

## Writing Supplement

### Third Assignment:

This assignment is a bit similar to the second, but I want you to present a lesson of sorts in a public forum. So, you will be “allowed” to be a little more scientific and perhaps a bit more formal (that is up to you) in your delivery than in the previous assignments. A good model for you to take here is the “Science Times” pages of the *New York Times* (available every Tuesday).

Specifically, the assignment is to explain to the general public, as exemplified or defined by the *NYT* section referred to above, the probabilistic notions of *independence* and *conditional probability*. The article is to be about three pages long. Be sure to give examples of things you are explaining. You can refer, for example, to the Marilyn Vos Savant controversies, if you think that helps your exposition, but that is not necessary, and may use up your time and space in an inefficient way. You have to make a judgment there.

Remember: three pages means double-spaced. I need space to write comments. You should also remember that this project is the first where I want a rewrite, so the space for my comments is essential this time. As we get closer to nitty-gritty editing, it might be useful to keep in mind a canonical reference like Strunk and White’s *Elements of Style* (available in the library) as a grammatical/stylistic reference. I am not going to be a grammar fanatic, but I do want you to be conscious of how your choices might effect acceptance of your writing.

This project will be due Friday, February 21.

Do not forget your term paper descriptions due Wednesday, March 5. You are going to be held to a higher writing standard than the rest of the class. Also, your papers will probably be longer than the other students’ because I am going to want to see a substantial amount of writing. You will not have to master more probability than they, but you may have to spend more time describing, exposing and commenting on what you discuss. On the other hand, this does not mean yours will be more “padded” than the others’. In your first submissions about topics I want a *very* rough outline of what you intend to write or cover in your project. You are free to change that later, as you actually learn something about your topic, but I want to see you in the act of planning your attack on the subject. If discovery bears you up later on her silvery wings, so much the better, but let us have a plan first, just in case that fails to happen.