CLAIM – EVIDENCE - REASONING

Every time you post in a discussion forum or write a paper, you are making a **CLAIM** in the form of a statement or statements. At the master’s level, it is not sufficient to merely state your **CLAIM** and expect people to take it seriously. You must support your **CLAIM** with **EVIDENCE**. Evidence is not "my experience says so" or "because I believe it to be true".

**EVIDENCE** includes your textbook(s), existing studies or previous research, your own research data, or what others have written based on a body of research. Always include in-text citations (and accompanying reference entries) for every **CLAIM** you make in your writing. Masters students are expected to go one step further and include the **REASONING** that links your **CLAIM** with the **EVIDENCE** you cite.

For example, if you **CLAIM**, "The New England Patriots are the most successful NFL franchise ever.", your **EVIDENCE** might be “They have an overall record of 476 wins and 383 losses and have been to the Super Bowl nine times, winning it five times (Pro Football Reference).” You would then need to follow this up with your **REASONING**: “While two other teams have as many Super Bowl wins, none have done it as consistently as the Patriots (Pro Football Reference) and none have had as many individual player records.”

Now, if you were asked to respond to that statement and provide feedback, you could respond, “The Pittsburgh Steelers have won six Super Bowl championships (National Football League), so the Patriots cannot be considered the best team by that criteria.” Note that this statement includes **EVIDENCE** that is cited and **REASONING**.

While the above example is simplified, it should give you an idea of the rigor that is expected to be present in your writing in your master’s level courses. For this program, you
cannot expect to be able to sit down and dash off a discussion post in 15 minutes. Nor can you
expect to be able to start a written assignment an hour before it is due. You must allow time in
your schedule for research, formatting, and re-writes. Read over your work several times, read
it out loud, and have someone else read it prior to submitting it for a grade. This will help
ensure you are submitting your best work.

References

National Football League (n.d.) Accessed from


Pro Football Reference (n.d.) Accessed from http://www.pro-football-
reference.com/teams/nwe/.