

## Talking About Happiness: Interview Project Sequence

For this assignment, you'll draw on published sources and our shared interview data to write 1) an IMRAD report, and 2) a remediation of research for a popular/non-expert audience of your choice. I'll provide more details and resources at each stage, but this sheet provides an overview of the entire sequence so you'll know where we're going.

### Foundation

Based on research from the first unit, we will work as a class to develop a shared bibliography and research questions for the second half of the quarter. This is your chance to “enter the conversation” by conducting primary research. Each student will conduct three interviews, giving us a substantial collection to analyze in different ways. We'll be referring to shared readings for models in terms of method and genres for sharing research with different audiences.

### Step One – Work with Published Sources

In unit one, we honed our skills in finding, evaluating, synthesizing, and integrating sources—you'll want to draw on that as you do additional textual research and write your Literature Review. Start with our shared bibliography and previously assigned texts. You might find you need to go back to the library databases to find more specific sources as you narrow your research question and discuss your findings. In addition to using these sources for your lit review, you'll later consider how you can put them in conversation with your primary research. For example, do your findings from the interviews confirm, extend, or refute the findings from the published source? Can the source provide contextual information (stats on increasing rates of stress among college students, for example, or reasons for increased happiness among senior citizens)?

### Step Two – Design and Conduct Interviews

We will work as a class to develop our broad research questions and interview protocol, shaped by our interview parameters and IRB guidelines. All students will ask their participants the same questions, but you'll be able to focus on particular aspects of our data set for your individual papers. Each student will conduct three interviews: one with a person close to your age, one with someone your parents' age, and one with someone about your grandparents' age. You can interview family members, friends, co-workers, professors, etc. We'll discuss strategies for conducting and recording interview, and you'll share your transcripts with the class using a Google form.

### Step Three – Narrow RQ and Data Selection

First, you will choose specific sections or questions from our interviews to analyze. For example, you could look at the ‘things that make me happy’ and ‘happiest moments/events’ for all age groups and see if responses change with age. Or, you could examine how college students' responses to physical well-being questions correlate with their general happiness ratings. How do social life ratings and community activities relate to happiness ratings? Does that vary by age? This will all depend on the questions we develop as a class, but you will have several options, so the key is to narrow your focus and then analyze the data.

#### **Step Four – Analyze and Code Interview Transcripts**

Prior to starting your analysis, download the relevant transcripts or make your own copy in drive. DO NOT make any changes to any of the transcripts in Drive! You can annotate and/or reorganize your own copies. Look for patterns and develop a coding scheme. Go back through the responses and code them appropriately. Highlight interesting examples and quotations, particularly those that illustrate a pattern or outliers.

#### **Step Five – Draft your IMRAD**

You will first present your work in an IMRAD report that uses APA format for paper layout and source citations. We will discuss strategies for writing the Introduction and Literature Review, Methods, Results, and Discussion sections as we go. You will be writing for an academic audience and should embrace the reporting style that we've seen in similar IMRADS, such as "Hope I Die Before I Get Old: Mispredicting Happiness Across The Adult Lifespan" and the interview sections of "Peace in a Thatched Hut—that is Happiness': Subjective Wellbeing among Peasants in Rural China." Your final report won't be nearly as long as these examples, but should be long enough to adequately cover each section (usually about 7 pages of text, with 10-12 total pages including title page, abstract, graphs, references, and appendices). Make sure to include a References page and an Appendix to present your research instrument.

#### **Step Six - Workshop, Revise, and Edit**

We will discuss each section in class, and you will post a full report draft to workshop on \_\_\_\_\_. You'll submit a revised version for my review on \_\_\_\_\_. As usual, you may choose to revise based on my feedback for your Final Portfolio.

#### **Step Seven – ReMediate your Research**

Your goal for this stage is to tell the story of the data to an audience of educated non-experts, so choose a forum where you could present your work online or in person and keep that audience in mind as you write. One great option is to create a poster, presentation, slideshow, or podcast for COMPosium, the Writing Program's showcase of student writing and research. Other options would be print or online articles (consider one of the mental health blogs from our list, the *DU Clarion*, *Salon.com*, *TIME.com*, *AARP*—who would be interested in your findings?) Determine the key findings from your primary and secondary research and what order you might present them in. As you draft, think about the approaches we discussed from "Students under Pressure" and "Inside America's Toughest Federal Prison." You might make an argument or suggestion based on your findings, or the piece could be more exploratory or speculative. You can include your own opinions and experiences if that seems appropriate, but the main focus should be the interview data. Choices in arrangement, style, and delivery will depend on your genre.

#### **Step Eight – Get Feedback, Revise, and Edit**

Post your ReMediation draft before the workshop on \_\_\_\_\_. Because uploading your multimedia project or article to Google Docs can affect formatting, you might want to upload a PDF to show us your layout and graphics, along with the text version for

comments. You'll submit a revised version for my review on \_\_\_\_\_. As usual, you may choose to revise based on my feedback for your Final Portfolio.

### **Shared Sources/Models**

Binelli, Mark. "Inside America's Toughest Federal Prison." *New York Times* 26 Mar 2015. Web. 28 Mar 2015.

Davey, Gareth, Zhenghui Chen, and Anna Lau. "'Peace in a Thatched Hut—that is Happiness': Subjective Wellbeing among Peasants in Rural China." *Journal of Happiness Studies* 10.2 (2009): 239-52. Web. 18 Mar 2015.

Lacey, Heather P., Dylan M. Smith, and Peter A. Ubel. "Hope I Die before I Get Old: Mispredicting Happiness Across the Adult Lifespan." *Journal of Happiness Studies* 7.2 (2006): 167-82. Web. 14 Mar 2015.

Novotney, Amy. "Students Under Pressure." *American Psychological Association* 45.8 (2014). Web. 13 Feb 2015.