

Course Project Warm-up #2

Overview For this warm-up, you will write a preliminary project proposal. Your proposal will include

- a question or hypothesis you want to study; and
- preliminary ideas on how to gather data relevant to your question or hypothesis.

Specific requirements Submit a one-page proposal by Friday, November 2. Your proposal should contain a clear and specific question or hypothesis that can be summarized in one sentence. You should also outline an experimental or observational study to address your question or hypothesis. Focus on outlining a data collection protocol.

Suggestions

- Pick an interesting topic. Consider challenging your own assumptions about the world. Think of little things you assume to be true without having solid evidence.
- Pick a topic that is manageable. You may find some tension in finding something that is both interesting and manageable. Err on the side of manageable. Your project will be more rewarding if you can reach solid conclusions about something smaller than if you fail to reach conclusions about something larger.
- Here's some types of question you might ask:
 - “How does A compare to B?” For example, you could compare textbook prices at the UPS bookstore compared with textbook prices at Amazon.com).
 - “What is the value of A?” For example, you could try to determine the average arm span of students in your residence hall.
 - “Is A associated with B?” For example, you could examine any association between arm span and height for students in your residence hall.
 - “Does effect A exist?” For example, you could ask if a particular individual has the ability to distinguish between regular and diet versions of Coke or if the individual has mind-reading abilities.
- You might want to focus on your immediate surroundings. Gathering data on or near campus will be much easier than gathering data more broadly. Do a simple random sample of students in your residence hall will be easier than a simple random sample of all UPS students or all Tacoma residents.

Looking ahead Here's a rough outline of project steps with tentative deadlines:

- Preliminary project proposal due Friday, November 2.
- Final project topic and preliminary study design due Monday, November 12.
- Pilot study data and final study design due Tuesday, November 20.
- Final data due Thursday, December 6.
- Final report due Monday, December 17 (at scheduled final exam time).