**SCED401: Long Term Research Project**

You must complete this project on your own.

The report must be typed (double spaced, 12 pt. type, 1 inch margins) and should be 6-8 pages in length (not including data tables or graphs). The assignment will be worth 100 points and is worth 25% of your final grade.

**DATABASE OPTION for Final Research Project**

If you would like to examine pre-existing data instead of devising your own test, here are some suggestions and requirements that will shape your assignment.

1) If you wish to use pre-existing data, there are many databases available on the Internet that you might use. Your instructor can provide you with some good databases.

2) Unlike the typical experiment designs we’ve discussed in class, for this approach, your question will be based on data that already exists. Look at the databases and then craft a question. If you choose a question, and then look for data, you may or may not find the necessary data, and you’ll probably spend a LOT of time looking. Note that this approach more closely fits the ‘retrospective’ design.

3) If you choose to use a database, be sure your question is looking at the relationship between two variables—that is, looking at a correlation of some kind. To do this, you may need to look at two different sets of data, possibly obtained from two different databases or websites. Your question should not be answered with one data point. (e.g. ‘What is the average life expectancy for African-American women born before 1970?’ or ‘How many landfalling hurricanes were reported between 2000 and 2005?’)

4) If you choose to use an existing database, you won't be designing a test, but rather gathering information about how that data was collected, along with the limitations of the data set. You'll need to make sure that you can get the data you need, and have enough data to answer your questions.

5) Many of these sites have reports that analyze parts of these databases already—steer clear of these. Your assignment is not to report on someone else’s report, but rather examine sets of data and determine whether there is a correlation between the data sets.

6) If you are using a database, this means transferring the data to a table that you will include in your report. Don't just print out a long list of numbers—present only the data sets that you are using.

7) Do not simply cut and paste a pre-made graph, if you are using a database for your project.

8) With this option, you will still need to complete a progress report—you will need to clarify your question and which databases you’ll be using and which variables you’ll be comparing (you should have the databases identified by this time). You’ll also need to discuss any potential problems you might encounter.

9) Your final report will follow the guidelines for the experiment-based projects. For procedure, part iii, you’ll need to include a description of the database where you obtained your information, including:
   - exact web address
   - organization sponsoring the database
   - details on how the data was collected for the database
### GRADING RUBRIC for Long Term Research Project

25% of your final grade

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| **Introduction/Background**  
Was your original research question approved?  
Is your question clear?  
Is there a clear rationale for the study (why is this important to you and others -- this is the "so what?" factor)?  
Do you provide background info the reader needs to understand what you did and why s/he should care? | /10 |
| **Procedure/Methodology – what you did and why**  
Did you do a pilot study? Did you talk with me at this point?  
Clarity - can someone easily understand what you did?  
How adequately and thoroughly does your procedure address your question(s)?  
Do you control for variables (where appropriate)?  
Are procedures repeated (when appropriate) enough to generate significant data? | /20 |
| **Results/Findings**  
Data tables/charts and graphs with descriptions  
Is the data is summarized in a table/chart that's easy to read and understand in a glance?  
Is the appropriate type of graph included?  
Do you summarize your data--clearly and briefly? Did you avoid simply repeating the same information that is in the table? | /20 |
| **Analysis & Conclusions - your interpretations of the results**  
Do you interpret your results, helping readers understand what the results mean?  
Is interpretation/analysis based on the data?  
Do you evaluate your study in light of the information and criteria you learned about in class readings regarding study aspects like sample size, variable control, and bias? (Gott & Dugan, Carey, or others)  
Are the connections clear between your current data and the question to investigate in the new study?  
Do you adequately discuss how your study would continue if you were to continue investigating the general topic you began for this research? Is there enough detail that the reader can realistically see you doing the (new) study? | /33 |
| **Other Aspects of your Study**  
References (at least one)  
Formatting & length OK (~6 pages)?  
Clearly organized  
Punctuation, grammar, spelling, and mechanics are appropriate  
Sentence form and word choice are varied and appropriate | /10 |
| **In Class Presentation - summary of your research & findings**  
Is it easy to read? Is it well-organized?  
Is your research question clearly stated?  
Does it capture the main ideas of your investigation?  
Does it capture the viewer’s attention? | /7 |

### Overall grade: