

## **Research Reflection**

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When I started this project, I was most excited about exploring topics within my field of interest. I appreciated the formality of the assignment and hoped to improve my technical and professional writing skills. My biggest desire, which perhaps originated from my biggest fear in writing the project, was to gain proficiency in exploring ideas thoroughly in research. Ensuring thorough, but clear and directed, research was in fact the greatest challenge throughout the project. By the end of the project, I found the process of developing a research question and navigating a focus most valuable as well.

As I went through the research process, I struggled to solidify my research inquiry, and my ideas shifted by the day. Perhaps the biggest benefit to my project was the feedback and suggestions I received from Dr. Cole. Throughout the whole project, these suggestions and criticisms allowed me to narrow my focus and fine-tune my research method.

Looking back to where I started this project, I am surprised by where my focus ended. That is perhaps something I am also proud of. I had started out with what I realize now were very broad and unsustainable research questions on general research papers within the sciences. With time, I refocused myself onto research grant documents which I then narrowed further into. I had at some point planned to analyze the whole grant document after looking at grant samples that were a few pages in length, only to learn that the grants I was able to access were for a very particular grant and institution. Thankfully, Dr. Cole pointed out that representative research grant documents are far larger, and I once again was able to narrow myself further into the topics.

After the Chiang Research Festival, I was surprised by how people said my work is potentially very impactful for researchers if this were to become a serious publication. Although mostly anticipated, I was slightly surprised that people were not very enthusiastic about my topic. My research topic was very nuanced, perhaps pertaining to only a small subset of researchers.

My participation in the festival didn't significantly change my views of my research in particular, but it did make me reflect on how research presentations and conferences in general cover a wide range of information that will not be within every audience member's understanding. I have learned though, that a poster presentation should be vastly different from the research paper itself.

This project opened my eyes on the wide variety of pathways I could go on to investigate a research question, and I would like to gain more proficiency in developing research methods. I plan to become involved in and contribute to research projects within the next year or two to develop these research skills.

I do envision myself in three or four years leading my own research, and I anticipate that this project will not only allow me to understand the research process in developing a question and investigating it, but the knowledge of writing grant proposals will be useful in obtaining the funding for grants as well. Regardless of the discipline I decide to pursue such research in, I believe this project experience will universally help me in all opportunities.