

Second Writing Assignment, Winter 2004

Sections A and B: Monday afternoon sections (Sophia Efstathiou, TA)

Explain what a confounding variable is. Give an example of an experiment (actual or made up) where a confounding variable compromises the internal validity of the experiment. What would be the best way to control for the confounding variable in this case? (There may be more than one option.) Explain how your solution would validate the experiment.

The paper is due in lecture Thursday, March 4. Hard copies only. I will not accept late copies this time!!

Sections C and D: Thursday afternoon sections (Lisa Damm, TA):

Again you are to write a 2 page (max 600 words, double spaced with 1" margins) paper. Cover sheets are not necessary, but please indicate which section you are in (i.e. section c or d). The paper is due at the end of lecture on Thursday, March 4. Papers are to be handed in directly to me. Papers handed in after this will be considered late and marked down accordingly.

Begin by describing both prospective and retrospective studies. Make sure that you point out some of the important differences between these two types of studies. Next pick a plausible topic for a scientific study (e.g. skin cancer) and decide whether you think it would be more advantageous to use a prospective or retrospective study in this case. Make sure that you discuss at least 2 reasons why you think the chosen type of study would be better in this case. Finally, discuss at least 1 potential problem (or drawback) that might still arise given your chosen type of study.