

Plan for Project Dissemination and Method for Analyzing Student Data

Project Dissemination Plan Outline

The project began effectively on the first week of class with the first set of assigned readings and ended one week prior to the end of the semester. The project entails seven (7) distinct graded components and one extra credit component that all form a complete project that was worth 100 out of 250 total points in the course. All activities were posted at the beginning of the semester on BlackBoard as both individual documents and links to submit work in the folder for the week it was due and in a separate folder designated just for the project so students could see it all together in one place. The following outline is how students experienced the project. I posted regular reminders to BlackBoard for each step of the project and to encourage students to work together on Microsoft Teams. VoiceThread lectures were between 10-20 minutes and included voice-over-PowerPoint and video. VoiceThread allowed students another avenue to raise questions about the project. I also answered questions and provided feedback on each activity through Teams. I would drop into each group occasionally to verify they were working together and if there were any concerns.

- Week 1: Set up students on Microsoft Teams and create small groups (5-6 in a 30-student class). Post list of student groups in Teams on BlackBoard. Groups remained the same all semester, though two students had to change groups, as their other group members dropped the course.
- Week 2:
 - VoiceThread video explaining the overall project, and how students will use Teams.
 - VoiceThread lecture on qualitative methods that students will use in the course along with readings from the course textbook that illustrate research methodologies.
 - Introduce students to the American Sociological Association research ethics guidelines online and provide extra credit quiz.
- Week 3: VoiceThread lecture on interview strategies and assign interview question activity.
- Week 4:
 - Provide reading research activity with readings that also provide key concepts students may likely use in their analysis plan activity.
 - VoiceThread lecture on how to conduct and transcribe interviews to prepare students for activity #4. Assign interview and transcript activity. This was done seemingly out of sequence to encourage students to begin planning their interviews in the third week of class to give them ample opportunity to schedule and conduct interviews and transcribe them.
- Week 6:
 - VoiceThread lecture on grounded theory, the constant comparative method, and coding and a video demonstration of how to code interview data (using real transcripts from my own research). The video was preceded by the following statement: “Watch this to see me go through a real interview transcript and how I coded it. I do NOT expect you guys to be professional qualitative researchers. Your work will likely be messy, confusing, and perhaps totally off base. But that is FINE. The activity is about going through the motions so when you go to do your own, you won't be quite as lost. Trust me, the first time I did coding, it was terrible.” Complete coding activity.
 - Project check-in via Zoom
- Week 9: Complete themes activity.
- Week 12:
 - VoiceThread lecture on how to create an analysis plan and assign analysis plan/research proposal activity.
 - Project check-in via Zoom
- Week 13:
 - Complete research proposal/analysis plan.
 - Virtual lecture on Zoom to present students' findings and discuss students' interpretations of their own data and compare to the instructor's and each other's.
- Week 14: Complete reflection essay and peer evaluation.

Method for Analyzing Student Data

I created a sample of student interviews for an exploratory analysis of the impact of COVID-19 on family life that I shared with my students in a lecture. Twenty-five students conducted a total of 75 interviews (N = 75). I grouped each students' set of interviews and assigned each grouping a number (1-25). Using a random number generator online, I selected 10 random

interview sets to get a sample of 30 interviews (n = 30). I selected that approach to capture a sample of students' families instead of individuals. The 30 interviews sampled included 14 friends and the other 16 were family members, either siblings (most common), parents, and a cousin. The average age was 39. A few interviews were with minor siblings, but I excluded interviews with children from the sample. The modal gender was female (n = 18) (students asked for gender identity). The same was asked about race, the most common of which was White (n = 26). There were a few biracial (White and Hispanic) and one Asian. A majority were employed (n = 19), some were not employed, and few were retired. Families tended to be middle class. Finally, participants rated their health 1 to 5, with 1 being *poor health* and 5 being *excellent health*, for an average of 4.0.

Students' interview schedules were not identical, except for the first question. For the remaining questions in the sample, I combined those that followed a theme. I excluded questions from the analysis that did not fit with any other leaving questions that centered on family practices and financial issues. Some students asked probing questions, but others did not, which led to some acquiring richer data than others. I used the constant comparative method to code data so that themes emerged inductively and a grounded theory approach to interpret the results. To facilitate sharing examples of data analysis easily with my students, I coded the interviews in Microsoft Word using highlights and comments in the margins (instead of e.g., NVivo).

In a virtual lecture on Zoom, I presented the results with quotes to illustrate themes that emerged from the data and used sociological theory and concepts from the course to contextualize the findings. I then opened the class to discussion so that students could share with the class their own interpretations of their findings and reflections on their experiences. The lecture was framed as an attempt to understand the COVID-19 pandemic and how it impacted students' families. I also shared a Word document showing how I coded their interview data and the process by which I arrived at the themes presented in lecture.