Final Project Guidelines

Project Rationale

The culmination of material covered in RSCH 8210: *Quantitative Reasoning and Analysis* and RSCH 8260: *Advanced Quantitative Reasoning and Analysis* will provide you with a number of tools for your statistical toolbox. An enthusiastic apprentice always looks forward to the day where the skills learned can be put into action, to display a product to the world that demonstrates they are now an artisan.

The purpose of the Final Project in this course is much like a Final Project an apprenticing craftsperson might undertake. This project will utilize the amalgam of your quantitative skills to demonstrate that you can:

1. Align an appropriate statistical test to a research question you constructed.
2. Find data that meets the assumptions of your statistical tests and answers your research question.
3. Synthesize the results to articulately present the findings via an oral presentation.
4. Present the results in a formal, written document.
5. Document how quantitative methods can assist with social change.

Expectations

Data

You are free to use data that you obtain on your own or utilize one of the datasets from the course but, to make the project more meaningful to you, it is highly recommended that you find your own data. If you use one of the datasets from the course, please make sure that you are not mimicking a project already posted in one of the weekly Collaboration Labs. You can find existing data through a number of clearinghouses on the web (i.e., NIH, ICPSR, NIJ, NCES, www.data.gov, etc.). If you are having difficulty obtaining data, please be sure and contact your Instructor for some suggestions. You may also want to consider data from your workplace but be sure you have permission to use it for learning purposes.

Deliverables

You have three deliverables for this project. The first is an oral 5- to 7-minute presentation that you post to the Week 11 Discussion Board. You can create a video directly in Blackboard using Kaltura; information to help you complete this task is available via the **Kaltura Media Uploader** link on the course navigation menu. Your video should be targeted toward a lay statistical audience. That is, consider giving a presentation of your results to your co-workers/team, a group who might not have the level of statistical knowledge you now hold. All too often, the results of great projects are not implemented because the researcher did not translate the results and communicate

the findings to the research consumer.

For the second deliverable, please respond to at least **one** peer's video presentation, providing constructive comments on the strengths of the Final Project, as well as identifying ways to improve. Remember, your goal will be to provide constructive and helpful feedback, so please be polite. In your feedback, for example, you may indicate that some aspects of your peer's presentation could be clearer. You might provide suggestions that could clarify the interpretation of their findings. In any case, remember that the purpose is to provide and obtain constructive and helpful feedback, so please be supportive and polite.

The third deliverable is a 7- to 10-page written product that details your approach, results, and interpretation of findings. This should be a formal, scholarly paper, one that adheres to the APA guidelines. In this document, be sure that you:

1. Present your research question clearly.
2. Explain why you selected your dataset and the statistical test you applied to that dataset.
3. Detail whether your test has statistical power or not.
4. Use one of the statistical tests covered in this course.
5. Visually display your results.
6. Detail how your findings might impact social change.
7. Ensure that your Final Project is 7–10 pages in length, in APA format.

While you are required to use one of the statistical tests covered in this course, you should feel free to appropriately augment with tests you learned in RSCH 8210. For example, you may use a correlation matrix to test for multicollinearity in a regression model.

Suggested Milestones

Week 3: Topic of interest should be identified. Start searching for data.
Week 6: Research question and dataset should be clearly identified.
Week 10: Final analysis should be completed.
Week 11: Finalize written draft and post oral presentation.