Heather Salazar’s Grading Criteria for the Science Unit

Paper Elements:

1. Proposal (10): The proposal should be no longer than two pages. It should introduce the topic, explain the importance of the investigation, state your hypothesis and outline your intended study or studies.

2. Abstract (10): The abstract should be no longer than one-half page. It should summarize your paper, and include a brief statement of your hypothesis, study, results and conclusion.

3. Introduction and Background (15): Your introduction can be adapted from part of your proposal and should include your research question, hypothesis and importance of the ideas involved. Your background should include 2 studies published in professional psychology journals or books. It should summarize these studies and explain the relevance to your present study.

4. Study Design and Methods (10): Your study should test your hypothesis by using either naturalistic observation or a survey. It should be done so as to eliminate extraneous variables as much as possible and target the variables that you are testing in order to give a valid answer to your research hypothesis. Your methods describe your sample population, the tools that you use to conduct the study, and the environmental conditions, including anything that you say to the participants. If you use a survey, you should describe the questions.

5. Results (5): The results should be easy to follow, and preferably in a table or diagram.

6. Discussion and Conclusion (10): In your discussion, you should explain any problems in the design or execution of the study that you can now see and identify any extraneous variables you were unable to eliminate which might have impacted the results of the study. (Note: there will always be extraneous variables, and highlighting them is a mark of a good researcher.) In your conclusion, you should explain whether the result conforms to your hypothesis why you think people responded in this way.

7. References (10): Your citations that you use in your paper and your references at the end of the paper should be in proper APA format.

Writing in the Paper:

8. Clarity (5): Your ideas should be presented in an unambiguous way, through the use of precise language and incorporating definitions of technical concepts where necessary. Clear statements and labeling of your objectives, hypothesis, and other items are important.

9. Reasoning (5): Your ideas should progress in a natural and logical way, your reasoning processes should be clear, and you should endeavor to be objective in considering the strength of your study and results.

10. Tone (5): As a scientist, you should strive to present your ideas in an objective but accessible way.

11. Organization and Proper APA Style (5): Your paper should be in accordance with the APA standards that we discuss in class, which will include the appropriate headings and title page, etc.

12. Grammar and Punctuation (5): Your paper should be professionally-presented, free from grammatical and punctuation errors.

Sharing of Your Results (5): Briefly discuss your research question, hypothesis and results with the class.

- Note: This class requires headings in the categories listed but does not require the labeling of charts.
- APA Resources: [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/)