



TeachPsychScience.org

Resources for Teaching Research, Statistics, and Writing in Psychology

Title of Resource	Assignment: Presenting a Research Proposal
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Brief Description:	The assignment has students formally present a proposed research study they conceptualize and develop to answer a research question of interest.
Keywords:	Communicating Science, Presenting Research, Research Talks
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Instructors:

This assignment requires students to formally present a proposed research study. Students must conceptualize and develop a research protocol and data analysis plan before giving this presentation. You may consider giving this assignment at the end of the semester as a way to review and interact with design concepts you have been teaching all semester.

Students will get experience with designing a research study based on a topic/research question that is of interest to them and develop a methodology for the study. They will also get experience presenting and explaining research. The class will receive exposure to many research topics and designs.

The presentation can range in timing depending on class availability and size. I limit students to a 5-6 minute timeframe, but you can give students more time if you want a more detailed presentation.

I use this presentation in conjunction with a formal written research proposal that students also complete. It is in the written proposal that I grade the quality of the research idea and methodology. Please note that I do not grade students' presentation skills for this assignment as I want them to become comfortable speaking in a low pressure environment. You may choose to grade the presentation skills. For this presentation, I simply note whether students included the requested information in their presentation. I included the checklist I use to monitor that below.

As students tend to dislike public speaking, you might want to convey the importance of communication skills (the ability to convey information effectively using a variety of methods) in life after graduation. The ability to speak in front of others is an extremely valuable skill to have, and is one that is cultivated through practice. This assignment will help them share their original research idea with others as well as practice this skill.

Presenting a Study Proposal

For this assignment, you will formally present a research study you conceptualize and develop to answer a research question of your choice. This will give you experience presenting and explaining research.

Presentation Details:

- Your presentation will be very brief. It should be 5-6 minutes long. Believe it or not, being succinct is more difficult than being overly verbose. You will be surprised how the time will fly, so the real trick will be avoiding superfluous details. Please practice the timing of your presentation as part of your presentation preparation.
- Your presentation skills will NOT be graded. Provided you make a good faith effort, there is absolutely no chance that your grade will be affected by your presentation skills. Public speaking is an acquired skill. I hope that not having your presentation skills graded will reduce your anxiety and allow you to be more natural and relaxed (both characteristics of good speakers). Your grade will be based on the accuracy and thoroughness of the information included, the quality of your visual aid, and your participation in class (i.e. asking questions and offering suggestions for others' designs).

Content:

The purpose of your presentation is to share your proposed research design with the class. In order to do this, you will need to address the following:

- Your research question and rationale
 - What is the goal/objective of your study?
- Justify why your research question is important to study
 - How does it build on previous research?
 - Be sure to address what is new and different about your study and include citations as necessary.
- The design you selected to answer your research question
 - e.g., survey, two-group, multi-group, within subjects, etc.
 - Be sure to justify why it is the best design for your research question.
- Your method for data collection
 - Provide operational definitions for key concepts. Be sure to be very clear about how things will be manipulated and/or measured.
 - The procedure
 - Explain what your will participants do, hear, and see between consent and debriefing
 - Here a brief/partial demonstration would be great if it applies—it is always better to show than explain!
- Your hypotheses
 - Make sure they are complete based on the research design you selected.
- The limitations of your study design
 - What methodological limitations does your study design have?
 - Give one good reason your study might not work. No research design is perfect!

Visual Aids:

Please create a PowerPoint slideshow to accompany your presentation. Visuals can really help convey information. However, you should only use PowerPoint to support what you plan to say, offering key word or visuals to represent the concepts you will discuss. You should have very few words on your slides and should NOT just read your slides to the class when presenting. Good presenters use PowerPoint for support, not as scripts for their talks.

Presentation Evaluation

Name of presenter: _____

*This evaluation is about the content of your presentation. Your presentation skills were not graded as long as you made a good faith effort.

Content:

1. Did the presentation accurately and thoroughly address your general research question or purpose of your study?
 Yes Partially No
2. Did the presentation accurately and thoroughly address why this study is important and how it builds on previous research using citations?
3. Yes Partially No
4. Did the presentation accurately and thoroughly address what design used to answer the research question and justify that choice?
 Yes Partially No
5. Did the presentation accurately and thoroughly address include the hypotheses?
 Yes Partially No
6. Did the presentation accurately and thoroughly describe the method? Including:
 - a. operational definitions for key concepts (IVs manipulated; DV measured)
 Yes Partially No
 - b. procedure
 Yes Partially No
7. Did the presentation include the appropriate proposed analyses to test the hypothesis?
 Yes No
8. Did the presentation include any applicable demonstrations or visuals within it?
 Yes No N/A
9. Did the presentation include at least one good reason why one of the hypotheses may not work?
 Yes No
10. Was the presentation conducted within the specified time allotment?
 Yes No
11. Student adequately participated in class discussion of classmates' proposals?
 Yes No