**PSC-4099**

**Professional Development Assignment: Preliminary Oral Presentation**

This assignment requires you to give a preliminary oral presentation that captures the major arguments developed in your thesis project. The main purpose of this assignment is to make sure that you are prepared to give an effective final presentation of your thesis project that combines an effective oral overview of your thesis work—both the research design and your major findings—with a well-organized presentation of PPT slides, graphs, and figures summarizing major data findings.

These presentations should be approximately 10 minutes in length (i.e., do not go several minutes over or under this), and should be delivered with a PowerPoint that you will send in advance to Dr. Setzler.

There are lots of details below because you are being trained to give a presentation that includes all of the elements that need to go into the final presentation and paper. **When you are ready to give your presentation, hand me this sheet with your name on the top, checking off each box (\_\_) below, indicating that you verified in advance that your presentation does what you have been asked to do**. If you don’t know how to do a step, ask for guidance. Don’t panic if you can’t complete each of the formatting instructions you see below right now; however, make sure you can check every box by your final presentation.

The presentation needs to:

1. Introduce your project, including:
* \_\_\_ Identify your major research question and explain why it is interesting
* \_\_\_Provide a quick summary of what we know and do not know about your topic already. Your summary should carefully explain your study’s main concepts if a well-educated but general audience isn’t going to be familiar with it.
* \_\_\_Ideally, you will refer to specific peer-reviewed research when explaining what we already know about your topic area and research question.
1. Provide an explanation of the methods used to answer your question, including:
* \_\_\_ A formal statement of your hypotheses. Based on previous research and what you think we still need to know, what testable assumptions will you be exploring with a survey dataset?
* \_\_\_ A little information about where your data come from. This includes the date of the survey, who is in the sampling frame, the sample size for the group you are looking at if you only are using some of the sample’s respondents, and what the sample is supposed to be representative of (usually a whole country).
* \_\_\_ A brief explanation of your dependent, independent, and control variables (if there are any of the last of these)—in that order—including how they have been measured and coded from the original variables. Focus almost most of your attention here on the dependent and independent variables. Think carefully about what order you put your variables in because every subsequent analysis—whether in a table, figure, or written analysis—should consider the same variables in the same order.

\_\_\_ Remember, your dependent variable should be coded so that it matches up with your hypotheses (e.g., if you are predicting who is pro-gun control, the dependent variable should be coded that way).

\_\_\_ Remember, your independent and any control variables also should all be coded based on the expectation that an increase in their value (or whether a respondent is in the subgroup if you are talking about a dummy variable) will increase the likelihood/value of your dependent variable. If you don’t know what to expect with a control variable, code that variables based on what you see in the previous literature related to your area.
1. \_\_\_ Include at least one summary statistics table showing the (1) number of observations, (2) the mean, (3) the minimum, and (4) the maximum values for all variables. This is required information so that we can make sure that all variables have been coded correctly. When you present this information, just say something like, “Next, I have a descriptive statistics table summarizing in one place all of my study’s variables; let me give you a few seconds to see that everything is in order” (and wait 5-10 seconds before moving on; there’s no reason to explain each variable).

\_\_\_ Your variables should be listed in this order: dependent, independent, and control (if you have the last of these). Include a subheading label for each group of variables so that we are reminded which variables are of which type.

\_\_\_ Format the table’s means, min, max, and (if you present them) standard deviation stats so that they are as readable as possible (e.g., a three-digit mean of .256 is going to be better than .2564897 and a min. value of 1 is going to be easier on the reader than 1.0).

\_\_\_ Each variable should be consistently listed in all tables and figures in the same order that they are discussed in your study’s theory, hypotheses, and methods sections. In the bivariate and regression analyses (see below), you should consistently label and order variables the same way that they are listed in your descriptive statistics table. And make sure \_\_\_ to use plain-English labels that a well-educated person unfamiliar with this study is going to understand rather than a variable name you have come up with (e.g., Edu4).

Note: The only reason you should have more than one summary statistics table is if you are comparing two or more major groups (e.g., folks from different countries), and it wouldn’t make sense to put them all into one descriptive stats table. If you can, use multiple columns and put key sub-groups in the same table (e.g., if you are comparing Democrats and Republicans in your study), so comparisons can be easily made. If you do this, only report the min, max stats once and consider dropping the standard deviations so that the table is less busy.

Note: This is the *last* assignment where you can just copy and paste from SPSS; doing that is fine here so we can confirm that everything is coded right before you make a polished table. For your final presentation and thesis, all tables should be modeled on what you have seen in the sample assigned readings this term (i.e., created in a program similar to Excel or Word and not the raw SPSS output). Back in Week 4, you read an article on attitudes toward immigration by Graeber and Setzler that has samples of the kind of tables you should be creating (but you don’t need the standard errors they report). In week 5, you read an article by Setzler on who voted for Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil that has samples of the kind of figures you should use (but you don’t need the confidence interval bars).
2. As you move into your findings section, you need to present statistical results, showing the answer to your research question/hypotheses, including:
* \_\_\_ *Some type of simple bivariate analysis.* Specifically, have a well-formatted table or chart that compares the frequencies or means of your independent variable/s for your dependent variable/s before any controls have been added. Unless we have specifically discussed doing something different, you should include at least one bar chart that compares how different types of individuals sort out for your dependent variables. Specifically, what is the value of your dependent variable for individuals on the low and high end (or who belong to different subgroups, like men vs. women) of each key independent variable? This is the simplest way to show an audience whether it looks like there is an association between your independent and dependent variables before controlling for any other variables that might influence this relationship.

\_\_\_For your bar chart, make sure that your axes are properly labeled, a legend is included if necessary, and that any numbering for the x and y axes makes sense. For the latter, that means that you need to make sure that the scale is logical and the same if you have two charts on the same PPT slide so your audience can easily compare your two charts.

\_\_\_ When you get to this part of your presentation or paper, make sure to explain why you are presenting bivariate data, and explain your findings in a way that would be appropriate for a well-informed audience who doesn’t understand statistics well. Instead of saying, “Well, here is my bivariate analysis” and moving on, instead say something like, “Recall that I have hypothesized that some groups of people will be more supportive of gun restrictions than others, and to see if this is the case, it is helpful to look at a graph that plots levels of support for fire-arm controls for different types of individuals. In this figure, analyze the key independent variables in my study. While I hypothesized that we should see a big difference between groups *x* and *y*, you can see in the figure that there is not much of a difference between the two groups’ attitudes. On the other hand, whether someone identifies as *a* or *b* does appear to have the expected relationship. While we will need to see if any of the other variables I have talked about explain these relationships, the data here suggest that at least some of my hypotheses do not appear to be correct.”

?\_\_\_? Only if it fits what you are doing, you may also want to test the statistical significance of the differences in the dependent variables’ means or frequencies for different groups or types of individuals. In the workshop readings and online materials, we covered ways to use a bar chart, means tests (t-tests), correlation tests, and confidence intervals as some of the several ways scholars show that there is a relationship between two variables. Most of you will not include statistical tests of the relationship between your independent and dependent variables until you report regression results, since the point in the first part of your findings presentation is to make a quick case that there is (or is not) a relationship between your independent and dependent variables before you use regression to better understand that relationship.

\_\_\_ *Unless it is essential to your analysis, remove from your final presentation the correlation matrix* figure you may have been asked to include in your earliest talks so your audience could help you verify whether there were going to be issues with some of your variables being so highly correlated that regression analyses would not work.
* ­­\_\_\_ Your *presentations must include at least one table that reports your regression model results*. Make sure that you can interpret those models correctly, including (in this order) what (1) the pseudo-R-square statistic is and means, (2) which *independent* variables are significant predictors of your outcome (you should ignore the control variables if you have any because they are there just to make sure that you are correctly isolating the effect of your independent variable/s on your dependent variable/s)s.

\_\_\_ When you get to this part of your presentation, make sure to explain why you have regression models. Instead of saying, “And, here’s my regression models,” instead say something like: “To fully test my hypotheses, I use regression models. Regression models provide several types of important information. First, they tell us how much of the variation in support for gun control is collectively explained by all of the variables I am looking at. Second, because people have overlapping characteristics that may influence support for gun control, we want to use a statistical method that can tell us how much each of my independent variables predict supports and whether some the individual characteristics that seem to be correlated with support are actually due to the presence of other characteristics. For example, I have hypothesized that women will be more supportive of gun control, but women also are more likely to be Democrats, so we want to know how much women support control after controlling for the effect of partisanship and vice-versa. So, looking at well these variables collectively explain support for gun control, the pseudo-R-square statistic indicates…”

\_\_\_ To interpret the effect of each independent variable, *make sure that you have reported* ***only*** *the odds-ratios* [again, those are the logistic regression results in the furthest right-hand column; the one labeled Exp(B)].

\_\_\_ Make sure that you know how to interpret the odds ratio for each of your independent variables. If you do not know exactly what you are doing, make sure to review this handout from Unit 3 (the materials on how to interpret logistic regression): <https://marksetzler.org/SeniorSem/SPSShandoutsAndStats%20help/AnnotatedLogitOutput.pdf>

\_\_\_ The statistical significance of any variable should be noted with asterisks placed on the odds ratio:

\* = smaller than .050 (i.e., no more than a 5% chance the finding would not be the same in repeated sampling);

\*\* = smaller than .010 (i.e., no more than a 1% chance the finding would not be the same in repeated sampling);

\*\*\* = smaller than .001 (i.e., 99.9% of the time repeated sampling will show that the independent variable has an effect in the same direction on the dependent variable).

\_\_\_ Note: If your study has multiple regression models, they typically should go into multiple columns in the same table so that readers can better see how your results are related to one another. Again, see the article by Graeber and Setzler to see what this should look like. Alternatively, here is what a polished logistic regression table looks like:
<https://marksetzler.org/SeniorSem/SPSShandoutsAndStats%20help/Sample%20formatted%20logistic%20regression%20table%20with%20three%20models%20.pdf>

?\_\_\_? Consider also making a probability figure similar to what we did in the SPSS workshop. If you do this, *only* include your independent variables in the figure, *BUT* (and this is important), the regression model you use to create the figure and the Excell worksheet need to include all of the variables or your results will be wrong! There are some examples of what these figures can look like in Setzler’s Bolsonaro article referenced above)

1. \_\_\_ Finish your presentation with brief conclusion. In order, the conclusion should explain what you found for each of your hypotheses, in the order they were listed originally in the presentation. Then, tell us how your findings have added to what we already knew. Finally, if there’s any next step—either for you or future researchers—tell us that, too.

The graded practice presentation counts as one of your professional development assignments; failure to attempt a presentation will result in a zero out of 100 points (5 percent of your course grade). Please also take this presentation seriously as preparation for your final capstone presentation, which is worth 10 of your course grade. You will earn an A (excellent work) or B (very good, with obvious small issues) for this assignment if your work (and attendance for other presentations) reflects a good-faith effort to complete all aspects of the assignment to the best of your ability. You will receive C if you miss one of the presentations or give an oral presentation that clearly is not your best effort (or a D if you do both of these). Completely unsatisfactory work will receive a D or a failing grade. For the final presentation, see the online rubric.