Literature Review Comments

Format:
- Box type to make even right margins
- Double space
- No space between paragraphs
- Distinguish font in subheadings (bold, italics)

Citations:
- Terminal punctuation follows citation.
- When name is first mentioned, year of publication much follow immediately: Jones (2000)
- Use maximum citations possible for any piece of information.
- Cite secondary sources: Smith (cited in Jones 2000) found…
- Put multiple citations in alphabetical order (Ellsworth and Gross 1994, Jones 2000, Stack 2000)
- If you are referring to the findings of just one study, refer to the specific research: In a 2000 Gallup poll, Jones (2000) found ….
- The first time a reference appears in a paper, the whole names of the authors are used. After that, just the last names. Since an introduction section will be constructed later that precedes the literature review, the first reference may occur then. Once the introduction (to the whole paper) is done, insert the full name citation for each author when the first citation appears.
- When referring to an author within the text of the paper, use just the last name: Jones not Jeffrey Jones.

Stylistic points/ Word selection/ grammar / voice

- Refer to the literature in general as the source of your information as you introduce material.
  Work on a variety of ways of wording this:
  Prior research findings reveal…
  A review of the literature suggests…
- DPS is an acceptable abbreviation in this paper and is defined as such in the introductory paragraph. Do not use DP. Write out death penalty.
- While both ‘effect’ and ‘affect’ can be used as verbs and nouns, it is best to be consistent. If you are going to use only one as both parts of speech, use ‘effect’. If you’re going to use both, use ‘affect’ as the verb and ‘effect’ as the noun.
- ‘Then’ refers to time sequence - I am going to school, then to the store. ‘Than’ refers to a comparison - I prefer going to school than going to the store.
- Use third person only. No I, we, our, you, us, etc.
- Omit ambiguous pronouns: The Supreme Court deemed the death penalty unconstitutional when public opinion declined. They reconsidered the issue five years later. Who reconsidered it? The Supreme Court or the public?
- Report empirical research findings as definite, theoretical explanations as possible:
  Prior research shows that….
  It is proposed that crime salience may affect DPS.
- Don’t use contractions in a formal paper!
- Colloquialisms aren’t cool!
- Remember, if a number begins a sentence, write it out. If a number is ten or lower, write it out.
- Try to blend choppy sentences together:
  Choppy: Demographic factors are presented also as explanations for DPS variations. Differences in gender socialization are offered as a model in the literature.
  Blended: Demographic factors are presented also as an explanation for DPS variations by sex, with differential gender socialization offered as a prominent model in the literature.
- Create strong topic sentences to begin each paragraph (See below).

Substantive points

- Acknowledge inconsistencies in the literature:
Prior research finding are inconsistent regarding the degree to which DPS affects voting behavior.

- Make sure that you include sufficient explanations. Don’t just say that DPS affects capital punishment laws. Explain how the two are connected.
- Work on strong, informative topic sentences that tell your reader what subject will be discussed in the paragraph:
  For example, rather than launching into the section on socio-demographic correlates by comparing two attributes, give your reader an idea of what will follow.
  Ex: Prior research finds reveal that DPS varies by numerous socio-demographic variables, including age, race, class, region….etc.
  Then, discuss attribute difference in DPS for each variable that you list and do so in the same order in which you mention the variables. Consistency and predictability will help your reader process the information.
- Include a strong summary paragraph:
  Topic sentence that reiterates the main themes that formed your subheadings. Follow with one sentence per section in which you summarize the findings in that section.
- As stated in class, the section on socio-demographic correlates of DPS should contain 2 paragraphs: P1: general socio-demographic correlates; P. 2 gender and political orientation
- As stated in class, the explanations section should use Stack’s framework of three categories of theoretical explanations with the following inclusions:
  1) symbolic orientations
     a. authoritarianism
     b. racial prejudice
     c. religiosity (optional)
  2) crime saliency
     a. victimization
     b. fear
  3) demographic factors
     a. differential gender socialization
     b. biological factors (optional)

Start with a strong, general topic sentence: Stack (2000) suggests that that are three categories of theoretical explanations for DPS variation: symbolic orientation, crime saliency, and demographic factors. Symbolic orientations include authoritarianism and racial prejudice. THEN DISCUSS THE RELATIONSHIP OF EACH TO DPS.