

## Pioneer Research Institute Evaluation Form

### Scholar Information

|                                    |                                                         |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| Scholar's Full Name:               | Guo, Jiaming (Terry)                                    |
| Scholar's Research Concentration:  | Digital Communication Technologies, Society, and You    |
| Title of Scholar's Research Paper: | What Influences Young People's Choices of Online Games? |

### Grading and Academic Oversight Section

Grade conferred by professor: **A**

*\*Full grading rubric approved by Pioneer Academics and Oberlin College*

The Pioneer Research Institute's college accreditation and academic oversight are conducted collaboratively with Oberlin College:

|                                        |                                                              |
|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| Listing on Common Application:         | "Summer Program, Credit Awarded Directly by Oberlin College" |
| Course Title on Coalition Application: | "099" "Pioneer Research Course"                              |
| College Course ID on UC Application:   | "INST 099" "Pioneer Research Course"                         |

### Comprehensive Evaluation Section

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|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Evaluator Name & Full Title:              | Sascha Goluboff, Director of Community-Based Learning<br>Professor of Cultural Anthropology                                                                             |
| College/University & Department:          | Washington and Lee University, Dept. of Sociology and<br>Anthropology                                                                                                   |
| Full Educational Background of Evaluator: | PhD, Anthropology, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign<br>MFA, Writing, Pacific University<br>BA, Sociology/Anthropology and Russian Studies, Colgate University |

**Please briefly explain the nature and requirements of the research paper and your interaction with the scholar:**

After discussing interactions among digital communication technologies, society, and personal identity during four group sessions, scholars undertook a qualitative research project to learn about an area in this field that interested them. The final research paper reflected the following structure: introduction and thesis, literature review (situate research questions using examples of what other scholars have said about this topic) and hypotheses, methods, results, discussion, conclusion, limitations/future research, and bibliography (Chicago Style for bibliography and in-text citations). Work on the paper was completed in a series of four stages spread throughout the final sessions. Scholars produced an annotated bibliography of relevant sources and drafts of their methods/results, discussion section, and complete paper, all of which I edited and went through with them in individual sessions.

For his research paper, Terry investigated how young people's choices of online games are shaped by social, motivational, and emotional factors. He interviewed 13 teenagers between the ages of 15 and 18 about their gaming habits. After reviewing the literature and applying theoretical concepts to his data, he found that the interviewees did not choose games based on any single reason. Instead, their choices and preferences were influenced by factors like what their friends played, what sort of gameplay they enjoyed, and whether they had the time or resources to access the game. He discovered that social connection was consistently one of the strongest influences, with other factors like competition, progression, freedom, and access to gaming resources also affecting participant choices. Unlike what other studies have shown, he discovered that gender was generally not an important factor in determining what the participants chose to play, but it affected the gaming environments and communities through stereotypes, assumptions, and even harassment.

Working with Terry, I was impressed by his motivation to locate and interview 13 individuals. He meticulously analyzed their responses and presented them in charts and quotes. He also was adept at connecting theoretical concepts with his results. He showed excitement and exploring new insights gleaned from his data and was open to the many suggestions I had for conceptual development and structural edits in his paper. He came to the individual sessions ready to discuss his findings and produce quality results.

**Please rate the scholar in the following areas:**

|                                                                       | Excellent | Good | Average | Below Average | Poor |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|------|---------|---------------|------|
| Ability to form original ideas and concepts                           | X         |      |         |               |      |
| Ability to communicate thoughts in an effective and articulate manner | X         |      |         |               |      |
| Ability to synthesize and organize information from disparate sources | X         |      |         |               |      |
| Level of scholar's curiosity, aptitude, and industriousness           | X         |      |         |               |      |

**Based on the scholar's performance throughout Pioneer, how would you rate this scholar's potential for undergraduate-level academic work at a top college/university, relative to other undergraduate students whose academic work you have mentored?**

|                                            |                      |
|--------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| One of the best I have encountered, top 5% | Excellent, top 10% X |
| Very Good, top 25%                         | Good, top 50%        |
| Below Average                              |                      |

**Describe some of the scholar's strengths:**

Terry took seriously the opportunity to learn during this course. He brought his best to every assignment and session. He seemed to quickly understand the theoretical materials he read for his research, and he was able to deftly apply them to his data, resulting in his identifying new trends that these original studies and concepts did not address. I see that as the highest form of learning -- he was able to not only digest new material but critique in when applying it to his own results. He came to the individual sessions ready to work and showed creativity and enthusiasm for the meandering research and writing process, not cutting corners to finish quickly. He also shows the ability to think across disciplines.

**Describe some areas in which the scholar can improve:**

One area where Terry can improve is his ability to focus on details, especially when it comes to editing the final draft. There were places he missed adding in small (but important) details (like percentages) or fixing sentence structure.

**While the second half of the research work was one-to-one with the professor, the first half involved a small research cohort of 3-6 scholars. Describe the contribution that the scholar made to the research group discussion and learning:**

Class sessions focus on reviewing and deeply discussing assigned readings. I also bring in opportunity for scholars to share what they wrote on their weekly assignments that aim to link the literature to their own experiences. They gather in breakout rooms and report back to the whole class what they learned/surmised from each other.

Terry provided summaries of the literature, as well as brought the class to new understandings of the readings through insightful questions and comments. He was always courteous to the other students and engaged them in thoughtful conversations.

**Would you recommend this scholar to a college admissions officer at a top college or university? Why or why not?**

Yes, I would recommend Terry for admission in a top college or university. He follows assignment directions well, and he is a creative and cross-disciplinary thinker who enjoys being academically challenged. Large workloads don't seem to bother him.

|                                  |                                                                                    |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Evaluator's Signature:</b>    |  |
| <b>Evaluator's Printed Name:</b> | Sascha Goluboff                                                                    |
| <b>Date of Evaluation:</b>       | July 10, 2026                                                                      |
| <b>Evaluator's Email:</b>        | <a href="mailto:goluboffs@wlu.edu">goluboffs@wlu.edu</a>                           |

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Pioneer Academics affirms that the scholar whose research paper is attached has followed Pioneer Academics' protocols for developing original research and that their paper has met Pioneer Academics' standards for authenticity. The grading and evaluation have met the standards collaboratively defined by Pioneer Academics and Oberlin College & Conservatory. If there are any questions regarding the work's academic integrity, please contact us at [academic.integrity@pioneeracademics.com](mailto:academic.integrity@pioneeracademics.com) or by calling (855) 572-8863. We will conduct an immediate review and respond to your questions promptly.