Capstone Project Proposal: Fantasy Football Pre-Draft Rankings Analysis

1. **Executive Summary** – I had a Fantasy Football draft coming up a few weeks ago and thought it'd be a fun project to scrape as many website's expert's rankings as I could find, clean the data, join them all together into one dataset, average the rankings, and analyze it all for patterns and insights. While using one site or expert's rankings and/or advice might lead you astray, taking the average of them all should be far more reliable. So, this project proposal is for a visual presentation of the analysis and will provide a drafting strategy backed by data for beginners and insights that even veterans will find useful on draft day.

2. **Why** – The goal is to help fantasy football beginners and veterans alike with their draft. I will analyze the dataset patterns for a comprehensive drafting strategy for a beginner and look for any insights that could give an experienced fantasy footballer a crucial edge in their draft. For example, I will think in terms of a 10-team league/draft (the most common size), spotlight the first few rounds (the foundational players), and determine the optimal time/round to draft a tight-end and quarterback (something the audience can actually control).

3. **Who** – Whether the stakeholder is a fantasy football website's editor or myself, the primary focus of this presentation and project will be the audience: fantasy footballers preparing for a draft. **(Do I create 2 personas? One for beginners and another for vets?)**

Persona of beginner fantasy football drafter (demographic info found at [Fantasy Sports & Gaming Association](#)):

Name: Steve Jankins

Age: 42

Gender: Male

Context: After being peer pressured into taking the last spot in a fantasy football league at work despite never playing before, Steve discovers a boss who doesn't like him is in the league too. With only a few days until the draft, Steve wants the league to be a way to connect with his boss rather than a source of further embarrassment, so he goes online to do some research. He found this presentation and hopes it will help him draft a competitive team.

Goals:

- To not embarrass himself with his co-workers, friends, and boss.
- To have a competitive team that will allow him to enjoy his first fantasy football season

Challenges and Needs:

- He's never done a fantasy league before.

- He barely watches football and hardly knows any players.

Persona of veteran fantasy football drafter:

Name: Brian Stokes

Age: 30

Gender: Male

Context: Brian's been in the same fantasy football league for 10 years with friends from high school who created it to stay connected. However, Brian hasn't won and has barely even gotten close in all these years. He's been devouring the internet for any and all info, data, and advice, and hopes the draft strategy and insights from this presentation give him the edge he needs to finally draft a winning team.

Goals: to draft a winning team

- To have insights and knowledge that even his experienced friends don't have
- To have a round-by-round draft strategy, including when to take his tight end, quarterback, defense, and kicker.

Challenges and Needs:

- He's too busy with work during the season to watch much football or keep up with anything but the basic needs of fantasy football, which is why he needs to have a fool proof team.
- His high school crush is in the league, and they've made a bet where if Brian wins then she'll go on a date with him. He *really* wants that date.

4. **What** – The dataset I'll be using is the overall PPR (points per reception) rankings I scraped from 15 websites/experts, including 2 ADP (average draft position) rankings to have additional data for analysis and to provide a comparative perspective on how people are actually drafting players versus how experts are ranking them. Most players will also have their position and team. I checked each website before scraping to ensure I was allowed to do so, making it free to use however I'd like.
   a. **Quality** – The scraped websites ranked anywhere from 96 to 500 players, so the top players will have 14 rankings and 2 ADPs, while some players will only have a single ranking. Also, only about 300 players will have their position and team name because that was the largest dataset with that information included. However, both limitations are largely irrelevant for the project because we'll be focusing on 10-team league whose draft will span 15 rounds, it's unlikely we'll need any players ranked outside the top 150.

      b. **Timeliness** – Because experts frequently change their rankings as the season approaches and they gain new information, timeliness is a concern. I scraped all the rankings within 2 weeks of the first game of the season (when drafts end), and the ADP rankings a few days before it (they were a last minute addition).

5. **How** – Right now I have a handful of topics/insights/patterns/findings I'd like to cover in detail, so I'm thinking in terms of a Story Point Presentation. The slides I have in mind right now are: an intro, overview, spotlighting the first few rounds and the top running backs and wide receivers, highlighting the top tight ends and when one should be drafted, same thing with quarterbacks, possibly a slide for defenses and kickers, a slide comparing experts' rankings versus how people are actually drafting, and a final conclusions and recommendations slide.

6. **Challenges** – I've gotten quite familiar with the data and even made some basic visualizations in R, so I know of a few insights that I can highlight. However I can only hope that the data has enough patterns and insights to fill out this presentation.
I guess the main "question for my peers" that I'd have is if, after reading this proposal, you have any additional ideas or recommendations of things I could cover in this presentation for a draft strategy for either persona?