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July 11, 2016

Ben de Hoyos  
Adjunct Professor  
Department of English  
Brigham Young University

Dear Ben,

Enclosed is the proposal for our research paper that we will be submitting at the end of the semester. This proposal introduces and outlines our research paper succinctly. We will be researching the current safety habits and standards regarding stand up paddleboarding, and once our research is complete, we will offer insights and recommend changes that should be made in the stand up paddleboarding community.

Included in our proposal are:

- An Introduction to identify and illuminate the scope of the issue.
- The Current Situation of stand up paddleboarding, including the importance and urgency of this research.
- Our Project Plan; an outline describing what we will research and our methodology behind it.
- Our Management Plan, which includes a Gantt chart.
- A list of resources we plan to use.

We ask that after reviewing our proposal, you grant it, which will enable us to start drafting the final version of our research report, which we will deliver to you at the end of the semester.

Should you have any questions or areas of concern regarding our research paper, please contact us directly by email at [tylerboyack9@gmail.com](mailto:tylerboyack9@gmail.com) or by phone at 520-343-8325. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Respectfully,

Tyler Boyack, Janae Pettit, Jonathan Wilson, Joshua Fullwood



English 316  
Research Proposal

Janae Pettit  
Jonathan Wilson  
Joshua Fullwood  
Tyler Boyack

# RECTIFYING STAND UP PADDLEBOARD SAFETY MEASURES

*Looking for preventative measures to improve safety in stand up paddleboarding, ensuring more positive experiences with this enjoyable sport.*

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# INTRODUCTION

Recently, stand up paddleboarding has become an increasingly popular sport. With such popularity also comes tragedy; in June of 2016 alone, four deaths were reported being directly linked to the sport (Haworth, 2016). Currently, there are very few safety regulations in place with respect to training, equipment and so on. As the number of participants rises each year, the possibility of severe accidents also rises. We hope to determine a way to keep the number of future stand up paddleboarding injuries and fatalities to a minimum.

## Purpose

The goal of this research is to find potential weak spots that might cause these sport-related deaths and injuries and to make recommendations to prevent a more severe rise in such incidents. These recommendations may include changes to safety regulations, redesign of safety equipment, and/or better education on the safe practices of the sport.

## Objective

The objective of our research is to investigate three factors that are critical to ensuring the safety of stand-up paddle boarders. These include:

1. The sufficiency of safety regulations
2. Effectiveness of safety equipment
3. Safety culture and education

We will accomplish this objective through extensive research and analysis. We will study injury and death rates among stand up paddleboarders as well as the different causes of injury and/or death. Then we will take into account the current regulatory structure, the history of the

## 3 dead in separate standup paddleboarding incidents over weekend

June 15, 2016 By Robert Pursell [f](#) [t](#)



*Marc Ma (above) helped rescue his teammates during a paddleboarding expedition gone wrong on Friday. Sadly, he is now presumed dead.*

sport's regulations, and the reasons for these regulations will all be examined and critiqued.

## Overview

This proposal will provide contextual information surrounding our three main areas of investigation: regulations, safety equipment, and safety education. All preliminary research on these topics will be outlined briefly. Then, it will delineate our research methodology, project plan, management plan, expected outcomes for the project, and available resources for the project. Flaws and difficulties are anticipated and will be addressed in the Methodology section of this document. To enhance the project's focus, we will exclude certain topics and factors from consideration, which we will also detail in our Methodology section.

# CURRENT SITUATION

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## *About Stand-Up Paddleboarding*

Stand up paddleboarding is a relatively new mainstream sport. It began in Hawaii and has been around for many years, though the sport really began to gain popularity in 2005. Over the past 3 years, the sport's participation has increased by 26 percent, making it the top outdoor activity for growth ("Topline Report," 2016, p. 7). Stand up paddleboarding, traditionally done along the coast, is making its way inland to lakes, canals and rivers.



## *Regulation Inconsistencies*

Stand up paddleboarding safety regulations and requirements have been developing among various governmental organizations and independent companies. The newness of the sport means that these standards are not as concrete or mature as others and may be more easily updated as improvements are made known. However, the young state of the sport also means that the safety requirements for stand up paddleboarding can vary between types of bodies of water, and also depend on who owns or operates the area being used.

Additionally, there is a common understanding among experienced paddleboarders of safety practices and gear to be used. Problems may arise when inexperienced paddleboarders are unaware of these measures or when they fail to view stand up paddleboarding as a serious or competitive sport.

## *Safety Issues*

Due to this confusion and the rapid growth in popularity, there has been a spike in reported deaths and injuries related to stand up paddleboarding. Considering the above factors, there may be a link between shortcomings in safety protocol and the rise in accidents. Very little research into those causes has been previously done, offering a high potential for discovering ways to better prevent such accidents and improving current safety standards.

## *Prevent the Problem*

Our aim is to prevent potential injuries and deaths and ensure more positive experiences with this enjoyable sport. The consequences of this research not being done would be devastating for some. A single death negatively impacts entire families and countless friends by orphaning children, widowing spouses, and otherwise causing emotional turmoil. As stand up paddleboarding becomes more popular, the rate of related deaths will continue to increase. Failure to perform and implement the recommendations we offer from this research would put increasing numbers of people at risk by failing to correct any flaws we uncover in our research efforts.

# PROJECT PLAN

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## Overview

We have included our research paper outline, expected page count, and methodology of our report in the project plan section.

As stated above, the main objective of our research is to prevent possible injuries and

death among participants of stand up paddleboarding. We expect our research to lead us to propose new safety measures aimed at decreasing injury and death of participants.

## Research Paper Outline

		(Total: 41 pages)
I.	Introduction .....	1p total
II.	Methods .....	8p total
	a. Stats .....	[2p]
	i. Causes of injury/death	
	ii. By area (coast, river, lake)	
	iii. Conditions (weather, wind, etc.)	
	iv. Demographic	
	b. Expert opinions .....	[2p]
	i. Equipment	
	ii. Laws	
	iii. Education	
	c. Official websites .....	[2p]
	i. ACA (American Canoe Association)	
	ii. U. S. Coast Guard	
	iii. Outdoor Industry Association	
	d. Safety Standards .....	[2p]
	i. Equipment	
	1. PFD (personal floatation device)	
	2. Leash	
	3. Helmet	
	4. Board Material/Structural Integrity	
	ii. Practices	
	iii. Education	
III.	Results .....	16p total
	a. Equipment .....	[5p]
	b. Safety Practices .....	[6p]
	c. Environmental Factors (out of our control) .....	[5p]
	i. 4 Ws	
	1. wind	
	2. water	
	3. weather	
	4. waves	
	ii. coast vs lakes vs rivers	
	d. Miscellaneous/other correlations we uncovered that were unanticipated .....	[1p]
IV.	Discussion .....	14p total
	a. Summary of results .....	[3p]
	i. Equipment	
	ii. Safety Practices and Education	

- iii. Environment
  - b. Synthesize Information, correlate most important parts .....[4p]
  - c. Discuss Limitations .....[3p]
    - i. State Laws
    - ii. Poor Safety culture in participants
    - iii. Unreliable statistics
  - d. Recommendation(s) .....[4p]
    - i. Details
    - ii. Limitations
    - iii. Why we think it will work. Persuasive.
- V. Conclusion .....2p total
- a. Why do we care?
  - b. Methods
  - c. Main Point
  - d. Recommendation
  - e. Implication – Action. Save lives.

# METHODOLOGY

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## Scope

We acknowledge the necessity to narrow the scope of our research in some areas. While we will potentially compare stand up paddleboarding to other watersports, our results will be exclusively focused on and applicable only to stand up paddleboarding. We will exclude death or injury caused by unknown prior health-conditions that inhibit the performance of appropriate safety measures. We will also exclude wildlife-related injury/death, even if the victim was stand-up paddle boarding at the time.

We plan to investigate safety equipment related injuries and deaths to determine if the required gear may be a contributing factor. The environmental conditions surrounding these accidents will be accounted for in order to understand the factors that cannot be controlled. We intend to scrutinize the current safety standards and explore how they came into fruition and areas that may need improvement.

## Resources & Research Methods

The following resources and methods will be researched and synthesized as we develop a conclusion about our safety recommendations:

### Data & Statistics

We first plan on finding statistics about stand up paddleboarding injuries and deaths, and their respective situations. We will primarily use interviews, journals, and news reports to evaluate trends regarding causes of injury/death while specifically considering location, environmental factors, and demographics.

### Expert Interviews

There are many stand up paddleboarding experts and athletes in the Provo, Utah vicinity. We plan on interviewing a few of them to determine the impact of equipment on the safety of paddleboarders. They will provide unbiased,

first-hand experiences and resources that will aid us in our research.

### Official Organizations

Official websites, such as the websites of the American Canoe Association (ACA), the U. S. Coast Guard, and manufacturers of stand up paddleboarding equipment will provide reliable data with which to make appropriate safety recommendations.



### Equipment Regulations

Finally, we will evaluate the safety of specific products used while stand up paddleboarding, specifically Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs), leashes, helmets, and the paddleboard itself. We will research these independently, relying on unbiased safety ratings and explanations of these items found online in published journal articles. Because we are doing a relatively wide analysis on paddleboarding safety as a whole, we have chosen not to define a scale with which we will rate different safety devices. Instead, we will gather our research, analyze it, and make recommendations based on trends we see in the data.

### Limitations

The main limitation we face is a lack of statistics since data have only been collected in recent years. We will have small data sets, but they will still offer us very current information. Other limitations include statistical error of the reports that we cite. We will acknowledge it as present even though it is not our own. We will also acknowledge unseen correlations and reassert our recommendations based on our specific research.

As mentioned previously, the varying laws and requirements for different bodies of water may give cause for objection. We will stand by our recommendation based on our research, and acknowledge that each agency may do as they see fit with the information we present.

### *Criteria for Successful Project Completion*

We have defined a successful project as one that answers the following in the affirmative:

1. Have we identified causes of injury and death among paddleboarders?
2. Is our recommended solution feasible?
  - a. Is our solution easily implemented by the entities that oversee paddleboarding?
  - b. Is our solution cost effective for the associated governmental agencies and/or manufacturing companies?
  - c. Is our solution easy for consumers to understand and apply?
  - d. Is our solution timely?

# MANAGEMENT PLAN

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## *The Team*

The key to any successful project is the effective organization of a talented team, and this project is no exception. Our team consists of four talented and experienced college students who have proved themselves capable of thriving in Brigham Young University's challenging academic environment. With combined experience in design, the sciences and writing, they have all the skills necessary to produce a readable and compelling analytic research paper.



Janae Pettit  
Industrial Design



Joshua Fullwood  
Geology



Tyler Boyack  
Biophysics



Jonathon Wilson  
Computer Science

## *Collaboration*

Decision-making in the group will be done democratically. An unbiased group member will mediate conflict resolution between members, if possible. If that is not feasible, then disagreeing team members will be reassigned to other tasks as needed. Due to the project's tight timeline, outside mediation will not be feasible.

To ensure that every member of the team operates at peak efficiency, a project timeline has been prepared and task assignments have been made in advance to facilitate each team member's effective use of time. Key task areas such as research, draft writing and editing have been divided into specific sub-tasks, with each team member taking primary responsibility for 1 or more subtasks at any point during the duration of the project. The following Gantt chart provides an easy to understand graphical presentation on the project timeline.

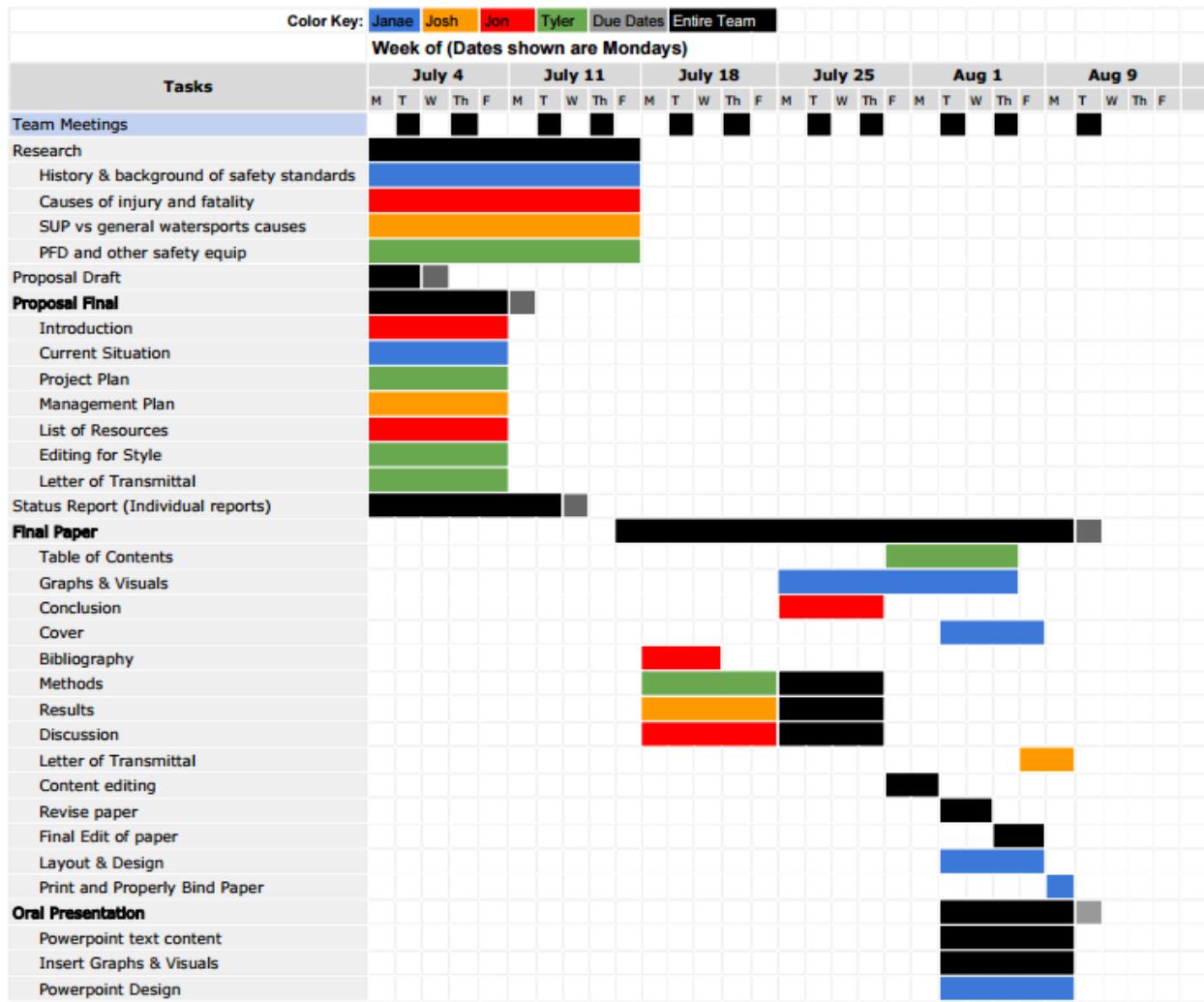
## *Meeting Schedule and Agendas*

Maintaining such a tight schedule on a complex project is not easy, so the team will hold bi-weekly meetings Tuesday and Thursday in the Harold B Lee library. Meetings will be facilitated by Joshua Fullwood, with agenda items determined by current project tasks, upcoming deadlines for deliverables and concerns raised by team members or the client.

## *Project Budget*

The project will have a budget of \$40 for the purposes of printing and binding the finished product for submission.

## Project Plan Overview (Gantt Chart)



## PROJECT RESOURCES

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