Project 4: Behavior

TOTAL: 5pts

GOAL

Identify a crime series.

Step 0: PREPARATION

Welcome to tactical crime analysis. But what is [tactical crime analysis](#)?

Step 1: DATA

There's two steps here.

1. First, get your crime data from [here](#).
   a. It's real, actual crime events from a collection of serial offenders. The specific offender names have been removed to make linking cases more of a challenge, of course
   b. Download it as a Microsoft Excel (.xlsx) file, or keep it as a Google Sheet if you want
2. Second, *if you want to augment what you find here with additional details you find through open source research, go for it*
   a. If you use additional sources, please make sure to cite!
   b. Citing in this case involves providing a URL for the source you used in your submission

Done.

METHODS

Let's find a crime pattern. What's a crime pattern, you ask? [Take a look at slide 6](#). But, how do you find a crime pattern? [Take a look at slides 7-9](#).

So, using the IZE method, let's find a pattern:

- Categorize
  - Done; all the variables you need, for now, are there
- Generalize

- - - Done; look at the values for things like crime, location type, and point of entry - they are groupings not specific descriptors. By design, it's easier to find similar ones
- Organize
  - Done; it's in Excel!
  - But, can you move variables around if you need to
- Minimize
  - Let's go.
  - First, turn your filters on. Go to 'Data' -> 'Filter'
    - Now all headers have buttons for filtering.
  - Second, pick something to start with.
    - Often in the real world, this start point comes from a *recent event* (the robbery from last night), an *upcoming operation* (burglary sting) or *a request* (from patrol or investigators)
    - In this case, you get to pick. Start with a crime type, that's easiest.
  - Third, scan for similarities.
    - What fields are most relevant to your crime type?
    - Filter and sort and identify commonalities
    - If you need to generate counts, or transform this table into a matrix, using pivot tables!
      - Go to 'Insert' -> 'PivotTable'
        - Select table/range: by default it should highlight the entire table
        - New worksheet
      - Organizing your data via pivot table quickly identifies all the counts across the variables you may care about
    - Scan, examine, and identify a small set of crimes that look to be a pattern
      - These are your core cases
      - They should have 'enough' in common to logically be related, but don't expect them to be 100% identical. Data is never perfect.
- Maximize
  - Use the core cases to find what is most in common
    - What values from what fields are the most important in linking these cases together?
    - Use those values against the entire dataset to find more cases
      - Review these, and determine if they fit your pattern
  - Remember, your pattern cuts across behavior, space, and time, so think about how to capture those relationships best.

So…what just happened? You found a crime pattern, hopefully. You found a set of records that you believe are related across <u>behavior</u>, <u>space</u>, and <u>time</u>. This process, when it works correctly, doesn't just mean you find one pattern; you can find all the patterns, theoretically.

- Behavior:
  - **WHO**
    - Suspect *and* Victim description
  - **WHAT**
    - Crime types
  - **HOW**
    - Modus operandi (M.O.), signature, suspect actions, etc.

- Space:
  - **WHERE**: keep this basic for now (events in the same general area), there's much more of this to come in future projects; for now, use it roughly to make sense of your events
- Time:
  - **WHEN**: keep this basic for now (events in the same general time period), there's much more of this to come in future projects; for now, use it roughly to make sense of your events

ANALYSIS

For starters, think of your analysis as inputs to this template. For this project focus on slides 2, 4, 7, and 8.

Now, using the records you identified as a crime pattern, analyze them. Dig into the details about what makes these records similar, and related to each other. Don't describe every field; only describe the relationships in the fields that matter. Think of it this way, address the:

- **WHAT**: crime(s)
- **WHO**: suspect(s) and victims
- **HOW**: modus operandi; method and point of entry; suspect actions; property taken, etc.

NOTE: this does NOT ask about the **WHY**. Good tactical crime analysis does not get into the WHY. There is no need for inferences, guesses, or explanations for why an offender is committing these crimes. It's largely irrelevant. What IS relevant is the exploitable characteristics. Your analysis should identify the unique, distinct decision-making processes that make these events an actual pattern.

The specific variables that are essential to your pattern vary based on crime types. Property crimes often highlight/focus on location type, point and method of entry, property taken, and time of day/day of week. Persons/violent crimes focus on suspect actions and description, weapon type, object of attack, and victim type.

Your analysis should be a single crime pattern. You do not need to analyze an entire crime type (that's too vague, and at best only a trend). You only need to analyze one crime pattern. Be clear in addressing why the specific cases you found are related. Also, you do not need to discuss the IZE method or any other introduction. Your writing can be concise, clear, and direct: analyze the crime pattern.

Your analysis should include a description of the **'archetype'** case in the pattern. An **archetype** is the perfect scenario - so, using the most commonly similar fields across your cases, what is the ideal/perfect case? This involves combining common characteristics, filling in the blanks, and making some inferences. Quick example: you identify a six-event residential burglary pattern. All the events occur in homes and have a window point of entry, five of the events have no sign of force method of entry, four of them have the same property types (cash and jewelry), and all of the events occur Monday-Friday between 0900-1500 hours. The archetype here could be: Single-family home residential burglaries involving an open/unlocked window where cash and jewelry are stolen, occurring during normal work/business hours.

Keep this in mind: your analysis should inform law enforcement on a specific pattern of crimes. There is going to be unique, exploitable, identifying characteristics about that pattern that creates actionable

opportunities for law enforcement to do something about it. When writing up your analysis, consider this perspective, and focus on the details that are most relevant.

Also, write your analysis in 'real-time,' assuming that the crime pattern is still active/on-going. Basically, treat the bulletin as if it were the day after the most recent attack.

[HERE IS THE SAMPLE DATA WE BUILT IN CLASS ON 21 MARCH 2025](#)

SUBMISSION

Once your analysis is complete, please submit your project via Canvas. Your submission should be a document - either as PDF, Word, Pages, or Google Doc.

Remember - finding a crime series in the provided data is relatively easy. So, take the time to find a series that you can use for Projects 5-7, too. This means choose a series with "good" behavioral, temporal and spatial data:

- <u>Behavior</u>: high event count (the more the better, but anything less than five doesn't give you much to work with. Anything less than 10 is doable but not as interesting as it could be!)
- <u>Temporal</u>: One big spree of events doesn't give you much to work with. Something that goes on for months or years is more ideal. And, a series with times is better than one without, but very few have times, so don't be too picky.
- <u>Spatial</u>: A series that occurs at one fixed location (a residence, a hospital, etc.) is a dead-end for Project 6.

GRADES

- **Part I: Series identification (3pts)**
  - Provide 1 paragraph (6-8 sentences) describing the crime series you identified, including
    - Details on the *WHAT*, *WHO*, and *HOW* (**1.5pts**)
      - WHAT is the crime activity
      - WHO is the suspect and victim
      - HOW is the Modus Operandi
    - Describe the 'archetype' case in the series (**1pt**)
    - Proper grammar. Full sentences. No spelling errors. Real words. ***Applicable external citations***, as necessary (**0.5pts**).
- **Part II: Visuals (1pts)**
  - Provide 2 visuals of your series. These can be simple screenshots of a graph or chart created with your table (**0.5pts each**)
    - The visual should sense to someone that has never seen them before
    - The visual should provide useful, relevant, and actionable insights
- **Part III: Data (1pt)**
  - Provide a table of your events. This can be a .CSV, .XLSX, or Google Sheet (**1pt**)
    - Include any additional columns, tabs, or calculations created

Please email me with any questions.