

Guidelines for completing assignments

Designing Clinical Research, One-Month 2021

This course requires you to prepare and submit a total of 3 written assignments as well as a final 5-page research protocol. Each of the course assignments is designed to help you develop new sections of your protocol that address important components of your proposed research project. If you keep up with assignments, your draft protocol should be complete by the last week of the course!

Note that in order to complete the assignments, you will generally need to complete the recommended reading and view the course lectures for that week. You may also have to seek advice from your research mentors, perform literature searches or background research, or explore datasets related to your research. So please allow yourself enough time to tackle these preparatory activities before each assignment is due.

All assignments should be prepared using a standard word-processing software program and submitted by the posted deadlines. Please note the dates, times, and methods and submission for each assignment:

- Assignment 1 is due by **Thursday during Week 1**, before 5 pm. E-mail your assignment to your section leader before the deadline. This assignment focuses on the important topic of “The Research Question”). [For Track 1, the deadline is July 29; for Track 2, it is August 12.](#)
- Assignment 2 is due by **Thursday during Week 2**, before 5 pm. E-mail your assignment to your section leader before the deadline. Note that this assignment has two components, which address the two major topics covered that week (“Study Designs” and “Subjects & Variables”). [For Track 1, the deadline is August 5; for Track 2, it is August 19.](#)
- Assignment 3 is due by **Thursday during Week 3 before 5 pm**. E-mail your assignment to your section leader before the deadline. Note that this assignment has two components, which address the two major topics covered that week (“Statistics” and “Sample Size”). [For Track 1, the deadline is August 12; for Track 2, it is August 26.](#)
- Your Final Research Protocol is due by **Friday during Week 4 by 5 pm**. [For Track 1, this is August 20; for Track 2, it is September 3.](#) Upload your protocol directly on the course website using the link provided in the “Final Protocol” section of the site. Note that you will need to add new sections to your protocol that address additional material covered in this week (“Enhancing Causal Inference” and “Qualitative Research and Questionnaire Design”).

There is also a recommended pre-course assignment, designed to help you identify a viable research project that can serve as the basis for your course activities. Before your first small group section on the first Wednesday of the course, we strongly encourage you to identify a potentially viable clinical research question, discuss it with a mentor, and assess whether necessary resources or data are available to pursue this question. As a pre-course assignment, write out a one-sentence version of your question and draft a paragraph describing the potential significance of this question. Be prepared to discuss your draft question and its potential significance at your first small group section!