BUS 230: Business and Economics Research and Communication
Instructor: Dr. James Murray
Final Report Guidelines

Your paper and presentation should clearly follow this outline:

1. **Cover Page:** First and separate page that includes the following:

   - Title

   - Authors and affiliations. That is, each group member's name. Their affiliation can include their major and the University of Wisconsin La Crosse

   - Date

   - Executive summary: 200-400 words that summarizes the purpose and findings of the research project. You will probably be best able to write this after you finish all the rest of the paper.

2. **Introduction:** Clearly state your research question and sell your research project. By this, I mean convince your audience (your client) that your specific research question is an interesting one to them, and that the work you are doing makes important steps at discovering something new.

3. **Survey, Variables, and Sample:** Your client may not be familiar with the survey. Describe the following:

   - The variable you use in your analysis

   - The survey questions that produced the variables you used (perhaps put the actual questions in a table or appendix)

   - Sample size and who the survey was administered to

4. **Analysis and Results:** Explain what analysis you conduct to answer your research question. This can include, but is not limited to, any of the following:

   - Descriptive statistics for your variables

   - Comparisons between variables such as differences in means or medians, correlations

   - Visualizations that show comparisons between variables or categories in a plot

   Describe the conclusions of any statistical tests you use, but keep out descriptions of hypothesis, statements about rejecting and failing to reject, etc. Report the name of the statistical test, a one-sentence description of what the test does, p-values, and plain English conclusions. If you have confidence intervals in plots (confidence bounds error bars), describe the meaning behind these comparisons.

5. **Conclusion / Discussion:** Answer some of the following questions:

   - What did you learn? What conclusions can you draw that your audience may find interesting?

   - What decisions may your conclusions help inform? 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?

Format

- Separate cover page

- Single-spaced, blocked paragraphs (i.e. space between paragraphs)

- Organized into sections (and optionally subsections) with section headings

- Tables and figures should be numbers and titled

- No page length requirement. A shorter report is better as long as all of the above issues are addressed.

Introduction Section			
Trait	**Below expectations (C,D,F Level)**	**Meets Expectations (B-BC Level)**	**Exceeds Expectations (A-AB Level)**
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 *or* 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.
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.

Survey and Variables Section			
Trait	**Below expectations (C,D,F Level)**	**Meets Expectations (B-BC Level)**	**Exceeds Expectations (A-AB Level)**
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.	Some of the descriptions of the population, sample, and/or survey are not clear.	The descriptions of the population, sample, and survey are clear, but perhaps not in sufficient detail to replicate the project.	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.
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.	The methodology lacks clarity or details to understand how it addresses the research question.	The methodology is clear and lacks at most a few details to understand how it addresses the research question.	The methodology is clear and it exactly addresses the research question.

Analysis and Results Section			
Trait	**Below expectations (C,D,F Level)**	**Meets Expectations (B-BC Level)**	**Exceeds Expectations (A-AB Level)**
Analysis: Report the method of your statistical analysis and data visualization, highlight findings, and report your conclusions in plain English. Choices for methods should be appropriate for your research question and for the data you use.	Methods are not appropriate and/or the introductions to the tests or discussions of conclusions or missing or incorrect.	Methods are adequately introduced and their conclusions are correct and clearly discussed, with at most a few errors or omissions.	Methods are adequately introduced and their conclusions are correct and clearly discussed.
Organization: Organization should be meaningful, have smooth transitions, and be consistent with other sections in the paper.	Organization of results is unfocused or not meaningful and/or transitions are lacking.	Most transitions are smooth and organization of results is meaningful and consistent with other aspects of the paper.	Transitions are smooth and organization of results contributes to understanding the purpose and outcome of the research.
Tables / Figures: Tables and figures should be professionally presented, easy to understand, and clearly contribute to the purpose of the research.	Tables and figures are not clear and/or their message does not clearly address the purpose of the research.	Tables and figures are professionally presented and are easy to understand.	Tables and figures are professionally presented, easy to understand, and contribute to the reader's understanding of the outcome of the research.

Conclusion Section			
Trait	**Below expectations (C,D,F Level)**	**Meets Expectations (B-BC Level)**	**Exceeds Expectations (A-AB Level)**
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.	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.	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.	There is adequate discussion of the the study's findings, weaknesses, or shortcomings, and it ties in with the rest of the paper.