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Data Science

Client Interview Overview/Summary

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As Whitworth group 2, our client is obviously more generally the campus/university itself, Whitworth. With that being said however, our specific client is Greg Orwig, who is the Assistant Vice President of Research and Innovation at Whitworth. Greg has a decorated portfolio of accomplishments including a Dallas Press Club 1st place Katy Award for News Writing, a silver medal for CASE national award for News Writing, 3 first place finishes (96’, 97’, 98’) in the Washington Press Association News Writing Awards, and various other achievements. To nobody’s surprise, Greg specializes in Higher education public relations, media relations, journalism, and communication.

In our research for the final project, we are focusing on data from 2018, 2021, and 2024 regarding students’ importance level and satisfaction with various prompts. For example, one prompt could ask if a student feels a sense of pride in their university. The student would then go on to answer how important that is to them and how satisfied they are with their sense of pride (the answer is measured on a seven-point scale). To go along with these importance and satisfaction scores, the data also breaks down other variables that could show potential influences on the general data, such as gender, major, class, etc. Furthermore, the data also compares the changes to the survey response over time, correlating importance and satisfaction between the 2018 responses and the 2021 responses for example. Due to the survey being conducted on real students, Greg has hidden individual student IDs on the data for confidentiality, other than that, the raw data has everything our group needs to conduct an in-depth exploratory data analysis.

Recently, I met with Greg along with some other students in my class to ask questions and gain access to the data (of which I have already began describing above). Our group’s goal with the client meeting was to get a feel for what Greg wanted from us and what style of exploratory data analysis we would be doing. Some of the questions that our group posed to Greg were:

* What are your goals (long or short term) with the data analysis that you receive from us?
* Is there anything specific you’d (meaning Greg) like for us (meaning our group) to focus on while doing the analysis?
* Has comparable research been done by other universities? If so, how does that match up with the surveys conducted by Whitworth?
* When did the surveys begin?

The gist of what I got back in response from Greg was that he wanted us to focus on something that is interesting to us and helpful for him. A lot of the data has already been cleaned and sorted in such a way that there are some obvious findings that our group has no use in pointing out. Hence, our group will have to focus on certain elements that are less obvious, perhaps how different majors rank sports being important or how different classes rank their satisfaction in academic instruction, more reading between the lines if you will. The big question that I believe perfectly encapsulates our mission as a group is: What factors of the student experience should [Whitworth] be spending [their] resources on to address?

Some possible researching ideas that have come up in recent discussions amongst our group are centered around focusing on a specific set of “prompts” compared to specific variables. For example, one idea that we’ve been circling about was asking how certain education prompts affect importance and satisfaction among different majors, different classes, and maybe even different housing developments. An education prompt would offer something like “The instruction in my major field is excellent.” Our group would take prompts similar to this one and compare and correlate importance and satisfaction among different majors and classes between the data from 2018-2024.