

Instructions for Peer Review of Research Reports
ANT/ES 450—Cultivating Change—J. Cole—Fall 2013

The Why

The peer review process is integral to scholarly activity. Granting agencies, academic presses, and scholarly journals typically make use of input from peer reviewers when making decisions about funding projects and publishing research. In the double-blind review format employed by many scholarly journals, the reviewer does not know the identity of the author just as the author does not know the identity of the reviewer; it is the job of the editor to make decisions based on input from multiple peer reviewers. The aim of peer review is to promote high standards through unbiased assessment. Scholars also rely on advice from colleagues, often before submitting grant applications and manuscripts for formal review. Like his colleagues, your professor has learned a lot from formal as well as informal peer review.

The What

Since in our case reviewers and authors are well known to one another, this exercise will give you experience with the collegial style of peer review. Drafts of all four team reports are posted on Moodle under topic 5 (research project materials fall 2013).

While it would be beneficial for every individual to review all drafts, in light of time and other considerations team members are asked simply to review the report of one other team. Grace G/Paige/Mike/Georgia will review the draft of Tandy/Nels/Brooke/Grace S and vice versa; and Jamie/Julia/Kat/Claire will review the draft of Phoebe/Sybil/Sarah/Lauren and vice versa.

Please send me your team review by Sunday, December 8. I will then send reviews to the four teams and communicate my own assessment of the drafts in meetings with all teams early that week. As stated on the syllabus, final team reports should be uploaded to team folders by noon on December 18.

The How

The basic goal of your review is facilitate the improvement of another team's report in the form of at least one page of commentary. (You may well find that in reviewing another team's report you gain ideas and perspectives that can benefit your own—so much the better.)

Your review should address the following questions. (You may add others if you would like.) When crafting your commentary please keep in mind that the other team will benefit most from specific points and suggestions rather than generalities.

1. What is your favorite part of the paper? Why?
2. How does the introduction position the reader to appreciate what's to follow? Could it be made more compelling? How?

3. What additional material and/or editing would enhance the farm description?
4. What additional material and/or editing would enhance the discussion and analysis? Here it would be a good idea to ponder the course readings (required and optional).
5. What additional material and/or editing would enhance the considerations of the research process?
6. To what extent does the conclusion do justice to the report? Can you suggest any additional or alternative points to make?
7. Are there any additional items that you recommend for the appendix?