

Some Suggested 10-page Research Paper Topics

This assignment is very broad, and my primary desire is that you find a topic related to public opinion and the course material that really interests you, that you want to find out about. Your proposed paper topic should be turned in to me by **April 10**. The paper itself is due **May 8 (no late papers will be accepted)**.

This is a research paper. Consequently, for topics discussed in class (e.g., the development of political reasoning in children) you are expected to go beyond repeating material covered in class. That means finding additional studies and presenting some new ideas/observations that were not discussed in class.

What I'm looking for in an "A" paper:

The best papers I have received over the years have contained the following:

(1) Public Opinion data (see Lexis/Nexis or IRSS site
http://www2.irss.unc.edu/data_archive/pollsearch.html)

(2) Research articles (about 10) from peer-reviewed scholarly journals (through library research or from databases like PsychInfo). If an article doesn't have a bibliography of sources it draws on, it is not a scholarly article. This means scholarly studies, *not* Time magazine, or just someone's opinions on their web page.

(3) Connections of material in the course to the paper topic (not just a reiteration of course material, but the application of the course material to the new topic with your own thinking).

NOTE: If you don't include a bibliography with your paper, the BEST grade you can receive will be a "C".

Possible topics include:

The development of political reasoning in children

Personality and political attitudes/political ideology

Public opinion toward arms control and defense spending

Public opinion about terrorism

Current research on the Authoritarian Personality

Current opinion on and the sources (e.g., personality, family, belief systems, etc.) for opinion on:

- 1) abortion
- 2) the death penalty
- 3) military intervention
- 4) gun control
- 5) attitudes toward gays
- 6) membership in militia groups

The effect of negative advertising in political campaigns

The polling industry and its relationship to campaigns and governing