Data analysis and Results section  
due Mon., Feb. 28, beginning of class

In this part of the course project, you will have to consider the data you and your colleagues have collected, decide what tests and procedures would be appropriate to conduct, conduct those tests and procedures, and write your results. You may consult with others in the class in deciding what tests to conduct, but you (and your partner, if applicable) should conduct the tests on your own and write up your results section on your own.

Choosing analyses

We will discuss some analyses that you could conduct on your data during class. However, in general, you should always begin with your initial question. What do you want to know about? How can your data supply an answer to your question?

Next, identify your independent and dependent variables. What kind of variables are they (categorical? continuous?)? How many of each do you have? What kinds of tests can you do with the types of data that you have? Each of you should be able to do at least two different kinds of hypothesis tests in your data. However, don’t just do tests randomly; the hypothesis tests should directly or indirectly help you to answer your original course project question.

Writing results

In writing your results section, you may find it helpful to consult the APA Manual section on the results section (pp. 20-26) as well as the sections on Numbers (pp. 122-130), Tables (pp.147-176) and Figures (pp. 176-202). When you report your results, you need to report your statistics (t, r, chi-square values) and significance levels (p values). Usually authors will report more important results first and then less important results. You should certainly keep in mind good writing even while reporting numbers; your paragraphs should have structure, with a topic sentence supported by other sentences, and should have transitions between. Topic sentences are generalizations of some set of your results. In addition to reporting your data analysis in words, I would also like for you to include at least one table or figure with your result section. Figures and tables are usually submitted on a separate page each, with figure captions on an additional separate page (see pp. 301-302 and the sample manuscript). Remember to reference your table or figure in the text of your results section.
The final version of the paper will be a combination of the other sections we have worked on thus far. In addition to the literature review, the method, and the results, you will also need to write a brief discussion section and an abstract. The discussion section should restate your results in a nontechnical (i.e., non-statistical) fashion, so that a person with no statistical training can understand the main findings. You then should describe any potential problems with the experiment that may have influenced your results. Finally, you should talk about how the study answers your question and relates to other research that has been done in the field. Does the study give you the answer that you predicted based on prior research?

The abstract is a very brief (usually no more than 150 words) description of your entire study. Usually it includes a sentence or two about the area of study (perhaps why it is interesting), about the background theory or research (perhaps your predictions), about your method and your results.

The entire paper should be in strict APA format. You may want to look at the sample manuscript in the APA manual to check your formatting. You can also take this opportunity to revise the sections of the paper that you submitted earlier. Take a day or two to reread the sections and consider any editorial comments that you received from Mija or Nora.