

Sandra Steiber

MAT 115

October 7, 2015

Friday's Discussion and survey potential

Friday's discussion brought up many good points as to how to proceed with our survey, and ultimately, make it successful. A few things, in particular, stuck out as important for our survey. First, the director of the consulting center stated that "data collection is not ideal". This is what our project should constantly keep in mind – no matter how we try to perfect our survey questions and eliminate all sources of bias and create an "ideal" sample population, there will never be a way to make our survey completely without flaws. But as he said, statistics does take into account random variables that will occur in our survey and crunch the numbers to see if there really is *something* of significance in our data. In general, I think it's going to be important to keep this all in context. We will do our best to eliminate issues but we cannot get so stuck on perfection that we lose practicality in executing our survey.

One thing that was brought up was the use of statements instead of questions for our survey. This allows us to collect "binary" data instead of having to sift through countless different and unique answers. The idea of a scale of rank is something that would be very useful. Using four ranks: strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree, will give us two categories – a positive and a negative categorical answer to our questions. This will allow us to see where patterns fall.

As far as executing our survey, I argue for the divide and conquer method. To keep things even, we can send half of the class to the East Side and the other half to the West Side. If Monmouth is our geographic dividing point, then our survey points on either side of the street

should be equidistant. For example, 3 streets from Monmouth to the east and 3 streets from Monmouth to the west. This in effect, will ensure that our survey sites are relatively equal. We would lose continuity if we surveyed the West Side in an area much farther from the center of Newport than that of our survey site in the East Side. Perhaps a group of two or three students could be assigned a specific place of business on their respective side. This would allow for two groups on each side. Each group could aim to survey 50 people, which would allow for a total sample size of 200.