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## A Questionnaire for the Young Women's Studies Club

*A description of the project undertaken (e.g. the purpose and major goals of the project, and the actions taken to implement the project)*

The Young Women's Studies Club (YWSC) at Hoover High School has been using an end-of-semester survey in order to gather some information about the high school students who attend and also an essay for the mentors who participate. The questionnaire that was used originally had seven questions. The questions were strong but insubstantial; they did not have any gauge on the responses, and as such, nothing measurable could be developed from them. It was our goal to update the questionnaire and add some more questions in order to gather some quick quantitative, descriptive statistics. Consequently, by revising the questionnaire, we are hoping to make the survey something that can be used by the YWSC leaders as something presentable to potential donors, parents, and Hoover High School, as many individuals and organizations look for numbers as proof of any positive outcomes.

We began by evaluating the original questionnaire to determine its intention, what to glean from any results, and how we could improve or expand on those questions. Laura had attended a few of the club meetings of the Spring 2015 semester to observe and have a better understanding of the club and its main objectives. After compiling and assessing what we knew, we began to draft questions. The questions that we have formulated are more precise and specific than the original survey, as well as, some diverse questions we added, making it longer and more in depth. There are yes/no, nominal multiple choice, ordinal, and open-ended questions. The topics of these questions are made in a way that will hopefully capture more information about the students, their expectations and experiences of the club, their lives and future plans, and demographics. We also decided to implement a questionnaire to be administered at the beginning of the semester to help Dr. Susan Cayleff, the graduate assistant, and the mentors have a better snapshot of with whom they may be working and what some of the students are hoping to do and get out of the YWSC.

It was also our task to update the reflective essay given to the mentors at the end of each semester. We both felt that the original questions were very strong and only contributed a handful of questions to add and revised two of the questions.

With the guidance and input of Dr. Cayleff, there were many drafts of the questionnaire for the students from June until August 2015. Each more refined, with particular language and a particular ordering of the questions, as was researched<sup>1</sup>. Once the post-semester questionnaire is completed, (end of Fall 2015), it will be our job to try to capture some of the responses as data. As well as going through the responses, we will have to go through the questions to determine if there were some that were not well-written, lacked a certain clarity, or that the students left blank because they might not have found them relevant or had time for them.

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<sup>1</sup> The main resource that was used was a Coursera class, "Questionnaire Design for Social Surveys."

*The outcomes of the project to date (e.g. the results obtained, any reports and/or papers you may have drafted, any presentations you may have given, and one or two main achievements of the project)*

Currently, the main outcomes of the project have been the pre- and post-semester questionnaires that we have developed for the YWSC, as well as the questions that have been added to the mentors' essay. As mentioned previously, there have been multiple drafts of the questionnaire. The pre-semester questionnaire has already been given to the students. That survey was much more for those in charge and running the club, and we have not seen the students responses to those few questions. Andrea Guajardo is at present the graduate assistant for the YWSC, and had mentioned that the pre-semester questionnaire was received well by the students of the club.

At the time of this essay, the post-semester questionnaire has been administered but we have not received it. We are all looking forward to seeing the results. It is this questionnaire, specifically, that we will go over. We will make sense of the responses and hope to come up with some insights about the club through data, as well as, try to have some visuals that may represent it well. We have yet to see if the survey has achieved what we were hoping and expecting.

#### *The value of the project to the collaborating organization*

In re-creating the survey for the YWSC, we hope to offer a tool to give the club an organized deliverable. This can be valuable to the YWSC, as it is able to stay in existence from the money of donors and grants. We want something that can easily be presented that offers clear and concise proof that the club is well-worth the investment for the students and mentors who attend. Presently, many want to look at data and numbers in reports in order to be able to see the value of something; our aim is to do just that for the club.

As mentioned, we have not analyzed the responses for the Fall 2015 semester, and have yet to see and make any revisions to the questionnaire that may be administered for the Spring 2016 semester. As such, the expected value has not been matched to the actual value.

#### *The impact on you*

*Laura Moran*

This has been a very fulfilling and rewarding process and I look forward to see more of the results as this school year progresses. I am a Statistics graduate student, who is also doing the Women's Studies Graduate Certificate. This project and research has allowed me the opportunity to blend both of those interests and skills together. This has given me invaluable experience in survey creation, which is a branch of statistics and data analysis. It has given me insight into the subtle details that are necessary and usually go unseen or unnoticed when one is actually a participant of a questionnaire.

I am drawn to the social justice aspect of Women's Studies. While my participation in this work would not been seen as something 'on the frontlines,' it is wonderful to take part and help an organization that helps and inspires so many young people. When I had attended a few of the meetings in Spring 2015, I was amazed at how profound some of the ideas were and how socially conscious the members were. It was

hopeful seeing a younger generation that can make some important and considerable changes to the world that we all share. It seemed that this club really gives them the tools, the inspiration, and a brave inclusive space to consider the world and culture that might not give them a chance otherwise. I am excited to read the responses and to make sense of it in a quantitative and qualitative way.

*Leah Schroeder*

I have learned a lot more than I expected to, gaining valuable experience and insight through partaking in this project for the YWSC. After attending the Research Justice Symposium put on by the SDSU Women's Studies department and filling out a paper with my information implying my interest in the Young Women's Studies Club at Hoover, I was not expecting to be contacted with the opportunity to actually help the club's interest in a practical way. Meeting with Laura, Dr. Cayleff, and her graduate assistant several times, I found out more about the club and all that it provides participating students at Hoover. The impact this Club has and has had on young women and men cannot be underestimated, especially today in a world where girls and young women, as well as boys and men, are constantly bombarded with the cultural norms and roles they are expected to fill in order to "fit in" in our society. The Club provides them a comfortable, open, and accepting space where they can discuss these and other issues, express their opinions and insecurities, and collaborate with peers and mentors to become more aware, educated, and confident young people.

Seeing the Club in this light and having the opportunity to create for Dr. Cayleff and the other leaders a means to assess and gain some concrete evidence of what real impact this space has on the students who attend has offered a more well-rounded understanding to me of how important these sort of spaces really are, particularly for high school aged young adults to learn and grow freely. I definitely wish there had been something similar at my high school!

### *Resources*

Beatty, Paul. "Understanding the Standardized/Non-Standardized Interviewing Controversy." *Journal of Official Statistics*, 11.2, 1995, pp. 147-160.

Coursera. "Questionnaire Design for Social Surveys." Taught by Frederick Conrad and Frauke Kreuter, Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan. [coursera.org](https://www.coursera.org)

Kreuter, Frauke, Stanley Presser and Roger Tourangeau. "Social Desirability Bias in CATI, IVR, and Web Surveys: The Effects of Mode and Question Sensitivity." *Public Opinion Quarterly*. 72.5, 2008, pp. 847-865.

Lohr, Sharon L. *Sampling: Design and Analysis*. 2nd ed. Boston: Brooks/Cole, 2010.

Oksenberg, Lois, Charles Cannell, and Graham Kalton. "New Strategies for Pretesting Survey Questions." *Journal of Official Statistics*. 7.3, 1991, pp. 349-365.

Schnell, Rainer and Frauke Kreuter. "Separating Interviewer and Sampling-Point Effects." *Journal of Official Statistics*, 21.3, 2005, pp. 389-410.