

BUS 230: Business and Economics Research and Communication

Instructor: Dr. James Murray

Final Paper Guidelines

Final Paper Due On Friday, May 17 by 5:00pm

Your paper and presentation should clearly follow this outline:

1. **Introduction / Literature Review:** Clearly state your research question and sell your research project. By this, I mean convince your audience that this is an interesting topic, and that the work you are doing makes important steps at discovering something new in this field. In this process, you should include cite some literature that demonstrates what is already known about your topic, and use this to help motivate your work.
2. **Methodology:** Explain how you are going to answer your research question. What is your population? How do you collect data? What survey questions do you ask. What variables do you collect? What kinds of comparisons or associations are you going to look for in your variables. Keep this discussion focused on your research question. Describe how your analysis is going to help answer questions related to your main topic.
3. **Results:** Describe and illustrate (using graphs or tables) your results. Describe what statistical tests you ran, what the results were, and what conclusions do you draw from this. Bring your results back to your research question. What did you find was the answer? Keep this section organized around themes related to your research question; do not report statistical test after statistical test. Keep the discussion focused on your project idea. What does each test, graph, or table, help you learn regarding your research question.
4. **Conclusion / Discussion:** Answer some of the following questions: What did you learn? What are some of the weaknesses of your project? What questions related to your main point are left unanswered by your research project? Is there a need to do further research on this area? Does your paper suggest another research question as the next step in advancing knowledge in this field?

Additional comments:

- You may have previously written earlier drafts all these sections at different points in the semester. Still, the final paper should be a cohesive and consistent document. You may label each section in the paper, much as chapters or sections are titled in textbooks. Still, you should re-read the entire paper and revise it so that it is a document that smoothly transitions from one section to the next.
- Make sure the different sections are consistent with one another. For example, the methodology and results should be discuss the same sample, same survey questions or variables, and the same statistical tests. The methodology should address explicitly the research question that is stated in the introduction. The conclusion/discussion section should describe what you learned from your project, within the context of the research question stated in the introduction.
- You may include an appendix that includes additional graphs, charts, tables, or statistical results. Still, the document apart from you appendix should read smoothly as a complete document. Readers who choose to ignore the appendix should still get a full experience from reading your paper, and a full understanding of your entire paper. Readers would go to an appendix if they were interested in more minute detail. These are likely readers who would try to conduct a similar project themselves.

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Final Paper Rubric

Your paper will be evaluated according to the following rubric:

Trait	Below expectations (C,D,F Level)	Meets Expectations (B-BC Level)	Exceeds Expectations (A-AB Level)
Introduction			
Background information. Provide enough necessary background information to understand the purpose and appreciate the importance of the paper, without providing unnecessary details.	Background is insufficient to understand the purpose of the paper or appreciate its importance <i>or</i> background information is significantly beyond what is necessary.	Background is sufficient to understand the purpose and importance of the paper, with no more than a few missing details or extra information.	Background is sufficient to understand the purpose and importance of the paper.
Relevant literature is cited. Cite peer-reviewed literature that both provides a background for what is known on the topic, and allow the literature to motivate the paper.	Citations fail to provide sufficient background and/or they fail to motivate the paper.	Citations provide sufficient background, but they fail to motivate the paper.	Citations are cited to provide sufficient background, and they motivate the paper.
Research question is clearly stated and is sufficiently narrow, well-defined, and measurable.	The research question is unclear by the end of the introduction.	A measurable research question is clearly stated, but the specific research question lacks motivation.	A measurable research question is clearly stated and it is a natural culmination of the background information and motivation.

Trait	Below expectations (C,D,F Level)	Meets Expectations (B-BC Level)	Exceeds Expectations (A-AB Level)
Methodology			
<p>Data collection. Describe your target population, your sampling procedure, and your survey instrument, in a such way that is consistent with your specific research question, and with enough detail so that a reader could replicate your work.</p>	<p>Some of the descriptions of the population, sample, and/or survey are not clear.</p>	<p>The descriptions of the population, sample, and survey are clear, but perhaps not in sufficient detail to replicate the project.</p>	<p>The population, sample, and survey are described in a simple fashion and in enough detail so that the study could be replicated by a reader.</p>
<p>Variables. Describe your variables, the scale of measurement, and explain what comparisons or associations will be made (this is your methodology). Make it clear in your description how this analysis answers your research question.</p>	<p>The methodology lacks clarity or details to understand how it addresses the research question.</p>	<p>The methodology is clear and lacks at most a few details to understand how it addresses the research question.</p>	<p>The methodology is clear and it exactly addresses the research question.</p>

Trait	Below expectations (C,D,F Level)	Meets Expectations (B-BC Level)	Exceeds Expectations (A-AB Level)
Results.			
<p>Descriptive Statistics. Explain and report the response rate and descriptive statistics of your sample. Describe generalizations about the sample that are useful in understanding the population and providing a context for the results.</p>	<p>Some important descriptive statistics are missing and/or explanations are missing.</p>	<p>Descriptive statistics are presented and accompanying explanation/discussion is nearly sufficient, but could be expanded.</p>	<p>Descriptive statistics are presented and with sufficient explanation/discussion to understand the results and understand the sample.</p>
<p>Statistical Method: Explain your choice for the statistical tests, clearly highlight statistical significance, and report your conclusions in plain English. Choices for statistical tests should be appropriate for your research question and for the data you use.</p>	<p>Statistical tests are not appropriate and/or the introductions to the tests or discussions of conclusions or missing or incorrect.</p>	<p>Statistical tests are adequately introduced and their conclusions are correct and clearly discussed, with at most a few errors or omissions.</p>	<p>Statistical tests are adequately introduced and their conclusions are correct and clearly discussed.</p>
Conclusion.			
<p>Conclusion / Discussion Summarize the study's most important findings and describe the study's weaknesses and/or what questions remain unanswered. The conclusion should follow naturally from the results section and explicitly address the research question.</p>	<p>The conclusion lacks significant detail of the study's findings, weaknesses, or shortcomings and/or the discussion is unrelated to other parts of the paper.</p>	<p>At most only a few details of the study's findings, weaknesses, or shortcomings are discussed and it ties in with the rest of the paper.</p>	<p>There is adequate discussion of the the study's findings, weaknesses, or shortcomings, and it ties in with the rest of the paper.</p>