**What goes in a Final Report?**

The last step in the project is to summarize the different stages into a final report. It is very important that the final report contains all the necessary information regarding your project. Try to keep in mind that you should write the report so that the reader would be able to recreate all of your steps, if they so desire.

The report will need to consist of **at least all** of the following sections:

1. Abstract
2. Introduction
3. Project Design
4. Implementation of the Project Design and Data Summary
5. Data Analysis and Inference
6. Results and Discussion
7. References

The Abstract is a one page summary of your project that explains your research question and the most significant findings of your project. You should consider the abstract as a one page advertisement for your project.

The Introduction should describe and discuss the research question you seek to explore. In this section you should propose a study, state its purpose and explain what questions you hope to answer and why these particular questions are of interest. The introduction should answer questions such as: How did you choose your research topic? What is interesting about your question? Why do you think it is important?

The Project Design section should explain how you planned the data collection portion of the project. For example, if you conducted a survey this section should, among other things, discuss how you formulated the survey questions, how you decided what sample size was needed and how you chose your random sample. For experiments, it should include a detailed description of your experimental design protocol.

The Implementation of Project Design and Data Summary section should explain how the data was collected and organized. Discuss whether there were any unexpected difficulties or problems that occurred during the data collection, and whether these factors may somehow affect your final analysis. You do not need to hand in the raw data.

In the Data Analysis and Inference section, you should include a description of the data analysis and inference you performed on the data, as well as your conclusions. Make sure that you edit the output you get from STATA, and only show the output that is relevant to the final results of your project. Make sure to include all the methods you used and all relevant graphs.

In the Results and Discussion section you should give a detailed interpretation of the major findings of your study. In addition, you can discuss the following aspects of the project (not necessarily all or restricted to only these):

- Using the data you collected, were you able to effectively answer all the questions you initially sought to answer?
- Was there any bias in your data?
• Were the statistical methods you chose suitable for the acquired data?
• Did the results of your study agree with your initial expectations? Did they agree with similar studies conducted by other researchers?
• Was there anything in the results that surprised you?
• If you were to repeat the project, are there any important improvements you could or would want to achieve?

Finally, at the end of the report, it is important that you include all the relevant references you used in conducting the project in a separate Reference section.

Please try to keep the length of the report between 5-10 pages long. You can decide how many pages to write depending on the nature and results of your project. Please do not use a font size smaller than Arial 10 pts.

**What makes a good Final Report?**

A good report should tell the "story" of your study. It should be written in a way that allows a reader to re-create the study using your report as a guide. Write the report in an order that makes logical sense for the reader, with the understanding that this may not necessarily be exactly the same as the physical or chronological order used to conduct your project.

Make sure that your report is precise and to the point, and that you have explained all the important details clearly. It is important that the report is readable and understandable for somebody who was not involved in the project. It is always helpful to include plenty of visual aids, such as graphs acquired using STATA, to help explain your results and allow you make your points.

**What makes a bad Final Report?**

There are a number of factors that can weaken the impact of your final report. These factors include, but are not limited to: use of unclear or incorrect visuals, poor organization and lack of proof-reading.

**Sample Final Reports**

To look at three sample reports, see:

http://www.columbia.edu/itc/statistics/w1111/