**Activity 21: Condensing the Primary Literature**

**Purpose of this assignment:** The goal of this assignment is to help you summarize the current knowledge and arguments in the published literature.

**How does it fit within the entire project?** This activity will help you write your discussion section. It is important to put your work in the context of the existing literature in that part of the paper.

**Tasks required:** Complete the handout below.

**Deliverable:** Completed version of this handout uploaded to [LMS] by [deadline].

**Estimated time:** Less than two hours

**Group work or individual work?** Individual work with some group coordination.

**Note to instructor:**

* This activity can be used to prepare students to write the discussion section of a manuscript.

**Step-by-step:** Note that the lengths of the different writing assignments of this exercise are important to that exercise. Please adhere to them.

1. Write below the most up-to-date hypotheses you are testing in your project. MAKE SURE to coordinate with your group members (I should see the same set of hypotheses from all group members):
2. List here a minimum of **five** papers that have explored one or more of these hypotheses in your study system. Think of “study system” broadly including [provide details here appropriate for the field of research and questions explored]. Think back to your bibliography and your framework assignments for help. Format the references according to the [journal format the students will follow for their deliverable].
3. For each of those five (or more) papers, identify in **four** sentences (no less, be thorough) the main conclusions of the paper with regards to the topic/hypothesis of interest to you.

* Paper 1:
* Paper 2:
* Paper 3:
* Paper 4:
* Paper 5:

1. Bring together the information from those different papers. Write a paragraph that is **twenty** sentences long and summarizes the conclusions of all five papers. You should NOT merely copy-paste the sentences from the previous question but instead make sure that you are comparing and contrasting the different conclusions. Think about the following questions: Are different authors/datasets in agreement? On the contrary, are there differing findings? Are there particular patterns? Some exceptions/outliers? What is the strength of the relationships that have been recovered in prior analyses?

Make sure that you cite the papers appropriately throughout your paragraph.

1. Condense this twenty-sentence paragraph to a paragraph that is only **ten** sentences long. Focus on the most important points. Get to the gist of the patterns. Make sure that you cite the papers appropriately throughout your paragraph.
2. Go back to your hypotheses. For each of them, provide a **two-**sentence summary of the position of the literature on the issue.
3. For each of your hypotheses, provide a **two**-sentence summary of YOUR relevant findings. MAKE SURE to coordinate with your group members (I should see the same set of conclusions from all group members).