**Elevator Pitch**:

My project will be mapping the “Rust Belt”.

1) One-to-two sentence description of why your subject matter needs addressing

Defining the “Rust Belt” matters as we can use these common, qualitative descriptions to construct broad, quantitative themes which may help define the phenomenon of industrial decay. It can also help target policy interventions and add clarity to political discourse.

2) The question you are asking

Where and what is the Rust Belt?

3) How you plan on addressing it

Using Census & ACS data along with other economic and demographic metrics I can find, hopefully dating back towards the 1950s when many Midwestern metropolitan areas reached their peak population. These may include population, economic, and urban decline through measures such as emigration, heavy industry loss, and depopulated urban cores. Secondary factors related to these may include drug usage, violent crime, ageing populations, deunionization, unemployment, etc. These must all be normalized to national baselines.

4) What you expect to find

I expect to find that primary factors like the decline of heavy industry and emigration readily define a region of the Midwest experiencing industrial and general population declines. This region will likely span from at least Chicago to east of Pittsburgh and from northern Kentucky to northern Michigan.

5) What you plan on doing with your results

I plan to compare these to other definitions of the Rust Belt, such as from [this](https://medium.com/migration-issues/where-is-the-rust-belt-d1dd280cf8a8) Medium post from an AEI scholar and note cities/areas which are managing to resist or reverse the economic and population decline of the region at large.

Pitch:

* Background
* Question
  + Where and what is the Rust Belt?
* Expectations
* Importance
  + Construct broad, quantitative theme from common, qualitative experience
  + Target policy intervention
  + Add clarity to political discourse
* Addressing
  + Data
    - Census/ACS, Census building data, HUD, and USGS land use
    - 1950+, or 1980+
    - Demographic, economic, and housing
  + Features
    - Demographic
      * Emigration
      * Aging populations
    - Economic
      * Deunionization
      * Loss of heavy industry jobs
      * Wage stagnation
      * Export/Import Quantities
    - Housing
      * Depopulation of urban cores
      * Lack of construction (Census building info)
      * Growth of suburbs
      * Homelessness (HUD)
      * Housing values
    - Other
      * Land usage data from USGS
      * Violent crime
      * Drug usage/perscriptions
      * Depression
  + Methods
    - “Rust” score
      * Series of weighted features
    - Normalize
      * Compare to national averages
  + Findings
    - 1950s sees population decline (aging populations)
    - 1980s sees industrial decline (unemployment/heavy industry)
    - Based on own interpretation
  + Usage
    - Interactive map
      * Choropleths
      * Select features to calculate rust score
      * Adjust by year
      * Create their own “Rust Belt” boundary
    - Outlier & similar regions
    - Comparisons
      * To [medium article by AEI scholar](https://medium.com/migration-issues/where-is-the-rust-belt-d1dd280cf8a8)
      * More/different features
        + “various substantial missing factors”
      * More clarity on “Rust” score
      * Final plot
        + Up for interpretation via interactivity
        + But with boundaries defined by objective measures