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### Lab 3

# Threats to the Validity of an Evaluation Design

## Exercise

In the last session you started to develop an evaluation proposal. The second section of your proposal will focus on a consideration of the potential "threats to validity" that might exist under each of the three alternative designs that you have developed. During this session, your group should consider as many potential threats as possible for each alternative (taken one at a time). The types of internal and external validity issues that you should consider are identified below:

### A. Internal Validity Issues

1. History
2. Maturation
3. Testing
4. Instrumentation
5. Statistical Regression
6. Selection Bias
7. Attrition
8. Selection Interactions (selection-maturation and selection-history)

### B. External Validity Threats

1. Testing-Treatment Interaction
2. Selection-Treatment Interaction
3. Reactive/Situational Effects
4. Multiple Treatment Effects

While the Campbell and Stanley tables indicate which elements are threats to particular types of designs, they are intended only as general guidelines. For each threat listed, you should consider whether it is likely to be a problem in the particular study design under consideration. If it is not a threat, indicate why that is the case.

*(Hint - You may wish to discuss the impact that alternative comparison groups have on your study's threats to validity).*