COMP6234 Data Visualisation Coursework 1

1   Your task

Your task is to think through at least three (3) examples of data visualisations that demonstrate features that you think are important. These could be features that are good, but also those that are poorly done. In each case, outline your plans for modifying aspects of the graph in order to make it better. There are plenty of examples that you can google down, and you must include an image of each in the report that you submit.

2   Guidelines and criteria for assessment

Use your knowledge of the various criteria that have been talked about in the lectures and in readings that you may have undertaken in order to *identify the reasons* why you regard these examples as worthy of interest. You should discuss the *narrative context* within which the data being visualised is used as *evidence*. It may so happen that there you do not have access to the actual context where this piece of evidence was used. In that case, you will have to make up a *scenario* or *question* that the graphic is answerable to. You will then need to consider how the design of the visualisation remains *faithful* to what can be said with the data available. You must remember that this is about *data* visualisation, and not *only* about visualisation. In all cases, give a detailed plan about how you would make the visualisation better, justifying each item for improvement with the help of concepts from *visual processing* of features, *aesthetic* conventions or aspects of *statistical* rectitude. You may also choose to include *other examples* which illustrate some aspects that could be incorporated to improve the graphs you have chosen to critique. As expected of academic writing, you must provide references for the sources you use to back up your claims.

The slides in the first 4 lectures laid out an overview and general principles of data visualisation, and provided guides for further reading. Please pay attention to them.

3   Marking scheme

The weighting of the this assignment is 30% of the total mark for the module. Breakdown of marks:

1. Choosing the visualisations and justifying the reasons why they were chosen (15%)

2. Explaining problems and issues (see criteria above) (35%)

3. Making appropriate suggestions for improvement indicating why and how they address the issues identified (35%)

4. Structure of the report, writing, presentation and grammar (15%)

4   Hand-in guidance, word length, key dates

The report should be 1200 words long, excluding references. Upload a PDF file. If you do use MS Word for your word processing needs, please export to PDF for your submission. Do not submit a MS Word `.doc` file. The hand-in date for this coursework is **March 11, 2016**. Feedback will be returned by **April 1, 2016**.

5   Academic Integrity

You must include the following statement in your report, whose spirit you must adhere to:

> *I am aware of the requirements of good academic practice, and the potential penalties for any breaches.*

Details of the possible penalties for breaches of academic integrity and how to avoid them can be found in the Academic Integrity Regulations in Section IV of the University Calendar: `http://www.calendar.soton.ac.uk/sectionIV/academic-integrity-regs.html`