

PLS 210
Data collection and analysis report instructions

This assignment is the third, and final, component of your research project. Its purpose is to provide you with an opportunity to apply the knowledge of research design and methods that you have acquired in the course as well as to gain hands-on experience of collecting and analyzing data. Having reviewed the scholarly literature on your research topic and designed a project that contributes to that literature and promises to answer your research question(s), you will now empirically test your hypotheses. To do this, you will make use of one or more of the methods covered in Part II of the course to collect and analyze original data. Collection of such data requires careful consideration of the risks that it poses to research participants; for this reason, in the assignment you will need to detail the measures that you have taken to protect research participants and their data in addition to detailing your methodological choices, the processes of data collection and analysis, and findings.

Specifically, you will need to address the following issues:

- 1) The choice of the method(s) (such as participant observation, interviewing, focus groups, archival research) used to collect data, along with a detailed explanation of the rationale for that choice.
- 2) The risks that your research poses to research participants and the measures that you have taken to protect the participants, including your efforts to obtain informed consent and ensure that participation in your research and obtained data remain confidential. In particular, if you collect data from human subjects, you must provide them with an informed consent form or script.
- 3) Your sampling strategy (where needed).
- 4) The data collected for the project, along with a description of the data collection process (including the dates).
- 5) The choice—and explanation of this choice—of the method(s) used to analyze those data, accompanied by a discussion of the analysis process.
- 6) The results of that analysis, i.e. the findings from your research project.
- 7) Assessment—provided in a separate concluding section that not only concludes this assignment, but also encapsulates the entirety of your research project—of the extent to which the findings allow you to answer your stated research question(s), accept or reject your hypothesis (or hypotheses), and contribute to the scholarly literature on the topic.

Each of these issues must be considered in the main body in the assignment. In addition, the assignment will contain the following appendices:

- 1) Your CITI training completion certificate, which must be dated no later than one day before the start of your data collection.
- 2) Consent script or form (if you have collected data from human subjects).
- 3) Data collection instrument (if you have conducted interviews or focus group discussions).

Optionally, you may include additional appendices that provide more details on your data collection (for example, lists of interviews, with dates and locations, archival documents, newspaper articles, or other data sources) and analysis (for example, information on coding and tables summarizing key themes that you have identified in your data).

Most assignments should follow the organization suggested by the foregoing points, but in some cases minor deviations from this structure may be appropriate. The assignment should contain:

- 1) A clear and concise overview of the main issues under consideration.
- 2) The main body that addresses points 1-6 from the list above.
- 3) A final section that concludes both the assignment and the research project.
- 4) Appendices.

The assignment should be no shorter than 1,000 words long, but in most cases addressing all the required issues will take up considerably more space. For this reason, there is no upper word count limit and you may—and, depending on your research project, probably should—write a longer assignment if you think you need additional space. However, as always, highest-quality assignments are likely to explain data collection and analysis with concision and precision, providing only the information that the reader needs to develop a good understanding of the research, and avoiding superfluous information.

You may include a list of sources if you refer to them in the assignment. It does not count towards the specified assignment length. Neither does a cover page if you choose to include one.

The assignment should be double-spaced with one-inch margins in Times New Roman 12-point font. All citations should follow the American Political Science Association Style Manual (<https://connect.apsanet.org/stylemanual/>), which is the citation style used in the course syllabus.

The assignment is worth 15% of the course grade. It is due at by 11.59 pm on November 23.

You can optionally participate in peer review of the assignment. If you choose to do so, you must sign up to participate prior to the submission deadline, submit the initial version of the assignment, provide your feedback on the work of the peer with whom you have been matched, and revise your assignment in response to the comments that you receive from them. I will share the link to the sign-up spreadsheet on Moodle. Peer feedback is most useful when it identifies specific areas for improvement and involves detailed, actionable suggestions for changes; conversely, vague, overly broad, and difficult-to-implement comments offer little value. I suggest that peer reviewers use the assignment rubric to assess the initial drafts and complement it with specific suggestions for improvement. You are by no means obliged to accept your peer reviewer's feedback. Your revised assignment is due at 11.59 pm on November 30.

Submission details and other assessment policies can be found in the syllabus.

Data collection and analysis report rubric

	Failure	Minimally acceptable	Acceptable	Good	Excellent
Introduction	The introduction is missing or not comprehensible.	Crucial details about data collection and analysis for the project are missing or unclear. Alternatively, the introduction may contain superfluous details.	The brief overview of data collection and analysis for the project could be presented better and in a more focused way.	The assignment provides a reasonably compelling brief overview of data collection and analysis for the project.	The introduction is focused and clear. It provides a compelling brief overview of data collection and analysis for the project.
Data collection method(s)	The assignment does not provide the required details about the data collection method(s) used in the research project and/or the choice of the method(s) is not explained.	The assignment provides some of the required details about the data collection method(s) used in the research project. The rationale for the choice of the method(s) is unsatisfactory.	The assignment provides some of the required details about the data collection method(s) used in the research project. The choice of the method(s) could be explained better.	The assignment provides all the required details about the data collection method(s) used in the research project as well as reasonably compelling rationale for the choice of the method(s).	The assignment provides all the required details about the data collection method(s) used in the research project as well as compelling rationale for the choice of the method(s).
Research ethics	The author shows no appreciation of the risks posed by their research and/or fails to explain measures taken to minimize those risks. Where this is the case and the research project involves collection of data from human subjects, the assignment will receive a failing grade.	The assignment demonstrates that the author is aware of some of the ethical challenges presented by their research but fails to provide satisfactory explanation of efforts to minimize associated risks.	The assignment demonstrates that the author is aware of some of the ethical challenges presented by their research and provides an explanation of efforts to minimize associated risks, but that explanation may not be compelling or complete.	The assignment demonstrates that the author is aware of ethical challenges presented by their research and provides a reasonably compelling and complete explanation of efforts to minimize associated risks.	The assignment clearly demonstrates the author's awareness of ethical challenges presented by their research and provides a compelling explanation of well-thought-out efforts to minimize associated risks.

Sampling strategy (where needed)	No information about the sampling strategy is provided.	The sampling strategy is not appropriate for the research project and/or poorly explained.	Some information about the sampling strategy is missing and/or the choice of that strategy is not fully explained.	The sampling strategy is reasonably well thought out and explained.	The sampling strategy is well thought out and explained.
Data collection	Information about the collected data and/or data collection process is incomprehensible. Alternatively: no original data have been collected for the project or they are deeply inappropriate for the project.	The assignment does not provide crucial information about the collected data and data collection process. The quality of the data of their appropriateness for the project may be unsatisfactory.	The assignment provides most of the necessary information about the collected data and data collection process. The quality of the data of their appropriateness for the project are satisfactory.	The assignment provides almost all of the necessary information about the collected data and data collection process. It also demonstrates that reasonably high-quality data that are appropriate for the project have been collected.	The assignment provides all the necessary information about the collected data and data collection process. It also demonstrates that high-quality data that are appropriate for the project have been collected.
Data analysis and data analysis method(s)	Information about data analysis process is incomprehensible. Alternatively: data have not been analyzed or the choice of the data analysis method(s) is inappropriate for the project.	The assignment does not provide crucial information about data analysis and/or the choice of the data analysis method(s). The quality of data analysis may be unsatisfactory.	The assignment provides most of the necessary information about data analysis and the choice of the data analysis method(s). The quality of data analysis is satisfactory.	The assignment provides almost all of the necessary information about data analysis and the choice of the data analysis method(s). The quality of data analysis is high.	The assignment provides all the necessary information about data analysis and the choice of the data analysis method(s). The quality of data analysis is very high.

Findings	The discussion of the results of data analysis is incomprehensible or missing.	The discussion of the results of data analysis is simplistic and/or poorly developed. It indicates little understanding of the topic and no originality of thought.	The discussion of the results of data analysis is somewhat developed but may not have a clear focus and be logically constructed and internally coherent. It displays some understanding of the topic, but little originality of thought.	The discussion of the results of data analysis is reasonably compelling and identifies valuable insights into the research topic. It displays a solid grasp of the topic and some originality of thought. It is also logically constructed and internally coherent, but not fully developed or deficient in some other way.	The discussion of the results of data analysis is compelling and identifies valuable insights into the research topic. It displays a solid grasp of the topic and originality of thought. It is also logically constructed and internally coherent.
Conclusion	The assignment contains no conclusion, or the concluding paragraphs are superfluous.	The author provides a conclusion, but it does not successfully encapsulate the assignment and/or research project.	Conclusion is indicative of the author's partly successful attempt to encapsulate the assignment and/or research project.	Conclusion offers a reasonably compelling encapsulation of both the assignment and the research project.	Conclusion encapsulates both the assignment and the research project clearly, effectively, and cogently.
Appendices	The assignment does not contain all the required appendices. Where the CITI training certificate is missing or dated after the start of data collection, the assignment will receive a failing grade.	The assignment contains all the required appendices, which provide only some of the necessary information.	The assignment contains all the required appendices, which provide most of the necessary information.	The assignment contains all the required and likely some optional appendices, which provide almost all of the necessary information.	The assignment contains all the required and likely some optional appendices, which provide all the necessary information.

<p>Organization, writing style, spelling, and grammar</p>	<p>Weak or no organization. Random expression of ideas. Thoughts are expressed in a disjointed or incomprehensible way. Writing style, spelling, and grammar need major improvement. The assignment is too short or too long.</p>	<p>The assignment needs better transition and flow between ideas. Some awkward and confusing passages detract from a thorough understanding of the research design. The assignment follows the word count instructions.</p>	<p>Mostly logical progression of ideas, but the writer must do more to make connections. Some awkward and confusing passages detract from a thorough understanding of the research design. The assignment follows the word count instructions.</p>	<p>Mostly logical progression of ideas, but the writer must do more to make connections. A few distracting errors or awkward phrasing. The assignment follows the word count instructions.</p>	<p>Good flow or progression of ideas and good presentation of how the points made fit into the overall research design. Eloquent expression of ideas with no distracting or obvious grammatical or mechanical errors. The assignment follows the word count instructions.</p>
<p>Citations, quotations, and bibliography (where needed)</p>	<p>Missing or inadequate citations.</p>	<p>Referencing does not follow the required citation style. In some cases excessive use of quotations.</p>	<p>Referencing follows the required citation style, with some errors.</p>	<p>Mostly correct referencing, with a few minor errors.</p>	<p>Correct referencing.</p>