

Final Portfolio

Premise

For the final portfolio project, you will formulate a research question that interests you, find a dataset to address that question, and create a series of three visualizations that provides insight into your question. Your final portfolio will most likely draw on your academic discipline, personal interests, or current events. Start this project with a topic, then search for data that can speak to your topic and then formulate your research question based on what is available in the data. Once you have the question/topic and the data, then you can consider how best to visualize it. We've provided a sizable list of [resources](#) that you can draw from, although these are only suggestions.

This project is unlike the first two blog posts in two ways. First, you will have the opportunity to iterate on feedback from the PinUp and a broader presentation before the final submission. Correspondingly, the scope should be larger and the topic should be something you are truly interested in. Secondly, you may use any visualization technique you wish. Many of you may decide to build a digital series in Tableau, but if you'd prefer to utilize another method (illustrations, art installation, textiles, video etc.) for your visualization, outline the details in your proposal.

By the end of this project, you will be able to: * Leverage data visualization in research specific to your discipline * Create a cohesive series of several visualizations that build on each other * Present drafts of your work and incorporate the feedback your live audience provides

PART I: Project Proposal

DUE 6am, Sunday November 15 (10%)

You will submit, via email, an approximately 1 page project proposal that addresses:

1. **Your research question.** Your research goal can take the shape of a question, topic, or title, but it must be coherent and addressable by this data set and through a visualization. We expect your research question will develop as you work with the data set. This should be more in line with a research question you would pose for a final paper. For example, your project may start with "What portion of American discourse on gun control is really about guns?"
2. **Your audience.** Who would benefit from an answer to your research question? Why does this question matter to them? This may be situated within your discipline and draw on those theoretical tensions or it can be broad and appropriate for a general audience. You can give narrative context or a very direct statement of what is at stake. As you begin to design your visualization, consider what functionality (such as filters or tooltips) would benefit this audience the most.
3. **The data you will use to address your question.** You must include what dataset you plan to use, where you got it, and how it is formatted (and your data cleaning plan, if applicable).
4. **A sketch of how you plan to visualize your data.** The sketch must be visual, preferably hand drawn. If you'd prefer, you may sketch it on a computer in a program such as [Gimp](#), [Tayuski Sketches for iPhone](#), [Medibang Paint](#), etc. This sketch should not be a computer generated graph or other visual at this point in the process. It should be your initial ideas about what your visualization's ideal form might be to best answer the research question you've proposed. Attach a picture of this sketch to your email.

I will provide you with feedback by **Monday at 9pm**. I cannot take late submissions, but can take early ones. This timeframe is to ensure that what you have planned is reasonable and realistic. If your project needs revisions, you will not need to submit a revised proposal. However, if there are major changes, I may ask to schedule a video chat over the weekend to help reframe your project.

PART II: Visualization and Blog Post

First Draft DUE 6pm Wednesday, December 2 | Final Portfolio DUE 6pm Wednesday, December 9 (75%)

You will publish a blog post on your CUNY Academic Commons Site that includes the following components. The written component should be approximately 500-1,000 words.

1. **Your research question.** Your research question may have evolved or completely changed since you submitted your proposal. However, your blog post must be cohesive. Its description and analysis must reflect the question or topic you have addressed in *this* version of your visualization.
2. **Your audience.** Describe the audience this visualization aims to serve.
3. **A written description of your visualization.** Explain your visualization in terms that a data novice would understand. Your goal is to make your work approachable. At this point in your post, anyone who has come across your site should understand what your research question is, why this topic matters to your audience, and how to read and interact with your visualization.
4. **Your embedded visualization.** Your visualization should be published on your Tableau Public Profile and embedded in your blog post. It should retain all the interactive functionality you built in Tableau.
5. **An explanation of the data and design decisions you made.** This section should illustrate what you did and why you did it. Why did you choose the type of chart/graph/visualization that you did? How does that choice best represent the data and address your question? Through this explanation, you will illustrate that the decisions you made were intentional and how they contribute to the project. You should also explain any limitations you encountered and any subsequent compromises you made with the data or your design.
6. **Next steps.** Finally, explain where you could take this project in the future. What would the immediate and more complex next steps look like? What improvements, developments, or alterations in scope would you make? ## PART III: Pin Up & Presentation

Pin Up DUE in class (Zoom at 6:30pm) December 2 | Presentations DUE in class on December 9 (15%)

In addition to the pin up and critique on Monday, June 17, there will be a Final Review on June 24th. Each student will have the opportunity to receive thoughtful feedback about their work and offer the same to their peers. You must be present in class for both events. Since critique is essential but ephemeral, if you have extenuating circumstances that prohibit you from attending either session, please make arrangements in advance.

The Final Review is slightly different than the Pin-up in the sense that it is a chance to showcase your work and defend it to a wider public. Faculty, staff, and other interested community members will be invited. By this stage, your project should be well developed and you should be ready to speak to both the story it tells and your process in getting there, including the design decisions you made along the way. You may invite classmates, friends, and family, but please do not invite small children.

Some notes

You can use as many or as few visuals to address your question/topic as you wish and as you feel is appropriate. You can continue to iterate on your project until you are satisfied, but the first version must be completed by Monday 1 hour before class. If you have major revisions after the critique, you may submit your project for reassessment.

Finally, the end product (from the website to the visualizations) should be reflective of you and your style. The objective is that you will have a portfolio of work at the end of the semester that illustrates your visualization skills. If you already have a portfolio or a personal site, talk to us about how to incorporate the two.

Evaluation

Part I (10%)

10/10 for submitting on time and addressing all the components

Part II (75%)

- Appropriate choice of visualization (20)
 - The visualization type addresses the research question
 - The choice of graph or chart represents the data truthfully
- Effective Communication (20)
 - Intended message is communicated clearly
 - Data are accurately represented without distortion
- Design and Aesthetics (20)
 - All elements and features of the visualization have a communicative function
 - The visualization has a thoughtful layout and an intentional design
 - Title, headings, labels create helpful context and have appropriate sizes, locations, spellings
- Content of Blog Post (15)
 - The blog provides helpful context that makes the visualization more understandable and approachable
 - The writing provides the reader an inside look into the visualization's intent and creation process
 - All components of blog post are addressed
 - Decisions are in line with good visualization practices (see [Data Points](#) and [Storytelling with Data](#))

Part III (15%)

15/15 for actively participating in the pinup. This includes sincerely listening to the feedback from the class as well generously offering your best ideas for improving the work of your peers.