

Working Title: Short-Form Video and Academic Performance: How TikTok Use Affects Study Habits in College Freshmen

Research Question: Does daily TikTok use above 90 minutes negatively affect study session length and GPA among first-year college students?

Thesis Statement: Frequent short-form video consumption rewires attention span in ways that reduce study effectiveness, with measurable effects on academic performance during the first year of college.

Background: Research on social media and student performance has grown significantly since 2015, with most studies focusing on Facebook and Instagram. However, short-form video platforms like TikTok represent a newer category characterized by rapid content switching and algorithmic engagement loops, which are features not present in earlier platforms. Existing studies (Anderson & Jiang, 2023; Liu et al., 2024) show correlations between TikTok use and reduced task persistence, but few studies isolate first-year college students specifically.

Methodology: This paper will analyze peer-reviewed studies published between 2018 and 2025, focusing on research that measures app usage data against GPA or self-reported academic engagement. Survey data from two university-published studies will serve as primary data points.

Expected Outcomes: The paper expects to find a negative correlation between daily TikTok use exceeding 90 minutes and academic performance metrics. These findings could inform digital wellness interventions at the course or institution level.

Preliminary Bibliography:

Anderson, M., & Jiang, J. (2023). Social media and student attention: A longitudinal study. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 115*(4), 412-428.

Liu, X., Zhang, H., & Chen, R. (2024). Short-form video platforms and cognitive load in adolescent learners. *Computers in Human Behavior, 148*, 107-119.

Rosen, L. D. (2012). *iDisorder: Understanding our obsession with technology*. Palgrave Macmillan.