

Throughout the course of my research project, I explored the nuances of gender within the King County Drug Diversion Court. Prior to conducting my research and interviewing participants, I interacted with a multitude of material related to drug courts, gender, the criminal justice system, and the intersections of these three closely related topics. This reflective essay offers an in-depth exploration of my research strategies, search methodology, and use of library tools and resources. I will additionally share the insights I have gained throughout this process.

Prior to the research process, I was lucky enough to have assistance from librarian Emily Keller who attended our weekly honors workshop meetings. These workshops included navigating how to best find relevant peer reviewed articles and sources and working with my peers conducting similar research projects.

Because of the extensive preparation that was provided to us by Professor Katherine Beckett and Emily Keller, I approached my research with an awareness of the complexities of drug court, prompting me to consider the unique experiences of each individual engaged in drug court. I began my research by conducting a preliminary sweep of the existing literature surrounding drug court. I aimed to understand the frameworks of current drug court research and the current empirical findings related to drug court. This initial phase involved looking through academic databases and searching through relevant articles that discuss drug court and/or gender. As my understanding of the current drug court process and system grew, I was able to understand the gaps in the existing literature, particularly regarding the gendered experiences of individuals in drug court.

My search strategy was characterized by a methodical and systematic approach aimed at accessing a diverse range of sources and perspectives. I utilized a combination of search techniques, including keyword searches to identify relevant and supported literature related to my research topic. I learned that certain keywords were more effective than others. Emily Keller recommended that we keep a search journal, where we write down the keywords we have used and what kind of information each keywords led us to. This helped with widening the scope of literature I consumed and identified.

I additionally focused on finding and utilizing sources with various perspectives, such as those focusing on the experiences of women and people of color. Despite my extensive research, I found a gap in the literature related to gender and experiences in drug court. Thus, I extended my research by attending King County Drug Diversion Court meetings and was able to talk to participants and personnel and gain more information along with literature recommendations in this way.

Throughout the research process, I made extensive use of library tools and resources to support my inquiry and enhance the rigor of my analysis. I consulted research guides, subject-specific databases, and online catalogs provided by the university library to identify relevant literature and scholarly sources. These resources served as invaluable starting points for my literature review, offering curated collections of peer-reviewed articles.

The assistance provided by Emily Keller, particularly in securing funding from Eleanor J. Pearson Endowed Fund, was instrumental in facilitating my research project. Without her support, I would have faced significant challenges in compensating my research participants adequately. The financial resources obtained through this funding opportunity enabled me to

provide each participant with a \$35 gift card as a token of appreciation for their time and contribution to the study.

This support was especially crucial given the vulnerable and marginalized status of many of the individuals I engaged with during the research process. By compensating participants for their involvement, I aimed to mitigate the potential for exploitation and ensure that the research relationship was characterized by mutual respect and benefit. The provision of financial compensation not only recognized the value of participants' perspectives and experiences but also fostered a sense of trust and reciprocity, thereby enhancing the integrity and ethicality of the research endeavor.

Emily Keller's assistance exemplifies the pivotal role that library services and personnel play in supporting scholarly inquiry and facilitating meaningful engagement with research participants. Her efforts not only contributed to the practical implementation of the research project but also aligned with broader ethical considerations regarding participant compensation and research integrity. Moving forward, I am deeply grateful for the invaluable support provided by library services in advancing my research objectives and promoting ethical research practices.