EDU 5655: Educational Research and Date Analysis/FALL 2008

Professor: Dr. John Hughes

SYNTHESIS

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Both Data Analysis and Statistics II were haunting me from the beginning. I have to say that these courses intimidated me from the beginning. I was wrong on both counts. Dr. Bernice made statistics interesting, and Dr. Hughes demonstrated the ability to utilize SPSS as a tool for presenting a convincing solution to present-day problems. I have learned to take statistics which have been collective via qualitative or quantitative techniques, and create charts, graphs and summaries with specific objective criteria. Indeed, Dr. Hughes demonstrated via the study of the Urbana School District, how a number of qualitative survey opinions can decide school policy and ultimately changing educational programs.

First, Dr. Hughes made several brief presentations about how to utilize SPSS. During the presentation, Dr. Hughes explained the process of utilizing numbers in answers to subjective questions and translating the answers into pie charts, and graphs, and histories, in devising a story about how teachers, students, and the community believe about their school district. Dr. Hughes navigated through just a few of the many options in creating several charts, graphs and histories that make up SPSS. Then, Dr. Hughes gave us an assignment where we were required to take our new knowledge and make a presentation about what we thought was important themes in the Urbana Survey. We worked diligently on our assignment for quite a while; it made me reflect on my own advice to my teachers at Central Islip in encouraging them to be “guides on the side,” not sages on the stage.” In other words, after Dr. Hughes demonstrated the few utilities of SPSS, he encouraged us in a cooperative assignment to create a presentation according to our own choice of questions in the Urbana survey and he encouraged us to create our own PowerPoint designs and slides. Technologically, we were required not only to utilize SPSS, but the PowerPoint program, as well as upgrade our products on our website. While it is stressful to complete the computerized assignments, I have to say that it enables me to become more prepared in my career as I have become accustomed to make presentations.

After our cohort was able to navigate our way around SPSS, we got to work. Dr. Hughes explained his assignment, which was for us to chose a theme in each of the previously written about surveys from the teachers, students, and community. Then, we were to create charts and graphs from numbers and make a presentation during the following meetings. Intermitently, we were privy to a presentation about a website that another student was read to defend to the panel later on. During the website presentations it was I was intrigued to find that each of the websites was unique in their metaphors, and styles.

As we engaged in our cooperative activity, Dr. Hughes circulated around the rooms where we were stationed. It seems to me that the COHORT MODEL at the Oakdale campus is advantageous in many respects. First, there is one-to-one basis where professors and students may gain a tighter and closer rapport. Also, the Cohort model encourages the students to communicate with each other. Moreover, the students have better access to the facilities, and they are better able to utilize the available technology due to the low student to professor ratio. Moreover, all students at Oakdale are able to communicate via presentations, papers, videos, etc.

The presentation concerning various themes was conducted with my partner for this assignment, Rory Manning. Rory and I presented this assignment about Urbana utilizing the three surveys. It took much preparation, but in the end, we had learned how to utilize data and share its story. Debra Stone believes that data may be utilized to share a convincing argument, albeit who is to say that the argument is not objective. Rory and I found a way not to step on each other’s toes in creating a nice PowerPoint presentation about Urbana, replete with several themes about security, curriculum, instructional strategies, etc.