

16

Writing for Applied Audiences

SUGGESTED COURSE EXTENSIONS

■ A. 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 on pages 390–94 of *Writing about Multivariate Analysis*:
 - 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
 - i. 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 Web site such as the Urban Institute (<http://www.urban.org>). Critique the following elements of the brief, using the guidelines on pages 395–98 of *Writing about Multivariate Analysis*:
 - 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 Web site such as the U.S. Social Security Administration (<http://www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/chartbooks/>) or Healthy People 2010 (<http://www.healthypeople.gov/>). Critique it using the criteria in chapter 16.

4. Find a descriptive report about a topic in your field or at a Web site such as the Office of Human Services Policy (<http://www.aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/indicators03/>). Critique it using the criteria in chapter 16.
5. In the popular press, find a general-interest article about a technical topic. Critique it using the criteria in chapter 16.

■ B. WRITING

1. Create a 4' by 8" poster about a research paper for a conference of your professional association.
 - 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 B2 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.
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 on pages 390–94 of *Writing about Multivariate Analysis*.
 - 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 pages 395–98 of *Writing about Multivariate Analysis*.
7. Write a two- or three-page general-interest article about the purpose, findings, and implications of your multivariate analysis, following the guidelines in chapter 16.
8. Write a chartbook about a multivariate analysis, following the guidelines in chapter 16.

9. Repeat questions A.1 through A.5 from the suggested course extensions to chapter 15, 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 pages 390–94 of *Writing about Multivariate Analysis*. Revise the poster to rectify any problems you identified.
2. Critique a report you have written previously for an applied audience about an application of a multivariate analysis, using the criteria in chapter 16. Revise it to rectify any problems you identified.
3. Critique a speech you have written previously for an applied audience about an application of a multivariate analysis, using the criteria in chapters 15 and 16. Revise it to rectify any problems you identified.