act to Protect Children Online? Some Say Yes.

After senators grilled the leaders of Meta, TikTok, X and others, there may be momentum to pass rules to safeguard the internet's youngest users, some said.

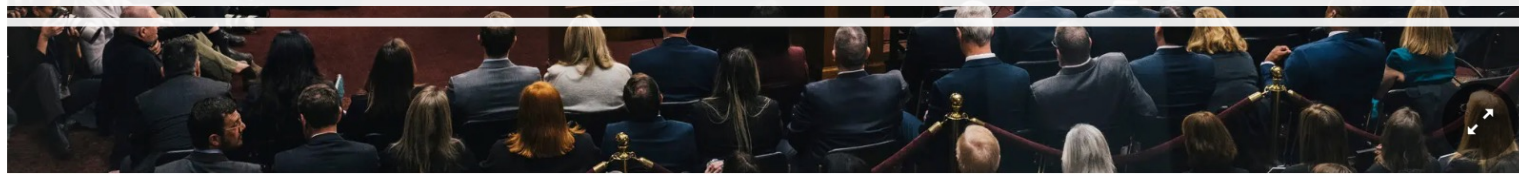
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Group 3



HUHS Removes Mental Health Care Visit Limits for Student Health



Harvard University Health Services announced it would remove visit limits for outpatient mental health care under the University's student health insurance plan. By Jennifer Z. Liang

By Alex Chou and Camilla J. Martinez, Crimson Staff Writers
8 hours ago

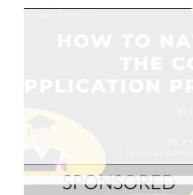
Group 4

Harvard University Health Services announced on Monday it would remove visit limits for outpatient mental health care and medical consultations under Harvard's student health insurance plan.

MOST READ

1. Top Harvard Diversity Officer Sherri Charleston Faces Plagiarism Allegations
2. Billionaire Megadonor Ken Griffin Says He Will Stop Donations to Harvard
3. Former Harvard President Faust Supports Disqualifying Trump From Colorado Ballot in SCOTUS Amicus Brief
4. Artist Profile: Brandon Sanderson on Fan Theories, 'Wind and Truth,' and Building His Fantasy Empire
5. Harvard Should Step in Before Its Next Student Financial Scandal

FROM OUR ADVERTISERS



THE CRIMSON BRAND STUDIO
How to Navigate the College Application Process with MR. MBA

In this article, Val Micro, Mr. MBA® will break down the often stressful and challenging college application process and provide professional, practical advice



HARVARD SUMMER SCHOOL

Group Activity

- A. What are research questions suggested by this reading?
- B. What are a few ideas or hypotheses that you might have based on this reading or other general things you may know
- C. What are a few different populations you might study to answer the questions