

PS 211: Introduction to Experimental Design

Fall 2025 · Section C1



Discussion 7: Finishing the Introduction & Poster Collaboration

Outline for Today

- Attendance – please sign the sheet at the front
- Exam bubble sheet instructions
- Poster project: introduction, references, and begin design/methods
- Class quiz game

Exam bubble sheet instructions

- Bring a blue/black pen or pencil
- **Name in all caps**
- Must fill out **BU ID #**
- Must fill out **Exam Version**
- If you miss any of these things, then grading will be delayed for the entire class

			
Name <i>FIRST LAST</i>		Version (A) <input checked="" type="radio"/> (C) (D) (E)	
ID <i>U12345678</i>		Other <i>MIDTERM EXAM 1</i>	
Section <i>PS222 B1</i>		Marking Instructions Be sure to completely fill in the appropriate bubble. Example <input checked="" type="radio"/> (B) (C) (D) (E)	
Date <i>02/20/2025</i>			

Finalizing Your Introduction

- If your draft is mostly complete, focus on **clarity, conciseness, and logical flow**
- If still in progress, make sure you have:
 1. A clear **topic statement** (what the study is about)
 2. **3–5 credible references** that connect directly to your hypothesis
 3. A **gap statement** — what question remains unanswered?
 4. A **specific, directional hypothesis** (clear IVs, DVs, and predicted pattern)

Revision Checklist

- Does each bullet flow naturally from broad → specific?
- Do your citations use a **consistent style** (APA preferred, but consistency matters more)?
- Replace filler phrases (“Researchers have long been interested...”) with **specific findings**.
- Ensure your final sentence naturally transitions into your **Methods** section next week.

Introduction Example

Your introduction **does NOT** and **should NOT** copy this example. This is simply to show how to:

- Include only **relevant background facts** and **remove extra information or unnecessary filler** words
- Maintain logical **flow**; move from **broad** → **specific**; and end with a **smooth transition** into your study

Example: Group Study & Confidence

- Many students study in groups to prepare for exams
- Collaboration can boost understanding but sometimes also leads to overconfidence (Lastname, 2008).
- Students often feel more certain when surrounded by peers (Lastname, 2015).
- Few studies directly test whether group study actually improves confidence without improving accuracy.
- **Research question:** Does group study change confidence in one's answers?
- **Hypothesis:** Students who study in groups will rate their confidence higher, but show similar accuracy to those who study alone.

Citation polish & credibility

- Use **Google Scholar** to double-check source details
- Prefer **peer-reviewed journal articles** or review papers
- Avoid blogs, AI summaries, and Wikipedia
- Each **reference should support a clear point** — it's a foundation, not filler.
- Short parenthetical style is fine (e.g., *Smith et al., 2021*)

Quick reference tips

- “Cited by” count helps identify influential papers
- If you can't access full text → try BU Library proxy or “All versions” on Scholar
- Format example (APA 7):

Smith, A. B., & Jones, C. D. (2020). Sleep and attention. *Journal of Cognition*, 45(2), 123–135.

Poster Project: Introduction → Methods bridge

- Next week we'll start your **Methods** section
- Think ahead: what information will readers need?
 - Who are your participants? How many?
 - What is your independent variable (IV)?
 - What is your dependent variable (DV)?
 - How would you measure or operationalize each variable?
 - If these are hard to define, cite studies that have successfully done so and model your approach after theirs.
- Your Introduction should naturally **set up** these details
 - e.g., "Methods: To test this, we will compare ____ and ____ on ____."

Goals for Today

- Finish your introduction and show me!
- Ensure all sources are cited and show me both draft and references.
- You can add more sources as needed, I just want to make sure your reference style looks good.
- Begin working on your **poster design** (see last week's design tips).
- Start thinking about your **Methods** section — how could you actually test these variables?
 - Do your previous sources already operationalize them successfully?

Discussion poster project outline

- Discussion 3: Form groups and brainstorm research ideas
- Discussion 4: Research poster topics and form hypotheses
- Discussion 5: Refine topic and compile references
- **Discussion 6–7: Write and polish Introduction section**
- Discussion 8–9: Methods section
- Discussion 10–11: Analysis plan and limitations
- Discussion 12: Finalize poster
- Discussion 13: Group poster presentations!