

Module: Group Project
Title: Introducing ACS Data to Marriage and Family students
SOC 203: Marriage and the Family (an online course)
Spring 2017

Mohammed Shahidullah
Harold Washington College
(Chicago City Colleges System)
E-mail: mshahidullah@ccc.edu

This online group project is to introduce students to demographic and socio-economic data from the American Community Survey to understand major concepts of marriage and the family in a sociology course.

Learning Objectives:

Skill

- Get familiar with data from the American Community Survey (ACS0
- Learn how to use Census Bureau's website FactFinder to extract demographic and socio-economic data
- Create tables using quantitative and qualitative data
- Learn how to read and interpret tables displaying frequencies and percentages
- Improve student's confidence in reading and discussing data from tables

Substance

- Understand marital status of the population of a state
- Learn poverty status of families and individuals in a state
- Assess magnitude of uninsured families in a state

Summary

Each group will work on the assigned project from below based on data from the 2011-2015 American Community Survey (ACS) and answer six questions given questions section. Each group will have its own group discussion board to exchange your ideas and feedback. Live discussion using blackboard ultra is desirable but not essential if you participate through your group discussion board. One of you should volunteer to become the group leader and develop a timeline to get the project done on time. Post your final product as an attachment under Group Projects on the General Discussion Board for the class. Each group will submit one document only. The document should include the names who contributed in it. Your grade will depend on your contribution for this project. The deadline for this project is last day of class of the semester. Let me know (through emails) if you have any questions.

Activity Description and Teaching Material

Topics:

1. Marital Status (Table S 1201) (for **Group 1, State: Illinois**)
2. Households and Families (Table S 1101) (for **Group 2, State: California**)
3. Health Insurance Coverage Status (Table S 2701) (for **Group 3, State: Texas**)
4. Poverty Status (Table S 1702) (for **Group 4, Florida**)
5. Educational Attainment (Table S 1501) (for **Group 5, New York**)

Instructions:

This exercise is to introduce you to demographic and socioeconomic data from the American Community Survey (ACS) from the U.S. Census Bureau. Follow the steps below to get to the data source on the website:

Steps to Get to the American Community Survey Data

1. Go to **Factfinder.census.gov** website
2. Click on Advanced Search
3. Click on Show Me All
4. Click on Geographies
5. Select a geography (State)
6. Click on the State you selected
7. Click on “Add”
8. Close the gray-bordered Select Geographies overlay window by clicking on “X” (do not click “X” at the top right corner)
9. Now, click on Topics
10. Click on “+” of Datasets
11. Click on 2015 ACS Five-Year Estimate Data and click on “Close X” to close Topics area
12. Select your table (s) by clicking on the square boxes and then click on “View” or “Download
13. Print or Download the table as an Excel File

If you need to have a new run click on “Back to Search” and then click on red “X” to clear your previous selection. Repeat the steps starting from step #2.

There are many ways to get to your data and you may try some of the options once you are at the website factfinder.census.gov

Some Definitions to Review before Answering the Questions

Variable- Something which changes values from one observation to another observation. For example, Age is a variable because it can change value from one person to another person.

Univariate: dealing with one variable. For example, Race and ethnicity are two single variables or they are two univariates. A table dealing with only one variable will be called a univariate table. For example, a dealing with age will be called a univariate table

Bivariate – a table dealing with two variables is called a bivariate table. For example, A table dealing with only age and sex will be called a **bivariate table**.

Frequency and Percentage – Review the definitions of frequency and percentage from the following link:

<http://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/a3121120.nsf/home/statistical+language+-+describing+frequencies>

Independent and Dependent Variables - Review these two concepts from the following link:

https://nces.ed.gov/nceskids/help/user_guide/graph/variables.asp

Questions related to your selected topic and state:

1. Identify a variable and prepare a univariate table on that variable.
2. Identify two variables and prepare a bivariate table on your selected topic.
3. Give some frequencies from your univariate table.
4. Give some percentages using your bivariate table.
5. Select a dependent variable and an independent variable and construct a sentence to reflect it.
6. Summarize the table you downloaded from the website on your topic and write a paragraph on it.

Context for Use:

This online activity is used for an online sociology course for students in a community college. This activity explores multiple concepts of Marriage and the Family. This group project will be done during last four weeks of the semester.