# Jan2021 DR. LESSER’s STAT 1380 -- **PROPOSAL FORM** FOR DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS PROJECT

**Deadlines** are on syllabus; **Guidelines** (including the rubric I will use to grade it) are at http://www.math.utep.edu/Faculty/lesser/Stat1380DataProject.pdf

You’re not allowed to begin collecting data until I’ve approved this form; you’ll need to include the signed approved copy of this form as the last page of the final project you turn in. The sooner you get this form submitted, the more time there will be to clear up anything that needs to be fixed. And the sooner the form gets approved, the more time you’ll have to collect the data, analyze the data, write up the report, etc. Upload this file to me (keeping it as a Word file) and I will relay prompt feedback.

## Team Member Names:

1. Contact Person for the team if I have a question (give their full name, best email address, and best phone number):
2. Research Question you want to investigate:
3. Source of your Data -- state whether it is particular published (or publicly-available) documents or a particular population of people, etc. Clearly describe your method for selection (saying something like “we’ll just ask 50 random people” is too vague and, besides, the word *random* refers to a process or procedure, not to a person!). Note that subgroup sample sizes do not have to be identical to compare two subgroups (e.g., what if 31 of 40 men liked math and 41 out of 60 women did?). Make sure your research question does not require obtaining an unrealistically large sample to obtain a critical mass of people in a rare subgroup (such as vegans).
4. Data Collection Method. If, like most teams, you are doing some kind of **survey**, you need to **list here the actual wording of all questions (including any answer choice options you will provide participants)** you will use (remember to avoid the pitfalls listed in Utts Chapter 3) and the **method** you will use to collect the responses (e.g., a written questionnaire, a phone interview, an in-person interview, or survey software such as SurveyMonkey or GoogleForms or the UTEP-supported package QuestionPro. If, however, your method is an **observational study** or **experiment**, then you need to **fully describe your procedures, including what you will be observing/recording, what intervention/treatment may be involved, and what you are asking participants to do** (so that I can confirm that it is appropriate and, if so, assess how explicit or detailed of a consent statement may be needed). Whether you chose to do a survey, observational study, or experiment, you must give enough detail that someone else could read this description of your method and be able to collect data the same way.

**Tips**: To keep the data collection, analysis and presentation manageable for all, you are limited to collecting data on only 4-6 variables. At least two of the 6 variables must be categorical variables (i.e., nominal or ordinal) and at least two of the 6 variables must be measurement variables (i.e., interval or ratio). For example, that means if you did a survey, the survey would have no more than 6 questions on it (so you really have to decide in advance what the most important variables are; don’t collect additional information that is not relevant to your research question).

Go through your list of questions and identify the variable in each question, and make sure you have at least two of each variable type for the entire survey. See our textbook (chapter 3) to make sure you are clear about the difference between categorical and measurement types of variables.

* Do not confuse a categorical variable (e.g., gender) with one or more of its values (e.g., males, females, etc.).
* Do not confuse a measurement variable with a tally for a value of a categorical variable (if you’re not sure about the latter, ask yourself “Does the FIRST person I ask a question to answer with a category or something numerical?”). For example, reporting how many men and how many women are in the sample should be viewed as the results for the single qualitative variable “gender”, not as the results for two separate measurement variables.
* Also, if you want to treat a variable such as age as a true measurement variable (and not an ordinal variable), ask participants for their actual age, rather than making them choose among a few age brackets that you made up.

6.) Confidentiality or Anonymity. You are required to treat participants’ answers as **confidential**, and it is even better if they can be **anonymous**. (Consult our textbook to recall the difference between these terms.) State whether your participants’ answers will be “anonymous” or “confidential, but not anonymous” and explain the steps you will take to ensure this during data collection, data analysis, and data reporting. Also, think how you can show sensitivity and respect to participants by offering “other” or “prefer not to answer” options for potentially sensitive variables such as gender or race or nationality, especially if a person’s answer would place them in a category sufficiently rare in the population that it could potentially identify that person.

7.) Ethics. Read our textbook’s chapter 26, especially its first section, and then let me know if you think there are any potential ethics issues or questions with your proposal.

================ The section below is for instructor’s use only ===================

\_\_\_\_\_\_ I approve this proposal as written. Feel free to begin collecting data! (Remember that you must include this sheet at the end of your project writeup.)

 \_\_\_\_\_ I approve this proposal if you make the changes I have noted somewhere on this form (and if you understand and agree with the changes, you don’t need to resubmit the proposal and can go ahead and start collecting data! (if you have a question, discuss it with me) (Remember that you must include this sheet at the end of your project writeup.)

\_\_\_\_\_ I can’t approve this proposal yet because part of it is either not written completely/clearly enough for me to assess it or may be unrealistic/inappropriate; so please submit a revised proposal that addresses this. To save time, don’t redo the whole form – just write the changes or additions on the form (using a different color or highlight or TrackChanges so that it will be immediately clear to me what part is new) or on an additional sheet of paper you attach to the form. If you don’t understand the feedback I gave you, ask me (or make an appointment to discuss it with me) as soon as possible.