

Guidelines for preparing for the live review session for PRCI Core Center research papers

1. Read the title, abstract, introduction and conclusions only

- Do NOT read the whole paper from beginning to end the first time.
- Ask yourself:
 - What is the core focus of the paper, or the core question the paper is asking?
 - Is the focus / core question clearly stated? Is it interesting? Is it important?
 - Given your knowledge and experience, are the conclusions reasonable?

2. Now read the whole paper – for overall flow, not details

- Read it from beginning to end this time
- Don't get lost in the details. Ask yourself:
 - Does the paper “flow” well? Can you follow the argument and understand broadly the methods being used?
- Use the highlighting feature to highlight key points or facts or steps in the authors' argument
- Use the Word Comment feature to write comments TO YOURSELF as you read. Things that are not clear, or not logical. Or good points you see. For now, these comments are to help YOU understand the paper

3. Read the paper again – more carefully this time

- Reading the paper multiple times is important because you will see new things and gain deeper understanding of what's being done each time
- Pay attention to detail this time. Focus especially on the methods that were used
 - Are the methods and data clearly explained?
 - Is the data adequate to address the question?
 - Are the methods appropriate for the questions being asked?
 - Do you see any problems with how they were applied?
- Focus on the presentation of the results
 - Are enough results presented (in tables and figures) to allow you to fully understand them and critique how the authors have interpreted them?
 - Have the authors properly interpreted their results, or would you interpret the same results differently?
- Compare the conclusions to the results and the authors' interpretation of those results
 - Do the conclusions follow from the results as presented?
- Make more comments using the Word Comment feature as you get into the details
- Add to the highlighting as needed to help you follow the main points

4. Review the notes you have made and decide which points you plan to make during the live session
 - Before you prepare your live comments, review the guidelines below on how to give helpful feedback to colleagues
 - Outline your points in written form for your own use during the live review session
 - You do not need to give the written comments to your colleagues unless you feel that would be helpful
 - During the live session, one of the mentors will be capturing comments in an Google Doc, in which others can also write

Guidelines for giving useful feedback during the live session:

1. Make your feedback constructive, not destructive. We are here to help each other.
2. Remember that the purpose of giving feedback is to help your colleagues succeed, not to demonstrate your own knowledge or skill.
3. Your colleagues will be helped by two things: positive, specific feedback on what they've done well; and constructive, specific feedback on what they could improve. Please give both positive and critical feedback
4. Specific, positive feedback is helpful for building confidence and helping your colleagues build on the strengths of their work.
5. Positive feedback that is too general (e.g. "You have done a good job") is less useful.
6. When giving critical feedback, use positive phrasing. For example, rather than, "You clearly didn't consider X." you could say "You've considered a lot of things, but I am wondering if you considered X. Here is why I think X is important."
7. Be specific when you identify an issue. Describe what the issue is, and where it is located in the paper or presentation.
8. Be specific and action-oriented with your suggestions for how to resolve an issue you identify.
9. When you identify an issue, plan on suggesting a solution.
10. If you identify an issue but, after thinking about it, you are unable to suggest a solution, that is okay. In this case, it is good to acknowledge that you are not able to provide a specific next step.