

### Second Writing Assignment

Write a short paper (1-2 pages, double-spaced, typed) on the question assigned for your section. These are to be turned in by Noon on Saturday, November 28. Papers should be submitted electronically to your TA in .doc or .rtf format. If this is not possible, you may deliver them to your TA's mailbox by Noon. The goal of this paper is to explain clearly the central concepts employed in the question you are to address. Assume that your audience is a fellow student not in this class. To explain the material to that person you cannot just use the concepts we have developed in class but *explain* them. Present your answers totally in your own words—do not quote material either from the website, the lecture powerpoints, or anyone else.

A-01 and A-02. Design an experimental study to determine whether X is a cause of Y. You choose the X and the Y. They should be concrete variables (i.e. "X" and "Y" should not themselves be the variables under study). Some examples might be: watching violent TV causes violent behavior, working long hours causes stress. Discuss all critical factors involved in designing a good experiment, including how X and Y are to be operationally defined, potential extraneous and/or confounding variables, etc. How will confounds be controlled for? Be clear about how you would reason from the possible results of the experiment to a conclusion about causation. Reflect on the potential shortcomings or limitations of the study as you have designed it and whether there are ways to minimize them. Be sure to define and clearly explain all key concepts you use in your paper.