

Reviewer's report

Title: The effect of the Thanksgiving Holiday on weight gain

Version: 1 **Date:** 5 November 2006

Reviewer: Analiza Silva

Reviewer's report:

General

The question addressed by the authors is of scientific interest and it is well defined. The methods are appropriate and well-described and sufficient details are provided to replicate the work. However, few suggestions are appropriate for the statistical analysis in order to improve the manuscript. The results are well reported. The discussion and conclusions are well balanced and adequately supported by the data, and the limitations are also reported. The title and abstract are in accordance with the results. The manuscript is well written.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

No major compulsory revisions are needed.

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

1. In line 3 of page 6, the authors should include the correlation analysis between baseline body weight and body weight changes.
2. In line 3 of page 6, the word account should be corrected, since an independent t-test do not "account for" but simple compare means. Though, it is suggested that the authors should consider plotting the range of testing dates against body weight changes to determine if that variable affects body weight changes.
3. Last line of page 6, the authors referred "to determine if BMI impacted the change in body weight", but this sentence should be removed since the authors only compared means between 2 categories: normal vs. overweight/obese.
4. In Table 2 legend, after BMI the word categories should be included. Also, the standard deviations of the differences should be included.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

First paragraph of the results section (page 6), it is suggested that the authors remove the last sentence beginning in "Additionally", to page 7 before the last paragraph of the results section. In addition, and to improve the manuscript, it is suggested to perform a multiple regression analysis to determine if the relation between baseline BMI and body weight changes is affected by gender, class standing, and the respective interactions between these variables with baseline BMI (i.e. BMIxGender; BMIxClass Standing) by including them in the regression model along with baseline BMI, and using the entire sample. Therefore, if a significant association between interactions, for example genderxBMI, is found the respective result would be that the relation between body weight changes and BMI exists but is dependent on gender. The authors found in females a significant relation between baseline BMI and body weight changes, but not in males. Though, the analysis should be run with the entire sample and also accounting for the effects of the class standing on these relations.

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.