Barry University

Honors Program

HON 479H:
Senior Honors Thesis/Project

Information Packet

Table of Contents

IMPORTANT DEADLINES FOR THESES/PROJECTS

STEPS TO TAKE:	TIME LINE:	DUE DATES:
Student begins and/or enrolls in HON 479H (a one-time enrollment).	Up to 3 semesters prior to graduation (preferred enrollment term is the student's graduating term).	1st semester Junior year
Student meets with Honors Program Director (HP Dir) for thesis orientation.	By the 4th week (wk) of the initial semester.	1st semester Junior year
Student submits thesis proposal (proposal) to HP Dir (see pp. 5 & 40 for length requirements & form).	By the 4th wk of the semester.	2nd semester Junior year
HP Dir approves proposal.	1 - 2 wk after proposal submission.	2nd semester Junior year
Student begins thesis work with thesis advisor & committee.	Immediately after proposal is approved.	2nd semester Junior year
If applicable, student obtains an IRB approval (check IRB deadlines).	2 - 4 wk after proposal is approved.	2nd semester Junior year
Student and/or thesis advisor schedules oral defense with HP Dir.	4 wk prior to graduation.	Graduating semester
Student submits copies of defense ready draft to thesis committee & HP Dir.	2 wk prior to the defense date.	Graduating semester
If applicable, student works on any revision recommended by thesis committee.	Immediately after the defense.	One month prior to commencement
Student submits revised thesis copy to thesis advisor and HP Dir for a final proofreading.	Be considerate and give proofreaders sufficient time.	Two weeks to commencement
Student obtains signatures of the thesis committee members on 4 originals of the certificate page (see pg. 16 for quality of paper).	Keep in mind that faculty may not keep regular office hours during the final exam week.	One week to commencement
Student submits 4 final thesis copies (for binding) on specified paper, a PDF copy of the thesis, and binding fee to HP Dir.	No later than Thursday of the Final Exam week – allow a minimum of one hour for this process.	One week to commencement
HP Dir changes HON 479H's grade from IP to CR.	Immediately upon the submission of your thesis to ProQuest.	End of last term
Student confirms that the thesis title appears on the final transcript.	After the Registrar's issues the requested final transcript to the student.	One month after graduation.

HONORS THESIS/PROJECT PROPOSALS

The maximum length of a thesis proposal is no more than 10,000 words.

The minimum length of the body of a complete thesis is 30 pages, excluding references, appendices, etc.

The first step in completing the Senior Honors Thesis (HON 479H) is to write a thesis/project proposal. Thesis/project proposals must be submitted to the Honors Program Director (HP Dir) **NO LATER THAN THE 8th WEEK** of the initial semester of HON 479H. Once the proposal is approved, students can begin conducting their research. If applicable, students must also obtain the Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval prior to any data collection. The submitted proposal should consist of the following: the proposal **form** (see pg. 40), proposal's **cover page**, and the actual **proposal** (i.e., the first three chapters of the proposed thesis).

The cover page of the proposal needs to contain the following:

- Thesis/Project's title (the title should indicate as specific as possible the scope of research)
- Names of the thesis supervisory committee members
- Name of student

The proposal needs to contain the following:

- Introduction - In non-technical language **and** in response to one or more of the university's core commitments, the statement of purpose
- Literature Review - Scholarly literature to be examined
    - Research questions and/or hypotheses
- Methodology - Design of Methodology
- Contribution attempted to be made to the advancement of knowledge in the field
- Sample references or works cited

It is expected that students prepare a proposal in consultation with the HP Dir, the thesis advisor and/or thesis supervisory committee, prior to submitting the proposal.

Failure to submit the thesis proposal by the deadline will result in "NC" grade in HON 479H, forfeit of Barry Honors Scholarship, and departure from the Honors Program.

HONORS THESIS/PROJECT SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE

An Honors Thesis/Project supervisory committee consists of **four** (4) full-time faculty members, holding terminal degrees:

1. Chair, thesis supervisory committee (i.e., thesis advisor);

2. A faculty member from the same discipline as the thesis advisor (i.e., thesis supervisory committee member, also known as the second reader);

3. A faculty member from outside of the discipline (i.e., an external member);

4. A faculty member of the Honors Program.

In collaboration with HP Dir, thesis advisor, and student work together to form the membership of the thesis supervisory committee.

SCHEDULING ORAL DEFENSE

When the thesis is ready to be defended, the student and thesis advisor contact the thesis committee and HP Dir to select a defense date.

Once the defense date has been determined, HP Dir reserves a room for the defense and e-mails a meeting confirmation to all parties involved.

All committee members must be present at the oral defense.

RESULTS OF ORAL DEFENSE

The result of the oral defense will be reported to HP Dir on the Oral Defense Report Form which will be provided at the oral defense meeting.

This form will be completed and signed by the thesis supervisory committee. Where applicable, brief details of revisions required should be included under the "comments" heading.

Explanation of Results

(i) Accepted

The thesis supervisory committee agrees that the thesis/project is acceptable without revisions.

(ii) Accepted Pending Minor Revisions

The thesis supervisory committee agrees that the thesis/project is acceptable pending minor revisions, such as corrections of typographical errors or changes of a minor editorial nature. It is the thesis advisor’s responsibility to ensure that such corrections are made.

(iii) Accepted Pending Specific Revisions

The thesis supervisory committee agrees that the thesis/project is acceptable pending changes which may include insertion or deletions. Such changes would be of the sort which do not radically modify the development/argument of the thesis/project but which go beyond minor revisions. The practical criterion will be that the committee is able to specify such changes with precision. It is the responsibility of the thesis supervisory committee to ensure that all such changes are made.

(iv) Referred Pending Major Revisions

The thesis supervisory committee agrees that the thesis/project requires substantive changes in order to be acceptable. Detailed reasons for this decision must be supplied by the members of the thesis supervisory committee. These changes must be seen by all members of the thesis supervisory committee. One of the following alternative procedures, to be agreed on by the thesis supervisory committee before the oral defense is adjourned, must be used.

(a) the thesis supervisory committee reconvenes within six (6) months to examine the work;

(b) the thesis advisor circulates the revised thesis/project within six (6) months to all members, who will then inform the HP Dir in writing, as to whether the thesis supervisory committee feels that the major and minor revisions requested have been met.

(v) Failed

The thesis supervisory committee agrees that even with major revisions the thesis/project is not acceptable.

Voting

The oral defense requirement is met:

(a) when the thesis supervisory committee **<u>and</u>** the HP Dir unanimously accept the thesis/project with or without minor or specified revisions, OR

(b) when there is not more than one vote for major revisions or failure, or more than one abstention.

The candidate fails the thesis/project oral defense if:

(a) more than two of the thesis supervisory committee members vote for failure. Abstentions will not be regarded as votes for failure.

If neither of the above applies, the thesis/project shall be referred for major revisions. A thesis/project cannot be referred for major revisions more than once.

In an event that the candidate passes the oral defense **<u>and</u>** after the candidate has delivered all four (4) copies of the thesis (on required paper), an electronic copy of the thesis, and binding fees to the Honors Program, the HP Dir will submit the grade or the grade adjustment form for HON 479H and thesis title to the Registrar's Office. Note. The Registrar's Office can only issue a final transcript when the "IP" grade for HON 479H has been adjusted to either "CR" (credit) or "NC" (no credit). For students who opt out of the thesis process, their final grade in HON 479H will be "NC."

Sample of the title page (see pg. 16 for format of pagination)

Thesis Topic

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Barry University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the completion of the Honors Program

by

First name Last Name

Graduating Month, Year

Sample of the certificate page (see pg. 16 for format of pagination)

Barry University
Honors Program

Honors Thesis Written by

First Name Last Name

Approved by:

Faculty's Name
Chair, Thesis Supervisory Committee

Faculty's Name
Thesis Supervisory Committee Member

Faculty's Name Here
Honors Program Faculty Member

Faculty's Name Here
External Member

Sample of the Abstract page (see pg. 16 for format of pagination)

Stefan Jugmohan (B.S., Business Administration - Finance)
The Impact of a Student Managed Investment Fund on Students' Financial Literacy and Academic Performance May 2020
Abstract of a senior honors thesis at Barry University
Thesis supervised by Dr. Stephen Morrell
Number of pages in text: 43

This study explores the impact of being a member of a Student Managed Investment Fund on students' financial literacy and academic performance. Previous research on SMIFs has shown that students have little or no financial literacy knowledge or experience. This has translated into high student debt with no feasible solutions. Student Managed Investment Funds (SMIFs) are increasing in popularity among colleges within the United States of America as they claim to boost financial literacy and academic performance. Students in these courses are taught to use portfolio management techniques and to make real-world investment decisions.

Participants for this study consisted of two groups of undergraduate students at a selected university in the state of Florida. One group contained people who were members of SMIF and the other group contained people who did not participate in SMIF. An online survey was sent to 108 students enrolled in a selected university's School of Business. The response rate was 77%, or 84 students. Statistical analysis was performed on these two independent groups. Findings indicated that by participating in SMIF, students' financial literacy and academic performance were strongly correlated in a direct and positive manner.

iii

Revised 11/1/2021

Sample of the Acknowledgements page (see pg. 16 for format of pagination)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank everyone who has supported and encouraged me through this long and stressful, yet rewarding experience.

I am so thankful to the chair of my thesis supervisory committee, Dr. Hugh M. Murphy for his patience, time and knowledge from the initial to the final stages of my thesis. On a personal level, I would like to thank him for his love, care and laughter that he has shared with me these past three years at Barry University. I would like to give a special thank you to Dr. Pawena Sirimangkala. She has always been there for me with support, belief and guidance. I appreciate everything she has done for me throughout this process and my time at Barry University. I would also like to thank the rest of my committee members, Dr. Larry Byrne, and Dr. Giselle Rios, for their support and taking the time to be part of this important journey.

I owe my deepest gratitude to my friends and family who have tried to keep me sane, healthy and relaxed during this whole process. Thank you Giordan, Mary, Mcley, Willy, Louis and Melissa for your friendship, love and belief in me. I couldn't have done this without the guidance and knowledge of my sister-in-law, Kim, who I will never be able to thank sufficiently. I would also like to thank all the participants who helped me in my research.

Lastly, I offer my regards and blessings to all who have been part of my life these past three years here at Barry University. It has been a wonderful journey and something I will never forget. I have accomplished more than I ever thought I could and it's only the beginning, see you on Broadway.

iv

Sample of Table of Contents (see pg. 16 for format of pagination)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

v

Sample of List of Table (see pg. 16 for format of pagination)

LIST OF TABLES

Revised 11/1/2021

FORMAT

(1) *Paper*

Use 8-1/2" X 11" (also see pg. 17 for quality of paper)

(2) *Typescript*

The text should be double-spaced and on one side of the paper only. Footnotes and long quotations may be single-spaced. The entire thesis/project must be in the same type, and care should be taken to ensure evenness of impression and blackness. Faint or broken type is not acceptable. Ink jet printer quality is NOT acceptable if it produces faded or broken type. The font size should be at least 10 point, but no larger than 12 point.

(3) *Margins*

Leave one and one-half (1-1/2) inch margin at the LEFT-HAND edge of the paper to allow for binding. Leave one inch margins at the TOP, BOTTOM, and RIGHT-HAND edges. These margins also apply to all illustrative material and pages containing tables, charts, and maps.

Margin requirements apply to EVERY page, including illustrations (tables, figures, charts), the abstract, appendices, and title page.

(4) *Running Headers*

Do **NOT** use running heads to put title, name, chapter, etc., on each page. This information is unnecessary, and thesis/project with running heads will not be accepted.

(5) *Diagrams and Tables*

All diagrams and tables should be numbered as well as the page on which it appears. Page numbers should appear on tables and diagrams in the same position as they appear in the text. These tables may be horizontal or vertical as long as the required margins are used.

(6) *Appendices*

Materials copied from other sources must meet the same requirements as the body of the paper. Copies from books, maps, etc., must be clean and legible. There may be no residual shadows of page edges as created in the photocopying process.

(7) *Preparation of Title Page*

The title page must be prepared in the required format (see sample of the title page). It should be noted that the center of the typed matter on the title page is adjusted to 1-1/2" left and 1" top, bottom, and right margins.

(8) *Preparation of Certificate Page*

Certificate page must be prepared in the required format (see sample of the certificate page). Four copies of this page are required. Following a successful oral defense, these pages will be signed by the thesis supervisory committee.

(9) *Abstracts*

Each thesis/project must contain an abstract (see sample of the abstract page). The abstract is expected to give a succinct account of the thesis/project so that a reader can decide whether to read the complete work. The Abstract should be no more than 250 words. An abstract contains a statement of the problem, the procedure or methods used, the results and the conclusions. The Abstract page must appear immediately before any acknowledgments and the table of contents.

(10) *Contents*

The Table of Contents, List of Tables, and List of Illustrations, where applicable, should follow the abstract and acknowledgements.

(11) *Pagination*

In the thesis manuscript, the pagination in **Roman Numerals** of the preliminary matter is as follows:

Title Page (i) *(Number **not** typed on)*
Certificate Page (ii) *(Number **not** typed on)*
Abstract (iii) *(Number typed on)*
Acknowledgments (iv) *(Number typed on)*
Table of Contents (v) (*Number typed on)*
List of Tables (vi) *(Number typed on)*

Please note that the page numbers are NOT TYPED on the title and the certificate pages. Depending on the length of the abstract, the pagination of the following materials must be adjusted accordingly. For the remainder of the thesis/project, including the introduction, main body, illustrations, appendices, and bibliography, **ARABIC NUMERALS** are used starting with 1.

Thesis Binding

As part of the requirement for graduation, Honors Program students are responsible for submitting a PDF file (including signed signature page) of their Senior Honors Thesis to the Library for e-publishing with ProQuest.

Obtaining Bound Copies of Theses

If students want to have personal copies of their thesis bound, there are many companies that provide the binding service. For convenience, the Library has provided a list of binding companies that have experience working with theses. Students should contact each company for details on printing and binding costs, as well as shipping options. There may be other companies in the area that can provide this service, so feel free to shop around. Please note that neither Barry University nor the Library are responsible for the work of binding companies.

Hon 479H
Sample Thesis Outline #1

FOR HONORS PROGRAM STUDENTS IN NON-SCIENCE MAJORS (E.G., HUMANITIES, SOCIAL SCIENCES, BUSINESS, EDUCATION, AND NURSING)

Introduction

A. Introduce the problem (cite current and relevant statistics).
B. Develop the background and indicate why this is a worthwhile topic to investigate or examine.
C. State the purpose and rationale:
   1. indicate your research approach: behavioral scientific, humanistic/interpretive, critical perspective, and/or a combination of these approaches;
   2. indicate how your chosen theories will be useful (in providing answers, solutions, and/or understanding) in this analysis.

Literature Review

A. Introduce the chosen theories (a minimum of four) by previewing how each of the theories will help explain and predict, explain and understand, or question this social issue, social problem, or social representation;
B. Discuss the philosophical issues (i.e., epistemology, ontology, and axiology) in relation to your theories and identified variables;
B. Discuss previous research findings relevant to each theory:
   1. For each theory, you need to cite research articles and their findings that are related to your research goals (Rely mainly on current relevant periodical articles and books. Newspaper and pop magazines can offer current and relevant statistics that are appropriate in the introduction section. Internet sources used must come from full length research articles rather than abstracts.
C. After reviewing these research articles, identify your dependent and independent variables and formulate your hypotheses or research questions (i.e., what do you expect to find).

   For example, you are interested in examining the relationship between intercultural communication training outcomes and small group decision making process. From the review of the relevant literature and the four theories chosen (In this example, the chosen theories are functional perspective, constructivism, uncertainty reduction, anxiety/uncertainty management), you now need to identify your independent variables (in this example, they are cognitive complexity, training program content that includes the four functions of the functional perspective). You also need to identify your dependent variables (in this example, they are uncertainty reduction and anxiety reduction as training outcomes). Your hypotheses should then look like this:

   H1: There's a relationship between intercultural communication training outcomes and characteristics of trainees.
   H2: Cognitively complex trainees are more likely to reduce uncertainty and anxiety than cognitively simple trainees.

Method

A. Identify the data or participants (e.g., college students, organizational members, married couples) and sample size (as discussed in class, depending on your methodology, sample sizes will vary. Methodology choices may include: meta-analysis/systematic review, extended literature review, experimentation, interview and/or questionnaire survey, ethnography, and textual analysis (e.g., rhetorical criticism, content analysis). Consult with your thesis advisor and HP director on an appropriate methodology and sample size for your research;

B. Identify specific steps taken in obtaining data (refer to research articles in your field for specific guidance on how to write up this section).

Results

A. Report what you found – here you need to be specific and report in details what you found. **<u>Note.</u>** It is strongly recommended that students find research articles that employed same or similar research method(s) and use them as models when writing this and other thesis sections;

B. Report whether you found support for each of the hypotheses.

Discussion

A. How does your research contribute to the social phenomenon examined.

HON 479H
Sample Thesis Outline #2

FOR HONORS PROGRAM STUDENTS IN SCIENCE MAJORS (BIO, MATH/CS; PHY SCI)

I. Introduction
   A. Background/review of previous work in the field
   B. Statement of research/Experimental plan (Proposed project research)

II. Experimental Procedure
   A. List and explain in logical order:
      1. Equipment
      2. Procedures/syntheses
      3. Chemicals
      4. Supplies
      5. Preparation of sample or sampling procedure

   used in your experimental design/data collection
   B. Provide **detailed** information for each component (example: purity, company/manufacturer name, make/model of instruments used, relevant operation parameters used)

III. Results and Discussion
   A. List, in an organized fashion, all data and results obtained from experimental work
      1. Data Tables
      2. Graphs/plots
      3. Relevant spectra
      4. Instrument or procedure output

      (label these consecutively as Table 1, Table 2, etc for data collections and Figure 1, Figure 2, etc for graphs, spectra, reaction schemes/mechanisms, etc.)
   B. Provide detailed analysis/interpretation of all results obtained and included in results section.
   C. Where appropriate, provide relevant error analysis and statistical analysis of data obtained and reported.

IV. Conclusions
   A. Provide a brief summary of results obtained
   B. Provide a description of final findings/conclusions drawn from the experimental results
   C. List several ideas for future work/experiments to be performed based on the results obtained

V. References
   A. List all reference sources used, in sequential order of first appearance in paper
   B. Most scientific organizations have guidelines for formatting referenced work. Follow the guidelines for your discipline

Sample of The First Three Chapters

Chapter 1: Introduction

In looking at both the history and current status of the United States of America, it is clear that groups who are deemed inferior by society experience a lower quality of life than others. More often than not, these groups consist of the people who need help the most, yet they are the most overlooked. Many groups have experienced a level of neglect and apathy, including immigrants, the disabled, and several ethnic minorities. The poor are no exception. According to data from the Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement (CPS ASEC), 10.5% of the United States'(U.S.) population is currently living in poverty – which equates to 34 million people (Center for Poverty and Inequality Research, 2020). This official poverty measure considers the number of family members in the home, the composition of the family in terms of individuals under 18, and the age of the householder, to determine that family's poverty threshold – the income dollar amount that has been deemed adequate for living by the U.S. Census Bureau. Those who fall below their applicable thresholds, currently $26,200 for a family of four, are considered to be living in poverty (2020 Poverty Guidelines, 2020). Due to their low socioeconomic status, below the poverty line, these individuals have been severely disadvantaged and face a great risk for developing social, mental and health issues, including exposure to criminal activity, depression, and obesity (Center for Poverty and Inequality Research, 2017).

The word "epidemic" has become a common phrase to describe obesity in America. Once a sign of wealth and status, obesity now plagues the country and serves as an indication of poor eating habits and inactive lifestyles. Obesity is a condition characterized by a substantial accumulation of excess fat in the body, indicated by a Body Mass Index above 30 (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2020). A build-up of fat may occur when a person's energy input – their consumption of food and drinks – is greater than their energy output. Naturally, energy output occurs as a result of the constant reactions occurring in the body, known as the metabolism. However, this often is not enough to keep the energy input and output balanced. This is why physical activity is crucial in the prevention and treatment of obesity. Obesity is a condition that can be managed and possibly prevented, but without the proper measures it is a gateway to serious health conditions.

Obesity is not a new phenomenon. However, the beliefs surrounding it have changed over the decades. This spread of obesity throughout a nation is not unique to the U.S. and can be referred to as the obesity transition. An article written in 2019 describes the obesity transition as a series of three stages in which obesity is prominent in different groups throughout the country (Figure 1). Stage 1 is characterized by proliferation of obesity among those with highest socioeconomic status, especially in women. A transition to stage 2 is accompanied by increases in prevalence for all adults as well as a small increase in children (Jaacks et al., 2019). There also exists a narrowing of the gender gap and socioeconomic differences. Finally, stage 3 is marked by a closure of the gender gap, continued increased prevalence in children, and a complete reversal of socioeconomic differences (Figure 1). As of 2016, the USA was considered to have entered this stage (Jaacks et al., 2019). According to this model, it is inevitable for countries to experience these transitions, as they are a result of industrialization and development. What is controllable, however, is how long a country spends in each stage. Ideally, stage 4 would call for an overall decline in obesity among the population, but with the current trajectory of obesity rates in the U.S., that does not seem possible without major changes. The latest data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) 2019 Adult Obesity Prevalence Maps reported that 12 states now have adult obesity prevalence at or above 35% - Alabama, Arkansas, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, and West Virginia. This is an increase by three states (>30%) compared to 2018 reports and by six states (50%) compared to 2017 reports (CDC, 2020).

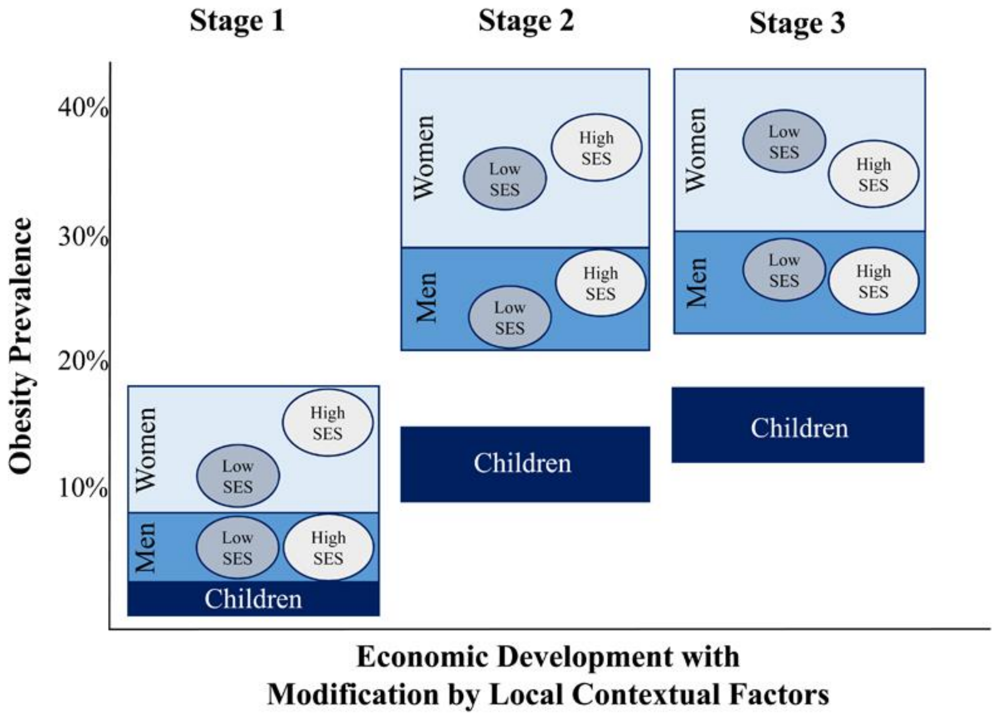

Figure 1. Obesity transition stages. When a country begins developing it starts off with a low percentage of obesity for all groups. In both stages 1 and 2, obesity is more prevalent among those with high socioeconomic status. Stage 3 is characterized by a switch in prevalence to those with low socioeconomic status (Jaacks et al., 2019).

The U.S.' current standing in stage 3 of the obesity transition is evident in the correlation between poverty and an increased risk of obesity (Figure 1) (Jaacks et al., 2019). This is likely due to factors associated with both poverty and obesity, such as limited access to high-quality, nutritious foods within a reasonable price range, limited green spaces and time to exercise, and the development of poor eating habits, out of necessity and convenience, passed down to younger generations. For few, obesity may be the result of a particular combination of genes that cause abnormalities or hormone imbalances, however, among the general population, obesity is most often a result of many factors that combine to cause an excess build-up of fat, including poor eating habits and a lack of exercise. A reversal of the onset of obesity would call for a significant lifestyle change. The difficulty, however, is that the responsibility of preventing obesity must not fall solely on the individuals, because, contrary to popular belief, individuals are not truly in control of what they consume nor their types of physical activity. They are limited by both environmental and social factors that affect their everyday lives. While many have the physical ability to choose the foods they eat and daily activities they participate in, many others are restricted in the sense that their financial standing and geographical location do not allow them to do so. Therefore, they are not in control of the activities they become involved in, the types of foods they have access to nor the foods they can afford. There is an unequal distribution of the quality of resources necessary to maintain a state of wellbeing and adequate physical health, resulting in some people facing a greater risk of becoming obese. In conjunction with an individual's stressful living conditions, factors such as age, gender, and race may also play a role in this increased risk.

i. Socioeconomic Status

In general, obesity is most prevalent among middle-aged adults between the ages of 40 and 59, affecting 42.8 percent of this demographic (Lee, 2014). The next highest group is the over 60 group, with 41 percent (Lee, 2014). Once considering socioeconomic status, however, the risk of obesity begins to fester at a much younger age. In 2014, a study explored the correlation between the timing of poverty and incidence of obesity among youth. It was found that children who experienced poverty at some point during their childhood and adolescent years were 1.97 times more likely to develop obesity by the age of 15. Also, children who experienced poverty before the age of two were 1.66 times as likely to become obese (Lee, 2014). This means that before young children even have a chance to begin making lifestyle choices for themselves, they are already at a disadvantage. For then, the risk of becoming obese adults continues to grow over time and persists into adulthood.

Obesity is most prevalent among children of low socioeconomic status, as shown in the CDC's Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. An analysis of the 2011-2014 National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) revealed that obesity among youth was lowest in the highest income group (10.9%). Conversely, among youth in the lowest income groups, the prevalence of obesity was much greater (18.9% for those >130 and < 350% of the Federal Poverty Line (FPL) and 19.9% for those < 130% of the FPL) (Figure 2) (Ogden et al., 2018).

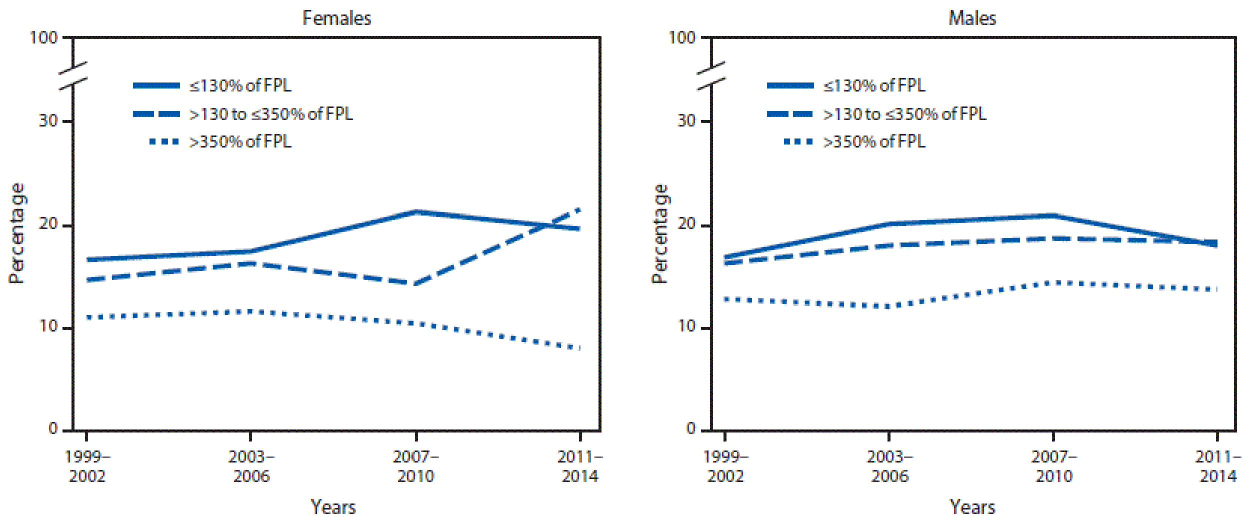

Figure 2. Prevalence of obesity among youth (years 2-19) by household income level
Percentages of obesity are consistently lower both for males and females in the highest household income group, those >350% of the FPL. The prevalence of obesity remains higher over time for groups with lower household incomes (Ogden et al., 2018).

These trends have continued and adolescents with higher socioeconomic status have continued to experience decreasing levels of obesity over time (Emmet, 2015). The matter of childhood obesity is important because it is a strong indicator of adult obesity. The lifestyles that an individual develops early on often have great influence on his or her lifestyle as an adult, so if a child is raised in an environment that promotes obesity, it is likely that habits will persist and their lifestyle as an adult may be unhealthy.

ii. Racial Impacts

Another important factor to be considered is that of race. The common argument regarding differing health statuses between races is that African Americans are simply predisposed to developing particular conditions at a greater rate than other races are, no matter the socioeconomic status. While it appears that there is a significant amount of data to support this, it is important to recognize the social and historical context behind these findings. America's history of slavery and discrimination against Blacks continues to have an impact on the lives of African Americans in this country today. Residential segregation by race in the past has led to clusters of races living in distinct neighborhoods and communities that are then deprived of resources, including outdoor recreational areas, school funding, and proper access to nutrient-rich, affordable foods (Williams, 2010). The past also contributes to the inequalities still experienced by Blacks today resulting in inequality regarding upward mobility and the climb from lower to higher socioeconomic status. Currently 18.8% of Blacks, 15.7 % of Hispanics are living in poverty compared to just 7.3% of Whites (Creamer, 2020). Compared to their White counterparts, college-educated, highly qualified Black people continue to suffer the ills of systemic racism and are more likely to experience unemployment and experience lower mean earnings if hired. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that among full-time wage and salary workers with a bachelor's degree or higher, Black and Hispanic workers have a lower median of weekly earnings, $1,065 and $1,101, respectively, compared to their White and Asian counterparts who received $1,342 and $1,465 (2019). These inequalities in wages expose the deep roots of the bias against and willful neglect of the Black community and other ethnic minorities.

Some evidence of the detrimental effects of a stressful environment lies in a study that examined the extent of early health deterioration of Black Americans compared to Whites (Geronimus, 2006). A 10-item measure of allostatic load determined the physiological burden being placed on an individual as a result of exposure to stressors. The items included biomarkers such as systolic and diastolic blood pressure, cholesterol, BMI, glycated hemoglobin, and homocysteine. High-risk thresholds were determined, and for each biomarker measurement above the threshold, the participant received one point. Although the highest possible score was a 10, the researchers deemed scores of 4 and greater to be high, and strong indicators of physiological responses that influence poor health outcomes. The results revealed that Blacks had higher scores at all ages and the gap between the two races increased with age. The largest gap was between the participants between 55 and 64 years of age, with 77.24% of Blacks scoring above a 4, compared to the 51.69% of Whites. (Geronimus, 2006). This research illustrates how the stress of living in a race-conscious society has contributed to the deterioration of health among Black Americans. With limited opportunities, it is a struggle to live a healthy life.

While some may find a way to defy the odds and prosper in the midst of inequality, a majority will struggle and fall victim to a system that discriminates and then blames them for their environment and their outcomes, often preventing individuals from escaping their current situation. Among those who struggle, unhealthy habits may develop and can be passed on for generations. A 2016 study used data from minority-segregated schools to show just how significant an impact this type of concentrated poverty has on individuals' health, particularly with regard to obesity. The study revealed that students in the minority-segregated schools experienced higher rates of obesity when compared to the more diverse schools (Piontak, 2016). Since the minority-segregated schools were more likely to be located in low-income areas, they also received less funding, and therefore less resources. This difference in obesity rates, however, became almost nonexistent once the poverty levels of the schools were controlled, making evident the negative effects that concentrated poverty has on obesity.

iii. Gender Impacts

There also exists a correlation between obesity and gender. Studies have shown that obesity is more prevalent among women, which is most likely a result of the reproductive activity of women, unequal income between men and women, and the stress associated with the female gender's role as the primary caregiver for children and the family unit in general, regardless of whether she also has a career. In a global study conducted, it was concluded that there exists a six percent difference in obesity rates between the two genders with that of females surpassing males. Of the 151 countries studied, 87 percent had female obesity prevalence and in no country did male obesity surpass female obesity by more than five percent (Garawi, 2014). Another important finding was the level of variability within each gender. Women experienced much greater variability in the prevalence of obesity, meaning that weights varied greatly. This is likely due to varying social context in different regions, including standards of food consumption and body image (Garawi, 2014).

One additional factor that contributes to the increased rate of obesity among women is the unequal pay between men and women. This is especially applicable for single mothers who are dealing with the stress of raising children on their own and trying to support their families with low-wage jobs. With a reduced income, a single mother may turn to calorie-dense foods that are often cheaper, yet less nutritious, to feed her child(ren). This quick solution could keep her, and her children satisfied longer, but at the cost of their long-term health. The discrepancy between genders illustrates the role stress may play in the correlation between poverty and obesity. To understand this relationship fully, however, it is necessary to examine the problem on a deeper level by isolating and further identifying factors that may contribute to higher prevalence of obesity among the poor, as well as possible solutions.

iv. Significance of Examining the Roots of Obesity

The compilation of this research reveals that while some people's body types may be more prone to retain fat and lead to obesity, obesity is ultimately a result of external influences. We are inevitably a result of our environment and our surroundings play a large part in how we develop mentally, emotionally, socially, and physically. This means that an unhealthy living environment will likely result in negative impacts on one's health, including the ability to maintain a healthy weight.

Research Questions:

- How does a misallocation of resources and differing geographical locations influence the correlation between obesity and poverty?
- What psychological and behavioral factors contribute to the correlation between obesity and poverty?
- At what level of poverty are individuals most at risk for becoming obese?
- How do large companies profit from the prevalence of obesity among the poor?
- What can the average person do to contribute to resolving the problem?

This thesis will use the findings of these research questions to better understand the problem at hand. In determining the relationship between obesity and poverty it may be possible for both to be better managed and hopefully minimized. Doing this will lead to a more inclusive community, in which all people can live a healthy, happy life.

i. Biology of Obesity

The terms overweight and obese are often used interchangeably in common language today, however, it is important to distinguish the two. The difference between the two comes with understanding body mass index (BMI). A person's BMI is defined as his or her weight (in kg) divided by height squared (in m^2) (CDC, 2020). Although BMI does not directly measure body fat, it serves as an indicator of obesity. Someone considered average or normal in weight has a BMI ranging from 18.5 to <25. Once a person's BMI enters the range of 25 to 30, he or she is then considered overweight and the individual weighs more than what is expected for his or her height (CDC, 2020). Since BMI is not an exact measure of body fat, a BMI in this range may not always suggest excess body fat and does not necessarily represent a negative aspect of a person's health. A bodybuilder, for example, may have a high BMI due to the great amount of muscle weight. Obesity, however, is indicated by a BMI of 30 or higher and suggests that the individual has a significant build-up of excess fat. Being obese puts an individual at greater risk for experiencing overall poor health and developing conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, and even stroke (CDC, 2020).

While the development of obesity is often a result of a calorie-dense diet combined with a lack of physical activity, a person's genetics may contribute to weight as a predisposition to the onset of obesity. The influence that genetics and the environment have on a person is complex and intertwined. Two of these conditions include polygenetic and monogenetic obesity. In polygenetic obesity there are strong ties between genes and the environment. Genes in this category, include the at-mass and obesity-associated gene (FTO gene) and the melanocortin 4 receptor (MC4R) gene which play crucial roles in regulating food intake and energy balance in the body (Golden and Kessler, 2020). In this category of obesity, it is unlikely for the presence of a single gene variant to significantly increase the risk of developing obesity. It would require the inheritance of mutations in several of these obesity-related genes to increase a person's risk. Even with many mutations, however, there is no guarantee that a person will become obese, suggesting that polygenetic obesity requires both obesity-related genetic mutations and an obesogenic lifestyle (Golden and Kessler, 2020).

In monogenetic obesity, a rarer form, in which an individual's environment and lifestyle play a less significant role in the onset of obesity. The onset of obesity occurs during early childhood and is often accompanied by many other phenotypes, such as intellectual disabilities, dysmorphic features, and developmental abnormalities, which are characteristic of syndromes, including Prader–Willi Syndrome and Bardet–Biedl Syndrome (Golden and Kessler, 2020). Therefore, obesity, in these cases, are primarily due to genetics and possibly the lifestyle of the individual's mother, such as drinking or smoking while pregnant.

In instances in which genetic mutations lead to obesity, the mutation(s) may cause an imbalance of hormones that regulate metabolism, appetite, or lipid storage. One hormone known to regulate appetite and lipid metabolism is leptin. Leptin is a protein used to regulate energy balance in the body by reducing hunger and fat storage in adipocytes (Marik and Marik, 2000). Therefore, a condition in which leptin levels are low or leptin receptors are defective, could lead to constant hunger and a build-up of excess fat in the individual. An additional cause of obesity is stress, which can be emotional, job-related, environmental, and psychological. When a person experiences a stressful event, the hypothalamus releases corticotropic-releasing hormone into the hypophyseal portal system, which then triggers the release of adrenocorticotropic hormone from the anterior pituitary gland. This hormone travels through the bloodstream and stimulates the adrenal glands to secrete glucocorticoids, cortisol, and increases the appetite for calorie-dense foods, specifically. This suggests that those experiencing more stress are most likely to have poorer diets and gain weight. These examples make clear that obesity may not always be a result of the individual's lifestyle and eating habits.

ii. Functionalist Perspective of Poverty

As a well-developed country with a capitalist economy, it is not unreasonable for there to be a certain level of social stratification among the population. In fact, it is expected. Social stratification is the natural result of the development of a country due to the need of the division of labor. This division of labor calls for various positions of society to be filled, each accompanied by varying levels of prestige and power (Davis and Moore, 1945). It is, therefore, inevitable for some to have greater wealth than others in a society. The problem, however, is not the inequality itself. The problem arises from the fact that the wealth gap between the richest and poorest people in the country continues to grow at an alarming rate, especially in the last few decades (Figure 3) (Leiserson, Kopparam, and McGrew, 2019). The common phrase, "the rich get richer while the poor get poorer," is very applicable to the current conditions of the U.S. This country takes pride in being a place where all people have equal opportunity to excel and reach high levels of achievement. In reality, however, social mobility has become increasingly difficult and some even go so far as to say that the U.S. is becoming a plutocracy – ruled by the upper classes – rather than a meritocracy, in which social mobility is based on a person's intellect, talent, and achievement.

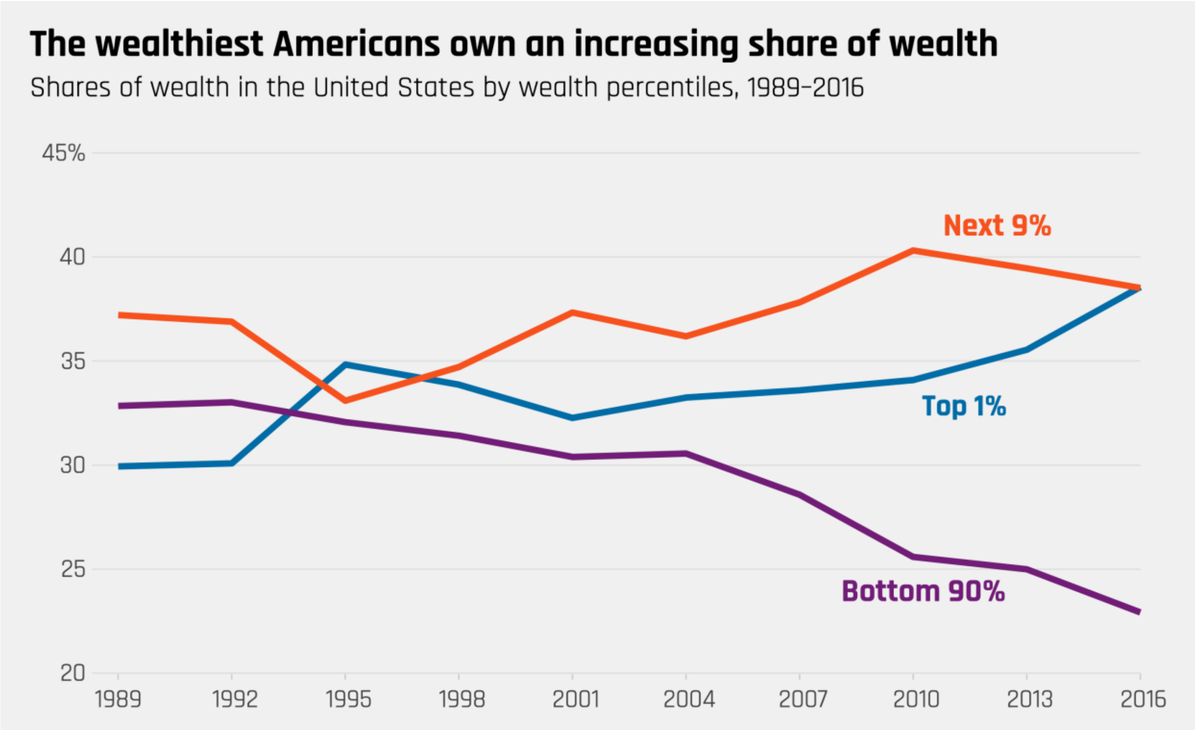

Figure 3. Distribution of wealth in the U.S. The Washington Center for Equitable Growth has compiled data to illustrate the growing wealth gap between the richest and poorest in the country from 1989 through 2016. The wealth held by the bottom 90% decreased from 33 to 23% while the top 1% increased from 30% to almost 40% (Leiserson, Kopparam, and McGrew, 2019).

Figure 3 illustrates that starting in 2004, the richest 1% of the population began getting wealthier while the poorest 90 % decreased in wealth. This trend has continued and as of the start of 2020, Federal Reserve Economic Data (FRED) reported that the net worth of the wealthiest 1% of the population at 32.7% while that of the bottom 50% was a mere 1.41%. The rapid and constant pace at which this gap is widening suggests that this trend is not a coincidence. It goes without saying that a wealth gap this large is not solely a result of traditional societal development. In this type of society, the richest prosper, but often at the expense of the poor.

As is typical of oppressive structures, it is going to take outside help to decrease poverty in this country. In this case “outside” refers to all citizens who are not currently living in poverty because these are the people who may be benefitting from its existence. Put into these terms, the problem seems easy to fix. Basic human decency and kindness could easily lead to increased opportunities for the poor to work themselves out of poverty. However, it is highly unlikely that people will unite to eliminate poverty because, it serves several functions in our society that allow others to prosper (Gans, 1971). In a capitalist country where everyone is concerned about our own well-being, it is difficult for people to support something that will, in their minds, disadvantage themselves. A few of these functions of poverty are outlined by U.S. sociologist Herbert J. Gans (1971):

- Poverty supplies the country with a low-wage labor pool that performs the dangerous and dirty work that others do not want to do. People who fill these positions only do so because it is their only option and are exploited by many other industries that others enjoy. This includes restaurants and the textile industry, that depend on this "dirty" work to exist.
- The poor are punished as deviants to uphold conventional norms regarding morality and work ethic. This destructive stereotype that the poor are lazy and unwilling to work, convinces the middle, working class to equate a happy life to hard work, obedience, and honesty. Since the poor have little cultural and political power to change these stereotypes, these false and prejudicial claims result in the perception that the poor are inferior. This also lessens the amount of moral pressure put on political leaders and the general public to eliminate poverty in this country.
- The poor promote the upward mobility of those in the class directly above them by supporting their businesses. Many may only be able to enter the middle class by selling their goods and services in poor communities rather than in middle and upper-class areas where the product or service is looked down upon or not considered high-end, such as slum housing and gas station goods.
- The poor contribute to the economy by buying goods that others do not want such as day-old bread and fruits and vegetables that may otherwise have been discarded.

The last function listed is especially startling because it directly affects a person's overall health and well-being. By settling for inadequate goods, particularly foods, their bodies are not receiving the proper nourishment they need to be healthy. It is unsettling, yet essential, to realize that corporations, and the average person, are contributing to the detrimental circumstances of the poor and in fact, profit from them.

iii. Sociocultural Perspective of Poverty

Sociologically speaking, people are a product of their environment. This was an idea confirmed by Swiss psychologist, Jean Piaget, whose work was based on the concept that a person's mind does not exist without major influence from his or her environment (Scott and Cogburn, 2020). He believed that a person's understanding of the world develops over time and depends largely on interactions with the world (Scott and Cogburn, 2020). This means that a person's cognitive abilities, which in part influences behavior, is often a reflection of what they have been exposed to, rather than the essence of the person. Similarly, Soviet psychologist, Lev Vygotsky, also explored influences on a child's cognitive development. He proposed that cognitive development is a result of the internalization of culture, which includes societal norms, language, and symbols. So, while humans can be their own people, the structure of how we think is greatly influenced by our surroundings, both good and bad. From this perspective it is clear to see how a neglectful and isolating environment may turn someone, into an angry or hostile person. Similarly, people who are living in an environment that fosters unhealthy habits and limits access to resources, will likely internalize these conditions and experience poor health.

When considering the problem of obesity, most people make a fundamental attribution error by considering an obese person's condition to be solely a result or indication of dispositional, personality-based factors, including the person's work ethic and drive (Martincik, 2019). Meanwhile, the situational qualities of the person's life are disregarded and under-emphasized. Whether this is done intentionally, as suggested in the functionalist perspective of social interaction, or implicitly, it is not only misguided, but also harmful to the self-image of those experiencing obesity and to the quality of life these individuals on many levels:

- The prevalence of such stereotypes may also decrease an individual’s likelihood of employment. Employers may assume an obese individual to be unproductive despite his or her actual abilities and qualifications.
- In addition to facing negative stereotypes from others, those living in poverty may experience a low internal locus of control in which they feel as though they are not in control of what happens in their lives. Instead, external factors such as chance, social norms, and the actions of others, determine their experiences.
- It has been shown, however, that a low locus of control is only partially associated with the relationship between poverty and poor self-esteem. Instead, individuals likely attribute their low socioeconomic status to external factors, such as governmental policies and bad luck, to preserve their self-esteem (Martoncik, 2019).

Chapter 3: Methodology

The methodology used to conduct this research was a systemic review. The information presented is the compilation of numerous primary research articles and meta-analyses. The use of these credible, peer-reviewed sources provides reliable statistics and conceptual information to fully answer the research questions presented. In addition, data was used to accept or reject the hypothesis that obesity is a result of poverty, and hopefully lead to a solution to the overall problem at hand – the responsibility shared for the increased levels of obesity among the poor in comparison to the rest of the population in the U.S. Several databases were used, including PubMed and EBSCO. Along with these publications, several census reports were examined to obtain additional data and provide support for conclusions drawn. This information was collected from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, providing accurate and up-to-date information based on country-wide sample sizes. In addition, trends, such as annual income and obesity, were detected over time. While the journal articles may have reported longitudinal studies, they more often deal with smaller sample sizes specific to a particular region or state, so a different type of information was extracted from this data. Together, the data from the national organizations and individual journals compromised a majority of the data for this thesis and served to provide a comprehensive review of the relationship between poverty and obesity while assisting in the generation of realistic solutions to the issue at hand.

Sample of the References section (APA format)

References

Anania, J. (1981). *The effects of quality of instruction on the cognitive and affective learning of students*. (Doctoral dissertation).

Burney, S. M. A. (2008, March 06). *Inductive and deductive research approach*. Retrieved from http://www.drburney.net/INDUCTIVE & DEDUCTIVE RESEARCH APPROACH 06032008.pdf

Christakis, D. A., Zimmerman, F. J., & McCarty, C. A. (2004). Early television exposure and subsequent attentional problems in children. Retrieved from http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/15060216

Clark, D. R. (2010, July 02). *Blooms taxonomy of learning domains*. Retrieved from http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/bloom.html

Cook, J. L., & Cook, G. (2009). *Child development, principles and perspectives*. (2nd ed. ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

David, N. (2009, January 15). *The christian school journal*. [0]. Retrieved from http://christianschooljournal.com/?p=526

E-learning Companion. (2011). elearning-companion. Retrieved from http://www.elearning-companion.com/disadvantages-of-online-learning.html

Ferenstein, G. (2012). Why it's never mattered that america's schools 'lag' behind other countries. Retrieved from http://techcrunch.com/2012/09/16/why-its-never-mattered-that-americas-schools-lag-behind-other-countries/

Gayathri, A. (2012, November 27). Us 17th in global education ranking; finland, south korea claim top spots. . Retrieved from http://www.ibtimes.com/us-17th-global-education-ranking-finland-south-korea-claim-top-spots-901538

International association of k-12 online learning. (2012, February). Retrieved from http://www.inacol.org/press/docs/nacol_fast_facts.pdf

Lips, D. (2010, January 12). *The heritage foundation: Leadership for america*. Retrieved from http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2010/01/how-online-learning-is-revolutionizing-k12-education-and-benefiting-students

May, R. (2000). Retrieved from http://www.businessdictionary.com/article/655/traditional-education-vs-online-education-should-you-switch/

Means, B. (2010, September). *Evaluation of evidence-based practices in*. Retrieved from http://www2.ed.gov/rschstat/eval/tech/evidence-based-practices/finalreport.pdf

Miller, K. (2005). *Communication theories: Perspectives, processes, and contexts*. Boston, MA: Mc-Graw-Hill.

NCLD Editorial Staff. (2012). *Learning disability fast facts*. Retrieved from http://www.ncld.org/types-learning-disabilities/what-is-ld/learning-disability-fast-facts

Rickard, W. (2010, September). *The efficacy (and inevitability) of online learning in higher education*. Retrieved from http://www.pearsonlearningsolutions.com/online-learning/downloads/Online Learning Whitepaper.pdf

Roschelle, J., Pea, R., Hoadley, C., Gordin, D., & Means, B. (2002, April 12). *Changing how and what children learn in school*. Retrieved from http://ctl.sri.com/publications/downloads/PackardChangingLearning.pdf

Torain, J. M. S. J. (2009). *Virtual learning: Is it conducive to student learning*. (Doctoral dissertation).

Trochim, W. (2006, October 20). *Research methods knowledge base*. Retrieved from http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/index.php

Vanek, C. (2012, April 24). Likert scale – what is it? when to use it? how to analyze it? [Web log message]. Retrieved from http://www.surveygizmo.com/survey-blog/likert-scale-what-is-it-how-to-analyze-it-and-when-to-use-it/

Webb, N. M. (1995). Constructive activity and learning in collaborative small groups. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *87*(9), 406-23.

Zourez, L. (2010). *Cooperative learning as a motivational factor in enhancing students' writing*. (Doctoral dissertation)

Sample of an Appendix

Appendix A
Questionnaire Survey:

Questionnaire One utilizes a standard Likert 5 point Likert scale. The following abbreviations and values are used:

Agreement Level:	Abbreviated As:	Likert Point Value:
Strongly Disagree	SD	1
Disagree	D	2
Neutral	N	3
Agree	A	4
Strongly Agree	SA	5

Question: Please check or mark an "X" the appropriate box to indicate strongly disagree (SD) disagree (D) neutral (N) agree (A), or strongly agree (SA).	**SD**	**D**	**N**	**A**	**SA**
1. As a teacher/student teacher, I make efforts to immediately correct student errors while they are doing individual work.					
2. I correct my student's work (Checks over individual work, return tests promptly, offer feedback and help on homework) within a timely manner (within 3 days).					
3. I find that receiving feedback on work helps students improve the quality of their work by fixing mistakes they previously made.					
4. I believe students would get less feedback or individual attention if he or she were to take a class online.					
5. I believe that I am more effective in communicating the information a student needs to learn in a face-to-face setting as opposed to an online model.					
6. I have observed that students are more verbal when they work in small groups.					
7. I have observed that children make more of an effort to show their work to others and are verbally enthusiastic about the product about their work when it is done in a group setting.					
8. I have observed students communicate for longer intervals of time with their peers when working in groups.					
9. I find that students show a more complex level of thinking when working in groups.					
10. I find that students have become more verbal during independent activities after working in small groups.					

11. I find that students want more opportunities to work in small groups.					
12. I believe my students would be less verbal and more inclined to forms of nonverbal communication such as texting if they took their classes online.					
13. I find that being able to work in a group makes my students more comfortable when presenting his or her work in front of the class and myself.					
14. I find that the social skills of my students improve more if they talk to someone face to face rather than through technology (social media, texting, online).					
15. I believe that my face-to-face classroom is a more enjoyable experience than an online classroom because my students have expressed an eagerness to attend my class or show signs of participation to indicate enjoyment.					
16. I find that working in small groups builds skills that will be used in the real world such as proper grammar and conversational etiquette.					
17. I believe that students are more engaged in a face-to-face setting and complete tasks more readily.					
18. I feel that my face-to-face classroom is conducive to developing my students into productive member of society.					
19. I feel that my students would be less prepared to go to a regular college if they took only took online classes.					
20. I feel that my face-to-face classroom better simulates the conditions of a higher learning institution or workplace than an online learning environment.					

Demographics:	**Please write your response:**
21.) Where do you teach? (Name of institution)	
22.) What age level or grade do you teach?	
23.) How many years have you been teaching in total?	
24.) Have you ever been an online teacher? (Indicate yes or no)	
25.) Have you ever been a traditional face-to-face teacher? (Indicate yes or no)	

BARRY UNIVERSITY
HONORS PROGRAM

SENIOR HONORS THESIS PROPOSAL FORM

I. **To be completed by student**:

Student's Name:

Course Prefix and Number: HON 479H H1

Credit Hours Enrolled: 3

Term Thesis Begins:

Defense Term and Date:

Names of four (4) Thesis Supervisory Committee Members **and** affiliated departments (all must be full-time BU faculty):

Thesis Advisor:

Thesis Supervisory Committee Member:

Honors Program Faculty Member:

Honors Program Faculty Member:

Title of Thesis (attach to this form, the following chapters: introduction, literature review, and methodology):

Student's Signature

Date

II. **To be completed by Thesis Advisor**:

Proposed method(s) for student evaluations:

Dates for Student's Progress Reports (please refer to the suggested timeline):

If applicable, tentative date for student to submit to Institutional Review Board (IRB)

Thesis Advisor's Signature

Date

Approved by Honors Program Director:

HP Director's Signature

Date

Copies: Student, Thesis Advisor, and Office of the Honors Program