Two Solo Exercises: Oral Presentation & Presentation Evaluations

For the last class meeting, you will conduct an oral presentation based on your research project. At a minimum, that involves a bivariate analysis using data from the class survey that much of the course connects to in some way:

- You had the opportunity to choose a topic in HW1 and/or HW2, and you were encouraged to begin operationalizing and conceptualizing hypotheses early on (including related labs where you got practice).
- You worked in groups to design measures for your project(s) in one lab, and, in other labs, formatted those measures into a survey instrument, and reviewed the omnibus instrument.
- You took the survey into the field to get as many as fifteen completions, and entered the data into an SPSS file – which has now been combined with the data other students entered from their *own* completions.
- For HW6, you discussed the specific variables and statistical methods you intended to use, and for HW9 you're performing the actual data anlaysis, using those variables and methods.
- Now, you're telling us what you did all semester – or, perhaps, what you're rushing to come up with now at the end.

Five percent of your overall 497 grade is your oral presentation grade, which will be computed from scores given by other students. Submitting a form with scores for other presenters in your class, counts as a lab grade for you in 497-L.

Presentation Order

We'll start with volunteers. Then I'll go through the roster systematically, once. If you still haven't given a presentation, even if you still havne't arrived, you will receive a zero.

Oral Presentation Structure

You presentation should begin with your initials, so that others can score you. Beyond that, it should summarize your project:

- What's your research question, and what variables did you choose to address it?
- How did you conceptualize and operationalize your hypothesis?
- Did you do any "data cleaning" (computing, recoding, identification of missing values, etc.)?
- What statistical method(s) did you use: chi-square? measures of association? t-test? ANOVA? regression? multiple regression? (Don't be arbitrary – you should know when to use what!)
- What did you the results show about the relationship you examined, and are the findings significant enough to be generalizable?
- What conclusions did you reach about your research question? What would you do differently?

Evaluation Criteria

Each presentation will be rated 1-5 (where 1 is lowest and 5 is highest - clearest, most prepared, etc.) on these five criteria:

- Clarity: Did you understand what they were doing? Did they?
- Prepared: Are they winging it? reading it? Or did they plan ahead for this?
- Organized: Is there a clear introduction, body, & conclusion? Or just arbitrary, disconnected bits?
- Creative: interesting research question, addressed in an interesting way, and/or presented interestingly? Or boring?
- Professional: Do they use stats? The right ones? & interpret them completely? correctly?

Evaluation Scores to Presentation Grades

Grades will computed from these scores as follows. First, I will standardize the scores for each evaluator – the scores *you* submit, for example, will be subjected to a conventional normalization around 3. (So, don't bother giving everyone a 5; they'll all just become 3s, and you'll get a lower lab grade; see below.) Second, all of the *normalized* (for each scorer) score for each presenter will be averaged, as simple average. Third, the final scores will be subjected to the same (non-normal) curving process that I've used to curve homework and exam grades, as discussed in the course guidelines, first lecture notes, and supplementary Grading Procedure PDF.

Evaluation Form to Lab Grade

If you give everyone the same scores, you won't get credit. That's not data; that's noise, and a waste of your time. It isn't providing any measurement (in a course about methods and measurement); it would be a silly exercise of giving the same number scores of times. But if you give variable scores, to everyone who presented, you'll get a "check plus" (95).

Excuses about Not Doing It

There is no alternative to the oral presentation. Part of research methods is presentation (see list from an early lecture), and this is a great venue in which to practice presentation and to confront (if not overcome) anxiety. If you can present results from a small bivariate project you've conducted, you could present something more complex - and perhaps someday will. Hint: If you feel pressure, go early – when there's less to which you might be compared.