

## Summary and Evaluation Assignments.

In these assignments, you have two main tasks, summary and evaluation. The first, summary, is to describe the research in terms of the language and concepts used in the class. As we progress through the semester, different topics are aligned with different parts of the course content and will be given different emphasis (the experiment is due following the course lectures on experiments; the case study is due following the lectures on case studies,...). However for all of the topics you should spend time presenting:

### **SUMMARY**

- How would you describe the research method, inductive or deductive, ideographic or nomothetic, qualitative or quantitative, paradigm with which the topic is framed?
- What ethical issues confront this research product?
- What political issues confront this research product?
- What pragmatic issues confront this research product?
- What are the variables and how do they relate to the concepts?
- What is the underlying theory or theories that are related to understanding this work of research?
- What are the research hypotheses either explicit or implicit, and how are they formulated in this study?
- How are the observations gathered, and what is the population to which results can be extrapolated?
- What is the sampling frame and sampling logic?
- What is the logic of operationalizing in variables the underlying concepts?
- Are any indexes or scales used? If so describe the nature and logic behind these measures.
- What use is made of statistics in the research?
- What best categorizes the approach (or approaches) used to gather evidence for this study, case study, focus group, panel data, cross section data, other?
- Is there a clear treatment and control strategy? If so, how was it done? If not, why was it not done?

### **EVALUATION**

- Do you think the research methods were appropriate for the question the research was designed to answer?
- What is your evaluation of whether the study satisfactorily addressed the ethical, political, and pragmatic challenges it faced?
- Did the variables selected and presented adequately correspond to the concepts the research was designed to investigate?
- Were the research hypotheses formulated in a clear way, and were they falsifiable?
- Was the sampling frame satisfactory, and are you convinced the results are possible to extrapolate to a larger population?
- Were the constructed variables, indexes, scales done in a convincing manner?

- Was the statistical treatment satisfactory?
- Does the nature of the data gathering approach match the research question?
- Was the treatment and control strategy adequate or if not present, is that defensible?
- If your next job was the assignment given to the authors of the research product, would you use the same approach used in the study in question? If so, why? If not, what would you do differently?

Around 8-10 pages, double spaced, 12 point font for the format. For the relative weight on the two main themes, summary and evaluation, you can move beyond equal weight, but don't get beyond 1/3<sup>rd</sup> / 2/3rds weight in either direction.

I will be grading these based on (1) whether the bulleted points above are addressed and (2) how accurately and well they are addressed. However, you don't need to address each and every point if it does not apply. The assignments differ and some points may not apply to some assignments. Think of the bullet points as the kinds of things to think about when reviewing the research product.