



Your reflective journal - STDS-reflection 35

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From [36103 Statistical Thinking for Data Science - Autumn 2020](#)

If you are going improve your practice as a data scientist then it is essential that you start to learn from your mistakes. (And yes - we all make these!) And plan for how you might do better next time if you found yourself in a similar situation.

One of the best ways to do this is to keep a log. Some things that will help you to improve your practice include:

- **Data Analysis:** What things are you trying today? Did it work? Do you have any ideas why/why not? What papers or links do you mean to chase up for the future?
- **Group work:** What is going well in your group? What is not working so well? What are you going to try in your next meeting to deal with that annoying team mate who never seems to deliver what they promise? Is group comms working as well as you think it should? What can you do about that? Have a look at [this post](https://www.inc.com/michael-schneider/analysis-10000-reports-told-google-to-train-new-managers-6-areas.html?cid=sf01003) (<https://www.inc.com/michael-schneider/analysis-10000-reports-told-google-to-train-new-managers-6-areas.html?cid=sf01003>) about the skills that google is now teaching its new managers - could you try to implement some of them for your group project? Why not identify some and then work towards implementing them in your journal.
- **Professional development:** What goals are you setting yourself? What can you do to meet them in this subject? Are there any goals emerging that might play into AT3? (e.g. What advanced statistical method would you like to learn?) What are things you will not have time to do for this subject that you think might be worth returning to later? (e.g. in an iLab).

Keeping a record of different thoughts, plans, issues etc. that you might have can be an enlightening exercise. This is why you are required to produce this record as part of the evidence you submit for AT2C! (Read the [assessment brief](#)!)

This page is your private reflective journal. Only you and the teaching team can read it (i.e. no-one from your group project can access it). **You should make an entry into it at least once a week throughout your group project.** You will not be marked on what you write - it is the fact that you are doing this that will be important for AT2C. However, when writing that submission at the end of your group project, you will find that if you link back to your reflection points and can argue that they demonstrate approaches you have tried, what has worked, what you would change next time etc. then you will receive much better marks. (But keep in mind that a lot of different evidence is required to do well for AT2C... not *just* this journal).

So! You will find that if you approach the task of keeping a reflective journal seriously for this class then:

- You will do much better on AT2C. You will have many more experiences to draw upon in writing your reflection on group processes, and will have much more evidence to present of what you have tried and whether that worked. Furthermore, you will have timestamps that show me you actually did keep a reflective journal throughout the subject (rather than hastily scribbling something out at the end).
- You will become a better data scientist! Trust me.. you will. Getting into an analytical mode where you reflect on weaknesses and strengths associated with what you are trying to do, and then tracking whether it worked or not, will become an essential professional skill as you move into the workforce. This is one way to do that.

Write something in here now! Try out a few different approaches throughout the subject until you find one that suits you...

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[← Write a reply...](#)[https://](https://canvas.uts.edu.au/groups/9336/users/59059) **Emma Valme**<https://canvas.uts.edu.au/groups/9336/users/59059>

Mar 30, 2020

First day of lecture!

A little reflection.

It was a weird but fun first workshop... Not used to have anything online and then have an all day long online session was intense, but also so much more giving then I would have thought. Since Im not used to have online meetings at all, it felt a bit weird to sit and talk to strangers, and I became a bit shy and afraid to say things and contribute, but I think I will get more and more used to it and take more place. It was also so much information which made me feel a bit overwhelmed and unsure about all thoughts my brain producing ... which ends up in that I become silent and insecure. But it will probably also be better in the future. It is also somewhat reinforced in the fact that English is not my first language... and sometimes its really tricky to hear what people say online.

I did almost all of the pre exercises, since I was a bit nervous about everything, and Im really happy I did.

However, Im a bit nervous but really exited to dig in in this subject. I think it will be a very educational course which will give me knowledge that I can carry with me in all different kinds of context.

All the best

Emma

ps. I really thought the project thet Kristy worked with (The student and course project) sounded really useable, I would have needed that a few years ago!! ds.

[http](http://canvas.uts.edu.au/groups/9336/users/2602) **Kirsty Kitto**<https://canvas.uts.edu.au/groups/9336/users/2602>

Mar 30, 2020

Hey Emma,

sounds like you are doing all the right things :) I agree - it is *really* hard when you have to try and communicate in a second language... and things just get harder in an online environment! Hopefully as you settle into your group things will start to get easier as you get used to how everyone communicates. It might help to organise some social times/activities with your group just so you can all get to know each other a bit easier during this cohesion phase. Keep plugging away and you will learn a lot!

Cheers,

Kirsty

[Leonie Payne](#)<https://canvas.uts.edu.au/groups/9336/users/3337>

Mar 30, 2020

Hi Emma

I'm really glad to read that you completed all the pre exercises - that organisation and attitude will help you very much throughout semester.

I only speak English, so I can only imagine the challenges you may face in an online environment in your second language. I can say that the contributions you made when I was in your breakout sessions were valuable, and encourage you to continue to contribute as you feel comfortable.

It is exciting to be at the beginning of semester - and your attitude towards learning is really positive, I look forward to reading your vignette.

Best,

Leonie

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[Emma Valme](#)<https://canvas.uts.edu.au/groups/9336/users/59059>

May 12, 2020

The week before the proposal due!

Last week was intense. My group, the Covid-19 group have realized that the area of study is pretty tricky. We have been having regular meetings every week but everything is going slowly. So when we realized that the due was the same week we kind of panicked. We also thought that we had a reasonably good idea but everything changed on the drop-in session. Our plan was to focus on Australia's individuals and how the virus have changed individuals behavior but with some inputs from the session we understood that it was better, regression-wise, to investigate from a more global perspective. So we changed lane and needed data. For our first plan i manually created a timeline of the events of Covid-19 affecting Australia so when our plan changed I started to create a similar timeline for the whole world, almost misson impossible. I sat with this for a few days and then we found a dataset with restrictions of different types, better than mine. So for the assessment we used this dataset instead. Really annoying but made it all better. I also was able to use some of the R-code that I did for Australia timeline, which was good. Anyhow, after having meetings and discussing how a group should work every day for that week we manage to get things together for the first due... But its been a lot of misunderstandings and so long diskussions and nothing gets done.... really time consuming.

Let's hope it goes better forward in this group.

All the best!

Emma

[Kirsty Kitto](#)<https://canvas.uts.edu.au/groups/9336/users/2602>

May 14, 2020

Agendas are your friend here. Documentation that tracks tasks, and sets timelines for discussion *ahead* of a meeting can be a lifesaver for achieving better outcomes when the team comes together. It can also really help with people struggling with English (a problem that I suspect your group suffers from). Have you tried this out?

Cheers,

Kirsty

[Emma Valme](#)<https://canvas.uts.edu.au/groups/9336/users/59059>

May 20, 2020

Yeah! We actually tried all different things. Being concrete with internal dues and so on, some of them just do not do anything... Josh have really worked hard, and he is really trying to bring everyone in. E.g we have used trello since the start. They say they will do things but nothing really happens. Which is starting to be really annoying, more on some of the other group members which create a angry environment... However, these kinds of things always appears when working in a group, i know that. But it is a bit harder when you havent meet the people and when everything is online. A real challenge actually...

[Kirsty Kitto](#)<https://canvas.uts.edu.au/groups/9336/users/2602>

May 20, 2020

Then make sure you have a very careful look at the task description for AT2C and thinking about whether you want to make a case in that submission for a reallocation of marks (you could try threatening them with that clause if you like). And make sure you store up some solid evidence to support that submission (which we will talk about more next Saturday).

Happy to have a chat to you about your team dynamics if you like, but I just spent quite a while talking to Josh about it so you might want pick his brains first. I agree though, you have quite a difficult group to manage, with a couple of very weak performers, and some fairly arrogant positioning. Think carefully about how you can talk about what you tried, what worked (or didn't) and what you might do differently next time you find yourself in a similar position. That will lead to a very good mark for AT2C, and you are quite likely well positioned to do very well in your individual project for AT3 - so only a few more days of dealing with these people.

Cheers,

Kirsty



[Emma Valme](#)<https://canvas.uts.edu.au/groups/9336/users/59059>

May 20, 2020

Thanks, yes I talked to Josh!

I have a question about Saturday, do we have to join the whole day or how does it look. Because of the time difference the lecture is from 1 am-9 am my time... If I need to join the whole thing I certainly will but if it some more or less important hours that would be good to know hehe.

Sorry for the inconvenience...

↩ Write a reply...

<https://>[Emma Valme](#)<https://canvas.uts.edu.au/groups/9336/users/59059>

May 20, 2020

Just before the presentation I did some investigation... Since earlier studies has shown that specific age groups of the community get hit harder than other. The old and weaker ones are in the zone. Here in Sweden everyone above 70 have to stay in quarantine and numbers show that 90% of the ones who has died in covid are in that age group. Anyhow, although age is hard for a country to change it may show that the country has to protect specific groups of the community more carefully. I started to do a poisson regression to predict cases per age group. For this I just involved Sweden and Australia, but it is pretty easy to involve other countries as well. This showed clearly that the older age groups were more vulnerable than younger. I was although a bit confused of the result since it is an ongoing spread and this predict that it is a poisson distribution, which it really is not. So this is just a result for now and now only since the status is continuously evolving, or? But it still shows the pattern that i wanted.

This made me wonder if the age of a population in a country increase the death rate. So I did a linear regression with median age on the x-axis and death rate on the y-axis. A lot of the countries in the data set had non deaths (which is good but made my result look boring). But after some cleaning up where I only chose the countries thats been hit really hard(over 1000 deaths) took part it got more clear. An outlaw with over 50000 deaths was also removed. This made a graph with a slightly upward leaning. I still wonder. Can I say that this is correlation? What level of leaning do I have to have to say something is showing? When it comes to median age in a country there are a lot of factors that are involved, can i count them in somehow? In example developed countries have an higher median age than the U countries and when it comes to covid, a lot of the more developed countries has been hit hard. I tried to remove that factor since only the worst hit countries are involved in the graph, can i do something else?

Thank you!

Sorry for ruin your breakout rooms last time;)

All the best!

Emma

**Kirsty Kitto**<https://canvas.uts.edu.au/groups/9336/users/2602>

May 20, 2020

There are quite a few news articles floating around with a claim that a reason Italy was so badly hit was because of their average age. You might want to conduct a bit of a literature search ;)

I think your current method might improve if you focus on countries that you think are doing a fairly good job with testing and reporting rather than removing outliers. So - if you look at the more developed European countries, Aus, NZ, Canada etc. then does the improve? You could try it with and without the USA, but my suspicion is that they are underreporting deaths quite significantly so they might skew your results...

**Kirsty Kitto**<https://canvas.uts.edu.au/groups/9336/users/2602>

May 20, 2020

Oh - Saturday... it will be largely similar to the first Saturday with free time to come and go, and various workbooks discussed. Definitely come for the first few hours, and then maybe play it by how sleepy you are? This is what it looked like last time, but I need to have a think about whether I change that up a bit...

Link to slides: [Workshop3.html](#)

Time	Topic	Key links	Source files
0900	Debrief on Assessment 2	Workshop3.html	Module 3.zip
0930	AT2C	AT2C: The Performance Review!	
1000	What do you want to learn next?	What will I learn in this subject?	
1030	Advanced models		
1100	Explore workbooks (jigsaw activity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> pcrWorkbook.nb.html tsWorkbook.nb.html spatialAnalysis.nb.html multilevelModels.nb.html semWorkbook.nb.html bayesianWorkbook.nb.html 	Source for all advanced workbooks in one file: AdvancedModules.zip
1200	Lunch		
1300	Continue with workbook explorations		
1400	Choosing a statistical model	A Challenge! Which statistical model should be used?	
1500	Assessment 3: Benchmarking past submissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> https://ca.uts.edu.au/ STDS-AssessmentBrief 	
1530	Continue with workbooks and get help on Assessments as desired		

← **Write a reply...**

**Emma Valme** (<https://canvas.uts.edu.au/about/59059>)

17:22

I have never been through something like this before, group wise... This project have taken so much more energy than I thought it would. I have been part of many group works but something with this was just weird from the beginning. The group dynamic was strange, during meetings people did not talk but

then everyone just talked about their ideas with Josh, who somehow became some kind of master for the group. He turned to me and said he did not want to have that role, which was understanding, because everyone only wrote and talked to him 24/7.

Now the last week have also been a mess. From the beginning I was clear what I wanted and had time to do for the report. I also did it and was done in time... I think I could have wrote it better but thats always the case when its a deadline. But nothing else happened, no one else wrote anything. In this part of the group-work I said that I do not have time to sit 3 hours a day in zoom meeting which almost been the case since day one in with this group. I asked the others if my part was ok, and they said its fine. Then, weirdly, when the report was due, even late due. One of the group members had complaines on my part, way too late. I was really annoyed by this, since I had mine done in time and also asked. Then we also had problems with plagiarism, which is just sad. I am really done with this group. All cred to Josh though, he tried his best and a little bit more to make this ok.

← Write a reply...

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[https://](https://canvas.uts.edu.au/about/59059) [Emma Valme \(https://canvas.uts.edu.au/about/59059\)](https://canvas.uts.edu.au/about/59059)

17:33

⋮

From Sweden.

I thought it would be easier to work here from Sweden than it has. The time difference makes it hard to follow how the groups develop. When I wake up I usually have over 100 unread messages. Also when I need help, everyone is asleep which makes everything go pretty slow. But I learnt a lot from this as well. Being clear in the group, so everyone know what I cover and do and also so I know what to do. Also i have seen how some people cant be creative and just do their part of the work. I learnt how people need to be handled differently and that you have to check everyones work before you send in a group work, for plagiarism.

← Write a reply...