

20. *Writing for Applied Audiences*

SUGGESTED COURSE EXTENSIONS

Reviewing

1. Find a poster related to your interests at a professional conference in your field. Discuss the research project with the poster's author. After you return, write a critique evaluating the following, using the criteria under "Posters" on pp. 447–51 of *Writing about Multivariate Analysis, 2nd Edition*:
 - a. Title of the poster
 - b. Ease of understanding of data and methods description for (i) researchers in your field; (ii) nonstatisticians
 - c. Accessibility of research findings to (i) researchers in your field; (ii) nonstatisticians
 - d. Relevance of conclusions for an applied audience
 - e. Clarity of the overall story line on the poster
 - f. Poster layout
 - g. Type size and other formatting
 - h. Availability and quality of handouts
 - g. Length and clarity of the presenter's oral description of the poster contents
2. Find an issue brief or policy brief related to a research topic in your field or at a website such as the Urban Institute (<http://www.urban.org>). Critique the following elements of the brief, using the guidelines under "Issue and Policy Briefs" on pp. 451–55:
 - a. Ease of understanding for nonstatisticians
 - b. Simplicity of tables and charts
 - c. Appropriateness of vocabulary for the intended audience
 - d. Layout
3. Find a chartbook about a research topic in your field or at a website such as the US Social Security Administration (<http://www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/chartbooks/>) or Healthy People 2020 (<http://www.healthypeople.gov/>). Critique it using the criteria on pp. 455–56.

4. Find a descriptive report about a topic in your field or at a website such as the Office of Human Services Policy (<http://aspe.hhs.gov/topics0.cfm/>). Critique it using the criteria on pp. 456–57.
5. In the popular press, find a general-interest article about a technical topic. Critique it using the criteria on p. 458.

B. Writing

1. Create a 4' by 8' poster about a research paper for a conference of your professional association following the guidelines on pp. 447–51 of *Writing about Multivariate Analysis, 2nd Edition*.
 - a. Design pages for each major section of the paper, including an introduction, literature review, data and methods, results (several charts or tables; see question B.2 below), and conclusions.
 - b. Draft the layout of the poster, including space for a title banner and abstract as well as the pages from part a of this question.
2. Adapt charts or tables from your paper to be used on the poster. Write titles and Vanna White notes for each table or chart following the guidelines on pp. 431–34.
3. Write a narrative to accompany your poster. Include short modules for each of the following.
 - a. An introduction to your topic and project
 - b. The key findings of your study
 - c. The policy or program implications of your work
 - d. The research implications of your work
 - e. A description of the data used in your analysis
 - f. An explanation of your methods for someone familiar with multivariate statistics
 - g. An explanation of your methods for nonstatisticians
4. Create handouts.
 - a. For a statistical audience
 - b. For an applied audience
5. Critique and revise the poster, narrative, and handouts.
 - a. Ask a colleague to evaluate your poster and associated narrative and handouts, given your specified audience and using the criteria under “Posters” on pp. 447–51 of *Writing about Multivariate Analysis, 2nd Edition*.
 - b. Revise the poster, narrative, and handouts based on what you learned in your rehearsal.

6. Write a two-page issue brief about a multivariate analysis, following the guidelines on pp. 451–55.
7. Write a two- or three-page general-interest article about the purpose, findings, and implications of your multivariate analysis, following the guidelines on p. 458.
8. Write a chartbook about a multivariate analysis, following the guidelines on pp. 455–56.
9. Repeat questions A.1 through A.5 from the suggested course extensions to chapter 19, writing a ten-minute oral presentation to a lay audience.

C. Revising

1. Critique a poster you have created previously for an applied audience about an application of a multivariate analysis, using the criteria on pp. 447–51 of *Writing about Multivariate Analysis, 2nd Edition*. Consider
 - a. The poster itself
 - b. Your narrative introduction to the poster
 - c. Your narrative modules about the purpose of the project, the data and methods, major findings, and implications for applications of your results
 - d. Handouts to accompany the poster
 - e. Revise the poster to rectify any problems you identified in parts a through d
2. Critique a report you have written previously for an applied audience about an application of a multivariate analysis, using the criteria on pp. 456–57. Revise it to rectify any problems you identified.
3. Ask a peer who is familiar with the statistical and substantive knowledge level of your intended audience to critique the revised draft of the report you used in the preceding question, using the criteria on pp. 456–57. Revise it to correct any shortcomings they identified.
4. Critique a speech you have written previously for an applied audience about an application of a multivariate analysis, using the criteria in chapters 19 and 20. Revise it to rectify any problems you identified.
5. Ask a peer who is familiar with the statistical and substantive knowledge level of your intended audience to listen to the revised speech you used in the preceding question. Have them critique it, using the criteria in chapters 19 and 20. Revise it to correct any shortcomings they identified.