Topic/Question/Problem Development

Goal

- To develop a focused research topic.
- To develop a relevant and significant research question.

Exercise

1. Read Chapters 3 and 4 in *The Craft of Research*.
2. Develop a research topic by following the suggestions in Section 3.1. Describe in writing how you arrived at the topic (e.g., why are you interested in the topic?) Describe how the suggestions in Section 3.1 helped you refine your topic.
3. Using Section 3.2, evaluate whether your topic is focused enough.
4. Create a list of possible questions about your topic using the suggestions in Sections 3.3.1-3.3.7.
5. For each question, evaluate the significance by following the steps in Sections 3.4.1-3.4.3.
6. Using Section 4.1, identify whether your questions are conceptual or practical and modify your questions in #5 to follow the format in Section 4.2 (e.g., conceptual vs. practical significance).
7. Turn in the write up for #2-6.
8. Bring copies of your problem statements to class for your group members.
9. In your group, you will summarize how you developed your research problem. The group will help you refine your topic/questions by discussing your topic/questions/problem (e.g., to clarify confusing or unclear points, to question the significance or the breadth, etc.). Take notes on their suggestions and comments to modify your problem statement.