



# The Challenger

The Newsletter of the MU McNair Scholars Program

November 2009

## 2009-2010 Internship Begins

A new cohort of bright and talented students have begun their year-long journey with the McNair Scholars Program this fall. These scholars represent a diverse fields of interests. Under the guidance of faculty mentors with similar interests, the scholars gain valuable experience in undergraduate research and graduate school preparation.

At the completion of their research internships these scholars will make a formal presentation to campus administrators, faculty, family and peers at at the McNair Scholars Conference on April 17, 2010

We are very proud of this class as it represents the 20th year of the McNair Scholars Program here at the University of Missouri. We will soon be issuing a special edition of *The Challenger* which will highlight the last 20 years of the program.



### Scholar

Deidre Brookins  
Lorien Hayden  
Kelli King  
Braydon Medlin  
Blossom Nwaneri  
Ashley Price  
Dakota Raynes  
Sydnea Redwine  
Jaqui Rogers  
Michael Schrantz  
Ashley Shaw  
Diliana Stoimenova  
Lezlie Taylor  
Ryan Torack  
Brittany Vickers  
Amanda Watkins  
ChaToyya Walker  
Solida Wise  
Devin Woodson

### Major

Nursing  
Physics  
Psychology  
Business  
Nutrition & Exercise Physiology  
Biological Sciences  
Sociology and Women & Gender Studies  
Marketing  
Secondary Education & English  
Political Science & Journalism  
Nutrition and Fitness  
Biological Sciences  
Agriculture Education  
Sociology  
History & Journalism  
Religious Studies & Anthropology  
History  
Sociology  
Communication

### Faculty Mentor

Linda Bullock  
Paul Miceli  
Nicole Campione-Barr  
Robert Weagley  
Pamela Hinton  
Amit Prasad  
Wayne Brekhus  
Lori Franz  
Peggy Placier  
L. Marvin Overby  
Stephen Ball  
George Davis  
Anna Ball  
Wayne Brekhus & Paul Weirich  
Robert Weems  
Rabia Gregory  
LeeAnn Whites  
Joan Hermesen  
David Brunsm



# What is a Review of Literature?

A review of literature is an essential part of your academic research project. The review is a careful examination of a body of literature pointing toward the answer to your research question. A literature or a body of literature is a collection of published research relevant to a research question. All good research and writing is guided by a review of the relevant literature. Your literature review will be the mechanism by which your research is viewed as a cumulative process. That makes it an integral component of the research process.

The purpose of the literature review remains the same regardless of the research methodology you use. It is an essential test of your research question against that which is already known about your subject. Through the literature review you will discover whether someone else already has answered your research question. If your research question has been answered, you must change or modify your question.

If you find that someone else has not answered your research question satisfactorily, then search out the answers to these questions:

- What is known about my subject?
- What is the chronology of the development of knowledge about my subject?
- Are there gaps in the knowledge of my subject?
- What openings for research have other researchers identified?
- How do I intend to bridge the gaps?
- Is there a consensus on relevant issues? Or is there significant debate on issues?
- What are the various positions?
- What is the most fruitful direction I can see for my research as a result of my literature review?
- What directions are indicated by the work of other researchers?

Only you can determine what is satisfactory, relevant, significant or important in the context of your own research.

**Getting ready to write:** It is time to review your notes and begin the draft of your literature review. Write out your research question again at the head of a list of the various

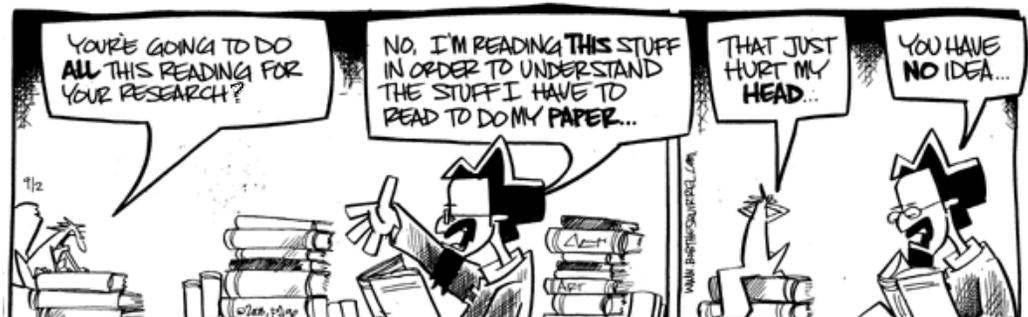
keywords and authors that you have uncovered in your search. Do any pairings or groups pop out at you? You are structuring or sketching out the literature review, which is the first step in writing a research paper, thesis or dissertation. Eventually, a broad overview picture of the literature in your subject area will begin to emerge.

**Writing the review:** In preparing to write your review, remember that your first draft will not be your final draft. Throughout the writing process, allow yourself to write in a non-linear fashion. If a selection of the writing is giving you difficulty, jump to another section.

**Edit and rewrite:** Your goal is to communicate effectively and efficiently the answer you found to your research question in the literature. While editing your work, take into consideration that your review should be clear and concise. Big words and technical terms will make your review hard for all readers to understand. Always re-read what you have written. Once you have edited your work, have someone else proofread your review. Then revise and rewrite it. If you are writing an abstract and introduction, leave them for last.

**Writing the conclusion:** Throughout your written review, you should communicate your new knowledge by combining the research question you asked with the literature you reviewed. End your writing with a conclusion that wraps up what you learned in the literature review process. While the interaction between the research questions and the relevant literature is foreshadowed throughout the review, it usually is written at the very end. The interaction itself is a learning process that gives researchers new insight into their area of research.

*[Information adapted from materials published by the Union Institute]*



From: Bob the Squirrel 9/2/08



# Notes on Networking and Etiquette

As scholars travel to academic conferences, complete with receptions and multi-course meals, these tips on etiquette are becoming more and more helpful. Below are a few more points that will assist in the ever expanding events scholars find themselves attending.

- Respond to invitations and RSVPs promptly. Even if you're unable to attend, let the person or organization know your intentions.
- Be aware of dress codes for events. Check with someone familiar with the event to know what you should wear.
- Place your name tag on the right hand side of your body. This way when someone shakes your hand, their eye goes straight up your arm to your nametag.
- Avoid discussing politics or other controversial topics with people you've just met. You don't know their entire background and can't be certain that what you say won't alienate them. Keep to safe topics such as the event you're attending.
- When being served at a table, wait for everyone to receive their meal or dessert before you begin.
- When looking at your place setting think of a BMW. The **b**read plate is to your left, your **m**eal plate is in the middle, and your **w**ater is to the right.
- Another tip for place setting: touch your thumb to your middle finger on both hands. This makes your left hand into a "b" and your right hand into a "d". You're now pointing to your bread plate and your drink. Make sure to do this inconspicuously.
- Use your silverware starting with the farthest from your plate. You may have a salad fork, a shrimp fork, and a main course fork. They are placed in order that you will use them. The utensil above your plate is reserved for the dessert.



- When attending a reception where you may have to eat standing up. Hold everything in your left hand, as illustrated above, allowing your right hand free to shake hands with others or to eat. To do this, place the plate between your middle and index finger and your drink between your thumb and index finger. Finally, lay the napkin over your pinky.
- Take smaller than normal bites of food. You're not there to gorge yourself. Take your time eating and use the event for your networking needs.
- Don't overcrowd your plate at buffet meals. Only take enough that you can easily manage.

*[Special thanks to Chef Leslie Jett, Hotel & Restaurant Management Program, University of Missouri]*

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## MU McNair October 2009 Highlights

**Workshop/Seminars:** Scholars have participated in several workshops that concentrated on the entire graduate school admissions procedure and the process of conducting academic research.

**GRE Prep Sessions:** Scholars developed test-taking strategies and reviewed the subjects covered by the Graduate Record Examination. In addition, scholars received tips and feedback on the analytical writing section of the exam.

**Research Proposal:** Scholars introduced their research question and sketched out a detailed plan as to how they intend to carry out their research or scholarly activity.

**Senior Retreat:** Graduating scholars received a formal presentation on structuring a CV and contacting faculty as well as in-depth, hands-on assistance in completing their graduate school applications.

**Etiquette Dinner:** Scholars learned the proper protocol of conference dinners and receptions. In addition scholars learned techniques for networking.

**Ronald E. McNair Day:** Former McNair Scholars shared how the various aspects of the McNair Program prepared them for their graduate studies and beyond.



# 2009 MU McNair Journal



The seventeenth edition of the *MU McNair Journal* is now available! This journal includes six of the manuscripts from the 2008-2009 Scholars. The work presented in this journal is the culmination of 275 hours of research that each scholar conducted. Their final papers were reviewed and selected by an editorial review board for inclusion in the journal. The research titles from all 18 scholars are also noted.

The 2009 *MU McNair Journal* can be found online at <http://mcnair.missouri.edu/journals.php> or by requesting a copy at the McNair office. Previous publications are also available online.

Congratulations to everyone selected!



NaTashua Davis  
*Director*

Jeremy Bloss  
*Program Advisor*

Darlene Dixon  
*Program Assistant*

<http://mcnair.missouri.edu>

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