

## Prof. Donovan's Feed on the Draft Visualizations and Presentations

### Jayden Butts & AJ Liberatore:

- **Visual appeal and professional appearance**

- While I appreciate your turning something in for the MP4 assignment, it didn't look anything like what was described in your MP3 Story Narrative or what I imagined it would look like. Based on your descriptions in the MP3 document and during class, I expected either a website or an interactive Tableau visualization; but what you posted was not the former, and too little of the latter.
- Consequently, I have relatively little to say about what you submitted, other than it falls short of what I expected and what I think you two, working together, ought to be able to produce. I hope there is more happening behind the scenes than you have decided to share with me and your peers so far.
- To talk about visual appeal and professional appearance of this MP4 document is a waste of time; it has very little thus far. Most of that appeal comes from the Pop-up Tooltips with the photo of the Senator and their stats; but even here, I think you should do more to design/arrange the contents of the Tooltip window. The functionality works great, but the aesthetics need more attention.
- As you design the final MP7 visualization, please bear in mind these qualities that promote visual appeal and professional appearance:
  - An attention-getting front page that gets the target audience excited to dig into whatever it is you are making. All your work is for naught if you don't inspire the audience to look at it.
  - Consistency in your treatment of all components, both for ease of navigation and to promote the impression of something carefully crafted.
  - Mistake-free execution of all elements, especially all textual elements.
  - Strategic use of color that works with your audience's expectations and associations, not against them.
  - Varying text size in proportion to its narrative or navigational importance.
  - Minimizing "wasted ink" spent on things that add no or minimal value.

- **Degree of informativeness**

- I CAN see the dataset you assembled, combining senate committee and duties with demographic data, so I can tell there is potential for your MP4 to be informative, but it seems under-exploited right now beyond the clickable map.
- I can also see the clever way you used Custom Shapes to create an association between each Senator and their photo, and used this kind of photo library to drive the display of their photo in pop-up tooltip. This is very cool, and I think worth sharing with your classmates during one of the classes coming up next week.
- The dashboard you created contains a map of Senators color coded by party affiliation and an undescribed calculation of influence, and some minimally labeled pie charts showing the race and gender distribution of the Senate as a whole, and of the country as a whole. The tooltips attached to this map are very cool, and I like the way they pop up on Hover as opposed to Select. I missed this feature when I was just looking at the map, but not navigating through it. I hope you will find a way to incorporate some instructions and/or a sample profile into the final version of the map.

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- The pie charts are effective at showing the out-of-whack proportions of the Senate as a whole, but I hope you plan to do a lot more of what was in your original proposal. For example, it would be nice to see...
  - whether these out-of-whack proportions vary by party;
  - a racial mapping of Senators. You could even create a series of maps using Map > Map Layers > Data Layers to color the states by different racial characteristics, overlaid with the race of the Senators similar to what you did for the Influence Map.
  - the distribution of Senators by age compared to the US population aged old enough to be Senators (which I think is 30).
  - Etc...
- **Apparent and actual accuracy in representing the data**
  - I cannot tell whether you have accurately portrayed the data, because nowhere in this report do you cite or link to the data. You should do that, either as captions/footnotes at the bottom of each visualization, or on a dedicated Sources section of your Report.
  - You should also make it clear what time period your data is from, if it is not perpetually up-to-date.
- **Clarity and/or speed with which the narrative and visualizations make their points**
  - The Map:
    - The map needs a stronger, clear title; and as noted above, could use some basic instructions and/or a sample profile to clue the audience into clicking each dot to get more information.
    - The narrative you use to introduce this map should also explain how you arrived at the Influence rating for each Senator.
    - Then put a lot of attention into the Tooltip design, so that it looks really professional. Experiment with context-driven colors for party, different font sizes, etc. for the different kinds of information.
    - Pay attention in the final viz to the size of the map. At the current size on my computer, some of the Senator circles seem to lie in multiple states. It would be good to get these circles to be clearly and completely in their home state.
    - Also play around with controls over which Senators' names appear on the map. I realize that not all of them will appear with the "show overlapping marks" option turned off, but it doesn't seem right that the smaller of two overlapping circles should have their name displayed while the larger one does not. I thought you were mapping influence, and this seems to run counter to that goal.
  - The Pie Charts:
    - The Pie charts need clearer titles.
    - I would argue that these pie charts deserve their own slide(s), too, as they don't seem to have any interactive relationship with the map. Doing that would enable you to make them larger, which would give you the room to possibly add their % values either inside or outside each slice.

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- The missing charts:
  - See my earlier comments about other kinds of information that I think you should be visualizing. Go back to your original Proposal with my Feedback and see what you've forgotten.
- **Good prioritization in deciding which points are best made with visualizations**
  - I can't really gauge this yet, as the narrative is completely missing from this MP4.
- **Selection of best charts to convey the points being made**
  - The map is good for getting an overview of the geographic reach of each party, and showing the geographic spread of "influence". However, that "influence" variable remains a black box to the end user, which you should rectify in your narrative.
  - Similarly, the pie charts are fine for getting a picture of the Senate's lack of proportional representation across both race and gender as compared to the nation, but they are not well chosen or designed to convey any finer points or any race-to-race comparisons. You will likely need a different kind of chart to display this more granular data; failing that, you might be able to get away with pie charts that are much bigger and more fully labeled.
- **Any other comments:**
  - Please feel free to reach out to me to schedule a time to meet over Zoom to discuss any of the points I raised above. Send me a list of dates and times you're available to meet, and we'll find one that works for all of us.