Statistics for Educational Research

This course helped us to learn when to use statistics to analyze data, which tools to use for various situation, how to use Excel and SPSS to calculate statistics, and how to analyze the output.

The first project in the course required us to find two articles about education, one in a scholarly journal, and the other in mainstream media. Each of these articles had to include some statistical analysis, and our task was to compare the level of information we received in each. Reading published works with an eye toward discovering strengths and weaknesses of their analytical work was a valuable exercise.

The next project was my favorite in this course, the creation of a website to help statistics students understand various topics. Leah Shull, Susan Terra, Anna Boscarino and I decided early in the process to use a Sherlock Holmes theme for our website, which gave it a light-hearted tone while delivering a lot of information. I was in charge of the actual creation of the website, and I am very proud of the final look and feel of the project.

The next assignment was related to the website project above. We were asked to critique another group's work against the rubric provided for scoring. This assignment made us take a closer look at the other group's work, rather than just accepting it on face value. Although I grade student work often in my job, I had never done a formal evaluation of the work of my peers, and the process was enlightening.

Finally, our fourth project in this course was to find a data set that was related to education and conduct a full statistical analysis exploring the possible relationships between the variables. I think this experience was valuable, as we will all have to make similar decision as we progress through our own research projects.