

Fall 2004  
15.301 Managerial Psychology Laboratory

**Task for Monday, September 20**

“Submit 1-page proposal for your project”

For this task you are asked to do the following:

1. Choose a research question for your individual project. (The subject of your proposal can be based on any of the concepts covered in class, or anything you find interesting/important.)
2. Design an experiment to test your research question. Consider the independent variables and dependent variables in your research question, and the measures that you need to operationalize your constructs.
3. Discuss with your TA prior to writing the proposal.
4. On **Monday, September 20**, submit to your TA a short one-page proposal that includes the following (see attached sample):
  - a. Title of Project
  - b. Research Question – A short description of what you want to test
  - c. How – A short description of your experimental design; you should identify the independent variables and dependent variables in your design, how you plan to manipulate your independent variables, and what dependent measures you have to record
  - d. Assumption(s) – Any assumptions you have to make in order for your experiment to be an adequate design to address your research question
  - e. Who Cares – Explain why you think your research question is interesting and important
  - f. Expected Results – your predicted results of the experiment

Name: Dan Ariely

**Title of Project:** The effect of 15.301 on long-term creativity

**Research Question:** 15.301 provide unique mind-expanding opportunities for students at MIT within a lecture style that is easy going and fun. Because the class is so much fun, we speculate that students taking the class can wrongly judge the class as being too “lightweight” and dismiss the extent to which they are gaining valuable information from the class. On the other hand, we suspect that a few years after graduation, 15.301 will be remembered more favorably, and so will the material presented.

**How:** In this study, we will compare attitudes for 15.301 with attitudes to other large classes at MIT (8.01, 6.01 etc.), and we will compare these attitudes between two groups: 1) students who took 5.301 last semester, 2) past students (3 – 8 years out of MIT). In addition to these subjective evaluations of the class’s value, we will also conduct an objective test of the class material (multiple choice) and will give this exam to all the participants.

**Assumption:** Since 15.301 was taught by Professor Allen for as long as history has been recorded, we assume that for the groups of participants, the level of instruction was equal (i.e. Professor Allen did not get better or worse in this timeframe).

**Who Cares:** This results are clearly important to 15.301. In addition, the results are also important in general, because they test the question of whether students can rightly judge what classes are good for them at the time they are taking them, the relationships between short and long-term evaluations and the relationships between objective and subjective evaluations.

**Expected Results:**

