

Topic Outline: Thinking About Projects

Revised: March 28, 2016

Materials

- Today's handouts: this outline, project examples, mini-cases
- All posted on *Topic outlines & links* page of website

Projects

- Back to where we started: **thinking about data**
- The **project** is the heart of the course — and a demonstration of your skillset that you can share with potential employers.
- Components: revised ideas, proposal, data report, project (see due dates)
- Typical project has
 - Data
 - A **graph that tells a story**
 - Additional graphs that explore follow-up questions
- The nature of project ideas
 - Ideas are developed, not discovered
 - Ideas have friends (if you find an idea, there are others nearby)
- Idea machines
 - Start with an idea or subject
 - Start with a dataset
 - Start with an example
 - Start with a suggestion from the people you work with
- Another place to look for ideas
 - Course data page (skim links there, see what strikes you)
- Who has an idea of what they want to work on?
- Project examples (see handout)

After class

- Required
 - Submit Revised Project Ideas next week — or the week after
- Recommended
 - Skim Project Guide
 - Skim Project Examples
 - Bounce around project ideas with friends