

APPLICATION PART 1: SOAR COVER SHEET

The SOAR cover sheet will be submitted in hard copy form.

APPLICATION PART 2: FACULTY PROPOSAL

By Debra Wetcher-Hendricks

PROJECT TITLE: Teams, Tones, and Tensions

Faculty Mentors: Dean Christopher Hunt and Dr. Debra Wetcher-Hendricks (Sociology Department)

Student: Victoria Alukpe

Project Start Date: April 25, 2014

Length of Project: approximately 15 weeks*

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

The idea for this project emerged from a discussion between Dean Christopher Hunt and Victoria Alukpe. In this discussion, Victoria mentioned her sense of tension between Black and non-Black athletes at Moravian College. Dean Hunt contacted Dr. Debra Wetcher-Hendricks for guidance regarding the methodological issues involved in performing a study to investigate levels of tension between groups of Moravian College students.

After consideration of various research designs and methods, Dean Hunt, Dr. Wetcher-Hendricks, and Victoria have determined the following plan for gathering and analyzing data.

- A literature review, focusing upon racial relations and interactions between athletes and non-athletes, will be performed. The information obtained from this literature review should validate the importance of the proposed study from both sociological and student-affairs standpoints.
- Questionnaires, composed of Bogardus Social Distance Scale items (which evoke answers from subjects without requiring them to blatantly portray themselves as unkind or disagreeable), will be created to measure levels of tension.
- A proposal for the study will be submitted to the Moravian College Human Subjects Internal Review Board. Further steps will not be conducted until the Board approves the project.
- Data will be gathered from a random sample of LVAIC students. Each individual will self-identify himself or herself as a Black athlete, a non-Black athlete, a Black non-athlete, or a non-Black non-athlete. Then, subjects will respond to questions about the levels of tension that they have experienced when interacting with those in their own.
- Statistical testing will take place. A two-way ANOVA may be conducted to assess the differences between the four groups that supplied data. However, the main statistical analysis will consist of t-tests that address the following hypotheses (pending justification from Literature Review information).

There is more tension among Black athletes than among Black non-athletes. (H: $\bar{X}_{BA} > \bar{X}_{BNA}$)

There is more tension among non-Black athletes than among non-Black non-athletes. (H: $\bar{X}_{NBA} > \bar{X}_{NBNA}$)

The second of these hypotheses, although not part of the original vision of the study, must be considered to assure that, if tension exists, it pertains only to Blacks and is not a widespread tension, characteristic of athletes and non-athletes overall.

- Following steps depend upon the results of the t-tests. If either of the hypotheses is accepted, however, further analysis would focus upon the sources of the existing tension.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In general, Victoria will handle the hands-on aspects of the project and the faculty mentors will work “behind the scenes.” Responsibility for the concrete aspects of the study lies with the students, but the faculty mentors will provide guidance for Victoria at each stage of the research. In some situations, this guidance may simply involve “assessing work.” Victoria, for instance, will conduct research for and write the literature review, with the faculty mentors helping her to produce a document that clearly and completely explains the rationale for the study’s hypotheses. Other situations may require the faculty mentors to provide instruction. It is expected that lessons regarding how to formulate Bogardus-style questions and design a survey as well as how to perform statistical analyses will be required.

The timetable below provides anticipated dates for the completion of project milestones. Please note that preparations for the project begin before the end of the Spring 2014 semester so that Victoria has as much time as possible during the summer to collect and analyze data*.

ACTIVITY	ACCOUNTABILITY	PROJECTED DATE OF COMPLETION
gathering sources for literature review	Victoria in consultation with faculty mentors	May 1, 2014
instruction on developing surveys and survey questions	Dr. Wetcher-Hendricks with Victoria	May 1, 2014
development of survey and submission of research proposal to Human Subjects Internal Review Board	Victoria in consultation with faculty mentors	May 25, 2014
completion of written literature review	1 st draft – Victoria revisions – Victoria in consultation with faculty mentors	June 5, 2014
distribution of surveys	students	June 5, 2014
instruction on data analysis using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS)	Dr. Wetcher-Hendricks with Victoria	June 15, 2014
completion of survey collection	Victoria	June 15, 2014
completion of data analysis	Victoria in consultation with Dr. Wetcher-Hendricks	July 15, 2014
completion of written research report	1 st draft – Victoria revisions – Victoria in consultation with faculty mentors	August 10, 2014

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT IN RESEARCH

This project essentially provides Victoria with an active classroom. She will learn the research process by being involved in it! The project belongs to her; she will design and conduct the study, analyze the data obtained, and draw conclusions. The faculty mentors serve merely as guides, providing Victoria with instruction when needed, ensuring that she conducts a valid study, and helping her to effectively report her findings. Given her intended major in the social sciences, Victoria will gain a strong foundation for the Research Methods courses required by their departments’ curricula.

Most importantly, however, the issue that Victoria will study has personal meaning to her. The vested interest that she has in the topic helps to make her invested in the outcome of it. Further, she has incentive to learn as much as she can about the research process so that she can obtain useful and valid results. Thus, she will be

genuinely concerned with the roles and mechanics of the methodologies she uses, rather than merely considering them necessities of procedure. This level of synthesis characterizes an extremely high level of engagement with the research.

CONTRIBUTION TO FORUMS WITHIN THE DISCIPLINE

Because race relations has received and continues to receive much attention in all social sciences, the importance of this project to Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, and Education are evident. Scholars in each of these disciplines regularly search for patterns of and explanations for discord between members of society. So, identification of the subcultures affected by a particular form of conflict and the source of this conflict would certainly be welcome. Those in each discipline might find different uses for this information, but all will consider it valuable.

Victoria has many options for circulating the findings of her study. She will certainly describe her study at a gathering of students and faculty members conducting SOAR projects during the summer. It is also likely that she will participate in Moravian College's 2015 Scholars' Day, presenting her findings and any research that she has conducted since the summer. The faculty mentors will encourage Victoria to promote her study outside of Moravian College as well. For instance, she may prepare and submit proposals to present at the Lehigh Valley Association of Independent Colleges' Social Research/Social Justice Conference or the Pennsylvania Sociological Society's Annual Meeting, and may submit a manuscript for publication in a student-centered journal such as *Sociological Inquiry*.

* Although the timeframe extends beyond the typical 10-week period for SOAR projects, the amount of time spent working on the project each week falls below the maximum of 40 hours. Thus, the entire project involves meets the overall time commitment limitations.

APPLICATION PART 3: STUDENT STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

By Victoria Alukpe

PROJECT TITLE: Teams, Tones, and Tensions

Name: Victoria Alukpe

Intended Major: Political Science, International Studies, and Africana Studies

Graduation Year: 2017

Faculty Mentors: Dean Christopher Hunt and Dr. Debra Wetcher-Hendricks (Sociology Department)

Campus housing: yes

Project Start Date: April 25, 2014

The idea for this project arose through an observation I had on campus. I noticed the tensions between black athletes and non-black athletes. This seemed like a significant problem to me, because sports contribute greatly to Moravian College's student life. Moravian College has a good sports program. The teams are NCAA Division III competitors in the Landmark conference, and for football, in the Centennial Conference. A high percentage of students on campus participate in a sport. Among Blacks on campus, it is specifically evident whether one participates in sports because Blacks constitute less than 3 percent of the students on campus. It is well known that the majority of African Americans on campus do participate in a sport. This situation can be related to the stereotypical belief that Blacks who come to college are most likely there to participate in a sport.

The African Americans who don't play sports are seen as different or deviant in society. In this case, deviance is defined sociologically to refer to any violation of norms. Possibly, more importantly, though, this circumstance may put pressure on the Black athletes who feel as though they must live up to other stereotypes. This pressure can cause competition between players who are all trying to prove their athletic skills, leading to a lack of solidarity between them. According to Durkheim's 1893 theory of solidarity, "Solidarity attracts men strongly to one another, ensures frequent contacts between them, and multiplies the opportunities available to enter into mutual relationships." Validating this idea, the strained relationships between Black athletes of different teams at Moravian College that I have noticed may be due to a lack of solidarity. This observation and my supposition behind it made me wonder if those tensions exist only among black athletes and the different sport teams as well, and whether it also exists amongst non-blacks. If the tensions exist among all players, then I cannot use my ideas about stereotypes as an explanation for them. But if the tensions exist only among Black athletes, then it is possible that my ideas about the reasons for them are correct.

Given my concern about this issue, I spoke with Dean Christopher Hunt, who directed me to Professor Dr. Wetcher-Hendricks from the Sociology Department to further investigate the supposed problem. We discussed the use of surveys and observations to possibly determine the levels of tension among black athletes, non-black athletes, black non-athletes, and non-black athletes, also considering the athlete teams. To strengthen our research findings, we plan on conducting this study throughout the LVAIC school system possibly even comparing the situation at Moravian to those on the other college campuses.

RATIONALE

My rationale in this project is to increase my understanding of racial relations, sociology and research. The focus of this project may not be in my particular intended major, but my classes in sociology, and learning about human interactions have been of great interest to me.

As an African American who used to participate in sports, I never realized this disunity until I saw it from the perspective as someone who doesn't participate in sports. This motivated me to investigate after possibilities and reasons into why this occurs. The SOAR project will help me to identify the source of the problem and to reduce the tensions created or caused. This project will not only help me in my personal endeavors, but will help others who want to gain perception on issues like this one as well.

It will also help give me a head start and insight into my career of political science, in my focus on urban issues, and solving diversity problems and solutions to prevent them. The project will broaden knowledge on racial issues and complex diversity issues that people may experience helping to spread awareness across the LVAIC school system, and hopefully elsewhere.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

"Teams, Tones and Tensions" would be positive not only to the Moravian College community, but also for other college communities. Information obtained from research can help develop and build improvements of student interaction. I expect this project to give a profound understanding on the topic of diversity, and how this college and many other colleges may help reinforce and encourage interaction amongst all students despite different backgrounds. In addition, the SOAR project will give me an in-depth knowledge of sociology.

Regardless of my finding, I expect to receive great hands-on-experience and on education that cannot be taught in the classroom. It will help sharpen and hone my writing and research skills, which will be very beneficial in my educational career.

SOURCES

Durkheim, E. (1947). *The division of labor in society*. Glencoe, Ill: Free Press.

APPLICATION PART 4: EXPENSE PROPOSAL

PROJECT TITLE: Teams, Tones, and Tensions

Faculty Mentors: Dean Christopher Hunt and Dr. Debra Wetcher-Hendricks (Sociology Department)

Student: Victoria Alupke

ITEMIZED LIST OF EXPENSES

copying fees	1,500 pages @ 10¢ per page	\$150.00
travel expenses	75 miles @ 56¢ per mile @	<u>\$ 42.00</u>
		\$192.00

JUSTIFICATION OF EXPENSES

As with most social research, expenses remain low due to the lack of equipment and supplies needed. The expenses listed above pertain to the creation, distribution, and collection of surveys. Although some social researchers distribute and collect surveys through the Internet, doing so has a number of disadvantages, including low response rates and threats to subject anonymity. Using hard copies of surveys, collected at college campuses and gathered by Victoria on visits to each campus, avoids these problems.

Approximately 500 two-page surveys, each with a separate informed consent document, will be printed. The cost for printing these pages constitutes the copying fees listed above. In addition, Victoria will likely make three trips to each LVAIC campus. On the first trip, she will explain her study to the appropriate individuals. She will then return to deliver the surveys and to collect the surveys. Travel expenses for these visits have, therefore, been included in the itemized list.