

“Research Says...”

(To be said in the same voice as “Survey says...” from the popular game show Family Feud)

Exercise is such a relatable topic that it has taken the internet by storm. Many individuals, including non-experts, host “fitspo” blogs and provide advice and recommendations for health that may not be grounded in science.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. wrote in his essay “The Purpose of Education” for the campus newspaper Maroon Tiger in 1947:

“Education must enable one to sift and weigh evidence, to discern the truth from the false, the real from the unreal, and the facts from the fiction. The function of education, therefore, is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. [...] Intelligence plus character—that is the goal of true education.”

(http://kingencyclopedia.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/documentsentry/doc_470200_000.1.html)

Following Dr. King’s lead, one of my goals for you in this course is to be able to critique misconceptions and literature in the field of exercise by using evidence (SLO4). I want you to be able to contribute to **evidence-based discussions** on different trends in exercise, to spread fact rather than fiction. It often takes a while for science to reach the general public, and when it does, it’s often misconstrued, and conclusions are drawn that are beyond the scope of the original study. Your goal is to critically review the literature and spread science to the general public.

For this assignment, you will prepare one written blog post for our course site

(<http://sites.udel.edu/coe-engex/>). **In addition, you will prepare 3 quiz questions/answers related to your post.**

This assignment is worth 10% of your final course grade.

Blog Post

Partners are pre-assigned. You and your partner will sign up for one topic from the provided list. Topics may not be duplicated. If you have an idea for a topic that is not on the list, you may contact Professor Rooney for approval. You will also sign up for a due date, which will be spread throughout the semester. Blog posts will be due Tuesday evenings by 11:59pm.

Format

Title: Come up with a descriptive title (e.g., NOT “Research Assignment”). Grab your audience’s interest, like a headline. This is the first way you will hook your reader.

The Issue: Begin your post by laying out the issue. One effective way to do this may be to find internet sources describing opposing viewpoints of the topic. Describe both sides of the story using lay-person language. One of the challenging aspects of this assignment is to focus your broad topic to a specific question or debated topic. Don’t try to cover everything that’s known about your broad topic; instead, be explicit in what you choose to address.

The Evidence: Then, it’s time to discuss the hard facts, the scientific evidence. Find multiple, peer-reviewed journal articles on the topic. Summarize the findings of these articles. Critique the limitations of the literature. Describe the facts, what the data say, not the opinions of the authors. Question and

challenge the assumptions. Interpret the context and relevance of the research to your specific question.

The Conclusion: Integrate the facts you learned through the peer-reviewed journal articles. Arrive at a conclusion, which may or may not be limited in scope. Compare your conclusion to the internet sources you found. Explain how prioritized the evidence to arrive at this conclusion.

References: You are expected to cite any work that is not your own. Since this is an online blog post and not a traditional academic paper, use mid-sentence hyperlinks to directly link to the sources. This allows your reader to directly understand the context of your work. Hyperlinks should be within the context of your sentences, not just a URL or a “click here” text. You may link to internet sources, peer-reviewed journal articles (or the abstract in a database like Pubmed), other posts within our course blog, etc. At the end of your post, include a “Recommended Further Reading” works cited list with appropriate formatting and hyperlinks so your reader has an evidence-based reading list to consult; this may include the peer-reviewed resources you hyperlinked in text and other high quality resources you have found. In addition, be sure to only include images that you are allowed to use (e.g., Creative Commons License) and cite appropriately.

Questions: Conclude your post with a couple “Questions to Consider” to facilitate comments and discussion. Make sure these are rich, open-ended, dialogue-fostering questions.

Formatting and Language: Remember, your post is public, and anything public means you have an opportunity to build your brand. You probably want your brand to represent quality, so proofread carefully. You probably also want your brand to represent respect, so check the tone of your post to ensure that it is not diminishing to others. Your goal is not to attack others, but instead to lead an evidence-based discussion.

Category: Mark your post using the category “Research Says...” and tag with relevant keywords.

Submission: Submit a link to your blog post on Canvas.

(Note some details of the blog portion of this assignment were inspired by <http://ds106.us/handbook/success-the-ds106-way/writing-up-assignments/#the-three-parts-of-a-great-ds106-blog-post>)

Quiz Questions

Prepare 3 potential quiz questions with solutions that would be learned through reading your blog post. These may be incorporated on a future quiz. Submit your quiz questions and solutions as a Word document to Canvas.

“Research Says...” Blog Post Rubric

(Adapted from Critical Thinking VALUE Rubric: <http://ctal.udel.edu/files/2013/08/CriticalThinking.pdf>)

	Exemplary [A]	Proficient [B]	Developing [C]	Poor [D]	Missing
Explanation of Issues	Issue/problem to be considered critically is stated clearly and described comprehensively, delivering all relevant information necessary for full understanding. Question or issue is focused. [10]	[8]	[7]	Issue/problem to be considered critically is stated without clarification or description. Question or issue may be broad or vague. [6]	[0]
Evidence	Information is taken from multiple, high quality (including peer-reviewed) sources. Sources are cited appropriately. [10]	[8]	[7]	Information is taken from few or low-quality sources. Sources are cited appropriately. [6]	[0]
Critique of Evidence	Evidence is interpreted and evaluated to develop a comprehensive analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are questioned. Thoroughly (systematically and methodically) analyzes assumptions and limitations of the evidence, carefully evaluating the relevance of contexts when presenting a position. [30]	[26]	[23]	Evidence is provided with minimal interpretation and evaluation. Viewpoints of experts are taken as fact, without question. Shows an emerging, surface-level, awareness of assumptions and limitations of the evidence. Begins to identify some contexts, but does not apply these when presenting a position. [20]	[0]
Conclusions and Related Outcomes (implications and consequences)	Conclusions and related outcomes (consequences and implications) are logical and reflect student's informed evaluation and ability to place evidence and perspectives discussed in priority order. [10]	[8]	[7]	Conclusion is inconsistently tied to some of the information discussed; related outcomes (consequences and implications) are oversimplified. [6]	[0]
Quiz Questions	Provides 3 potential quiz questions with correct solutions that could be found by reading the blog post. [5]				[0]

Note: Poor professionalism (e.g., lack of proofreading, improper tone, missing proper referencing, etc.) in your post will result in up to 10% deduction.