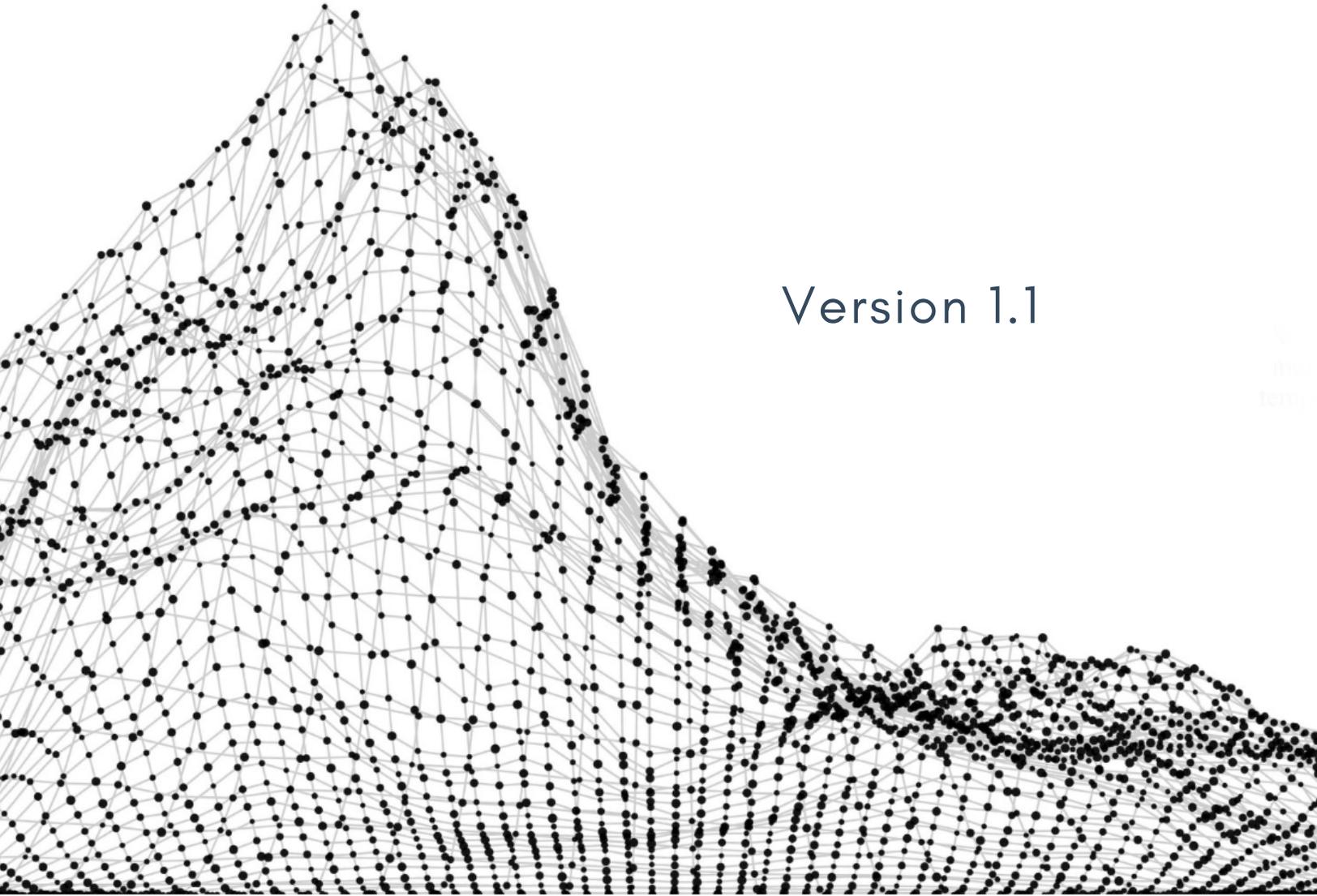


UTAH DATA  
RESEARCH CENTER

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# PEER REVIEW PROCESS

Version 1.1



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# OBJECTIVE

The peer review process ensures high quality of the Utah Data Research Center products and aids researchers in producing their best work. The peer review process should improve clarity of reports/data narratives and ultimately allow the Utah Data Research Center to better inform policy makers. Reviews should always be thoughtful and supportive.

## ROLE DEFINITIONS



### **Peer Review Coordinator**

Assigns primary reviewer to each research project.  
Provides a subject matter expert.



### **Primary Reviewer**

Performs first review of report/data narrative drafts.  
Leads review of their assigned project.

# PEER REVIEW STEPS

## 1 - AUTHORIZATION & PLANNING

### A UDRC Advisory Board Approval

Researcher is assigned a research project from the UDRC Research Agenda, which has previously been vetted by the UDRC advisory board.

### B Planning Stage

Propose research objectives & methodology at the WRA Research Committee (DCC attendance optional). This is a relatively informal process, it is a place to discuss methods before researchers spend considerable amount of resources working on a specific methodology/research approach.

## 2 - ANALYSIS

### C Analysis Review

In the process of completing the analysis of the research project, the methods, statistical implements, and SQL statement/code is required to be peer reviewed. A rotating core reviewer will be elected at this point.

### D First Draft Peer Review

First draft of report is peer reviewed by primary reviewer. The resulting review should include a brief summary of the research and main points of concern in addition to any specific edits that need to be made with references to line numbers.

# PEER REVIEW STEPS

## 3 - WRITING PEER REVISION

**E**

### Internal Feedback Meeting

A meeting with the UDRC manager, primary peer reviewer and researcher is held following initial review to discuss feedback summary. Specifically, this group discusses the validity and priority of points made by the reviewer. Both reviewer and researcher have the opportunity in this meeting to support their positions or clarify any written components.

**Feedback points are ranked into “low priority” and “high priority,” and the researcher agrees to make all high priority revisions.**

**F**

### Researcher Incorporates Feedback

Researcher revises and takes feedback into consideration. High priority feedback must be incorporated into the revised draft. Researcher highlights changes or corrections they have made in the new draft so that the peer reviewer can easily understand the changes that were made.

**G**

### Second Revision Peer Review

Draft is reviewed by the primary reviewer again and by one additional UDRC team member. Reviewers ensure high priority feedback is incorporated in the new version of the draft.

Primary reviewer is responsible for communicating any issues that may arise during the peer review process with either the peer review coordinator or UDRC manager.

An optional meeting with reviewers, researcher, and UDRC manager can be held at this point if discussion of reviewer feedback is required.

*(Continued on next page.)*

# PEER REVIEW STEPS

## 3 - WRITING PEER REVISION (Continued)

H

### Final Internal Revisions

Any final internally requested revisions are made by the researcher. Highlight or track changes and corrections that are made.

UDRC manager reviews reports and makes any final suggestions to the researcher. This can be more informal than the initial review process (outlined above).

*\*Report should be completed before data narrative is drafted whenever possible; repeat the above process for data narrative using the same two reviewers.*

I

### Partner Review

Report is sent to partners for review. Partners provide expert guidance on subject matter, methods, and interpretation of results.

J

### Prioritize Partner Revisions

Upon return from partner review, UDRC manager and researcher meet (with partner/s) to prioritize revisions.

K

### Final Revisions & Delivery

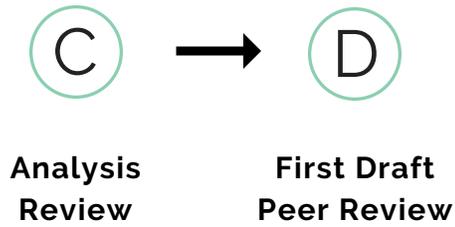
Final Revisions, report template formatting, and delivery to UDRC data communications team for production.

# PEER REVIEW FLOWCHART

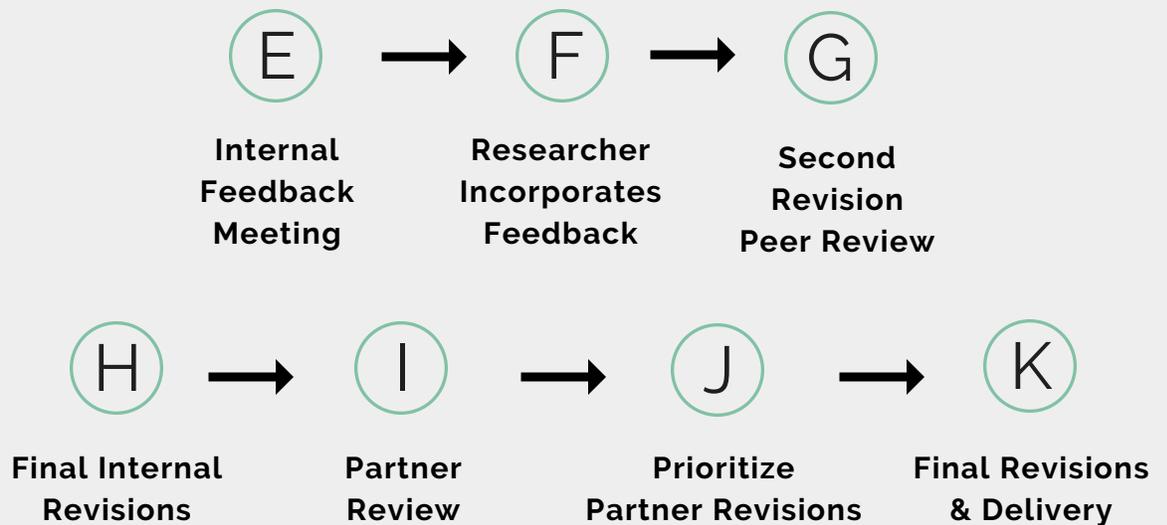
## Authorization & Planning



## Analysis



## Writing Peer Revision



# PROCESS CHECKLIST

## STEP A: UDRC advisory board approval

- Obtain official approval for research project idea from advisory board during meeting

## STEP B: Planning

- Researcher proposes methods

## STEP C: Drafting

- Hold research proposal meeting with UDRC research team
- Inform team members of timeline for completion
- Hold informal review of SQL, R, Python code if necessary
- Write first report draft in Word – double spaced and numbered lines
- Use APA citation style
- Review draft for typos and grammatical errors

## STEP D: Revision - Round One

- Send report draft to primary reviewer
- Upon return from review, read summary provided by reviewer

## STEP E: Feedback Review Meeting

- Discuss feedback concerns with UDRC manager and primary reviewer during scheduled meeting

## STEP F: Perform Revisions

- Highlight, color, or track changes in Word (this makes it easier for reviewers to see changes)
- Send completed revisions to primary and secondary reviewer

*(Continued on next page.)*

# PROCESS CHECKLIST

(Continued)

## STEP G: Secondary Review

## STEP H: Optional review meeting with manager, reviewers, and researcher

- Highlight, color, track any further revisions that are made
- Send to manager for final internal report approval
- After final approval, remove colors/highlighting in text that were made for internal revisions

## STEP I: Partner Review

## STEP J: Researcher/UDRC manager/peer review coordinator meeting

- Discuss which partner requests are valid and reasonable
- Prioritize partner-requested revisions with respect to research schedules and deadlines

## STEP K: Final Revision Stage

- Perform partner revisions as discussed above with UDRC manager/peer review coordinator
- Highlight text changes in Word version
- Send report to UDRC manager for final approval
- Format report using R Markdown template

# REVIEWER GUIDE

## WHO IS A REVIEWER?

Researcher must notify team and peer review coordinator of when report draft will be ready for initial review. This will initiate the peer review process.

A primary reviewer will be assigned at this point by the peer review coordinator in coordination with the UDRC manager. Ideally, assigned peer reviewers on the research team should rotate, but this may depend on research schedules.

Researchers should be default primary reviewers. Data communications coordinators may self-elect to serve as a primary peer reviewer if their schedules permit.

## DRAFT FORMAT



Drafts should be in manuscript form in Word: double spaced with row lines to make commenting easier.

References and citations should be APA format. (<https://www.apastyle.org/>)

## GUIDELINES FOR REVIEWERS

- 1 | Transparency of Goals, Results and Methods**  
On the first read through skim the paper to look for transparency of project goals, main results, and basic methods: what is the report asking, and do the results/conclusions reflect this? Include this information in the report summary you will provide to the researcher.
- 2 | Organization, Style, and Grammar**  
The second read through of the paper should be more thorough. Look for style and grammar issues and proper structural/paragraph organization. Check for wordiness and passive voice and propose ways these can be reduced. Check references for proper structure and relevancy.
- 3 | Positive Feedback**  
Keep notes on what the researcher has done well in the report.

# REVIEW CHECKLIST

## ITEMS TO INCLUDE IN REVIEW

- Brief written summary of the report for the primary researcher
- Paragraph or list stating major report issues and any suggestions for improvement
- Line by line comments on minor points and grammatical/style issues. Try to be as specific as possible. Try to make recommendations for improvements whenever possible.

## REPORT REVIEW QUESTIONS

Specifically, think about the following questions as a detailed review is performed:

- Are the report objectives clearly defined?
- Are the research methods clearly explained?
- Is all of the information included in the report topical to the report objectives?
- Does the interpretation of the results make sense?
- Are there any major points of interpretation that have been overlooked?
- Do any interesting results need to be broken out and discussed more?
- Do tables and figures add to the report or are they extraneous?
- Do figures have proper labels and legends?
- Can figures stand-alone without in-depth reading of the report?
- Are there specific places where the interpretation or explanation of results is unclear?

## DATA NARRATIVE REVIEW QUESTIONS

- Are major report results included and clearly outlined in the copy?
- Are the key findings summarized in the first paragraph?
- Does each section contain no more than two facts with numbers? (Avoid overloading the short written sections with too much numerical info.)
- Do you explain the meaning behind the numbers or findings in each section?
- Does the data in the visuals match the data from your report?

*After copies are reviewed by researchers, they are then sent to the data communications coordinators for final editing and publishing.*

