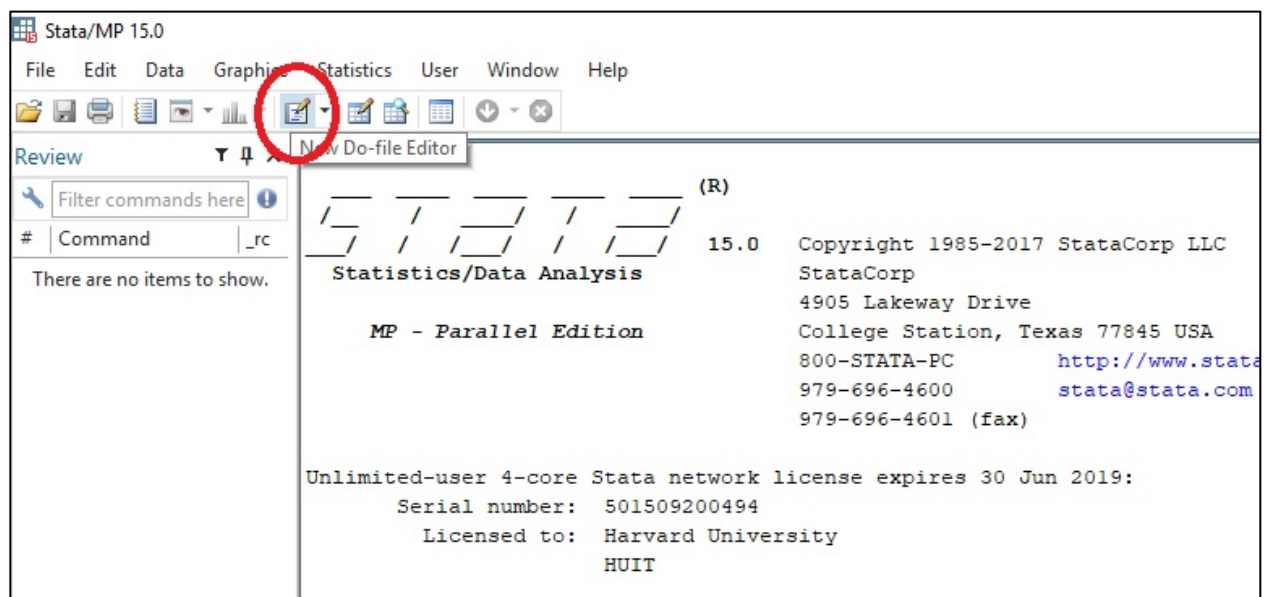## Creating a "Do" File in Stata

This set of notes describes how to create a "do" file within the computer program Stata. It assumes that you have set Stata up on your computer (see the "Getting Started with Stata" handout).
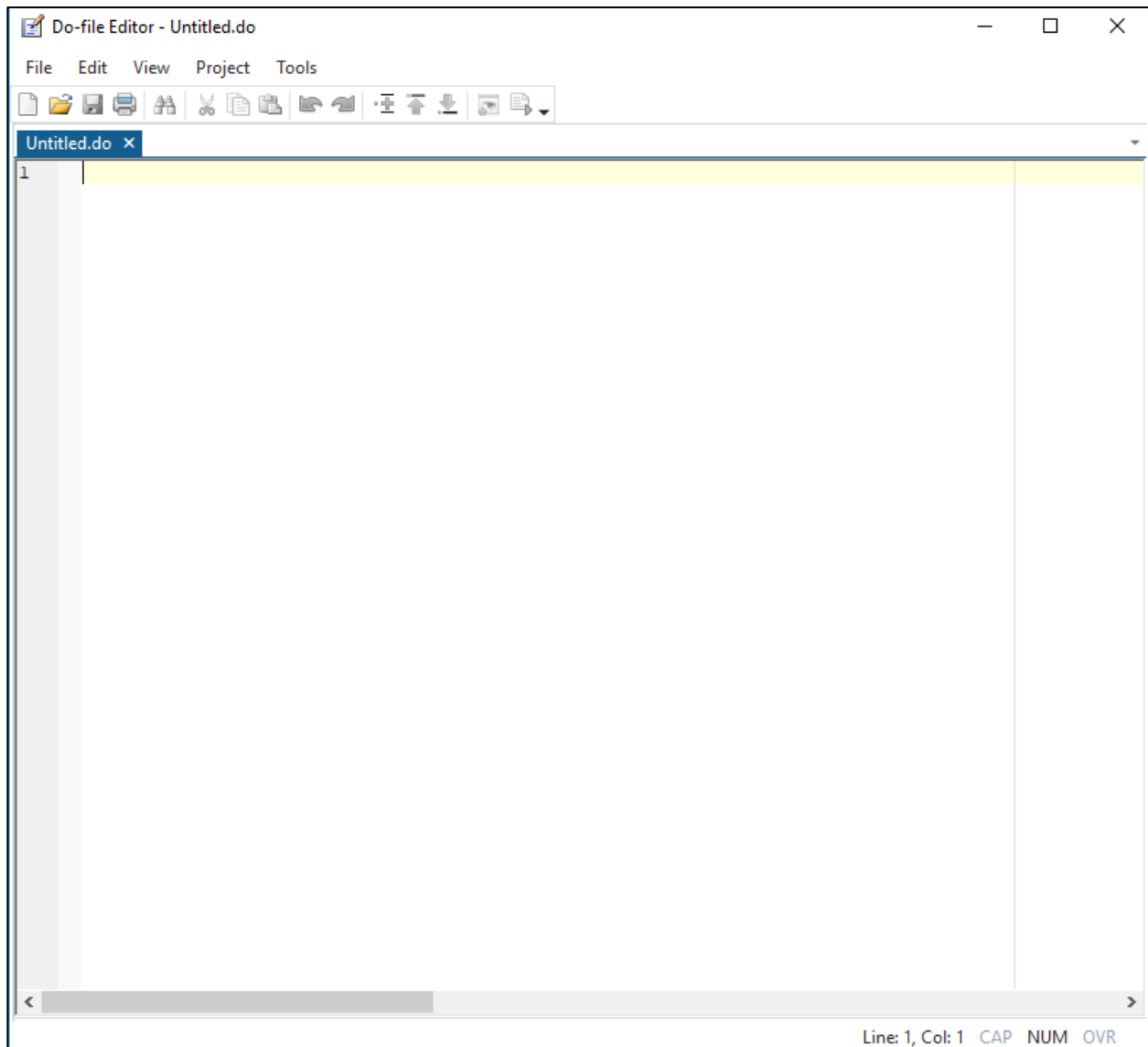
A do file lists and executes Stata commands. It is a convenient and efficient alternative to typing commands in the Stata command box. By storing commands for a particular analysis in a do file, you can easily replicate your results, re-run your analysis with modifications and elaborations, or repeat it after correcting errors. A do file is a separate file that has a ".do" extension.

"Do" files on a PC:

To create a do file on a PC, click on the New Do-file Editor icon at the top of the Stata window. Alternatively, you can click on Window, then on Do-file Editor, then on New Do-file Editor.

A new window will appear:

This blank text document is your do file. You can write (and edit) commands in this file as you would in the Stata command window, in the order that you would like to execute them.
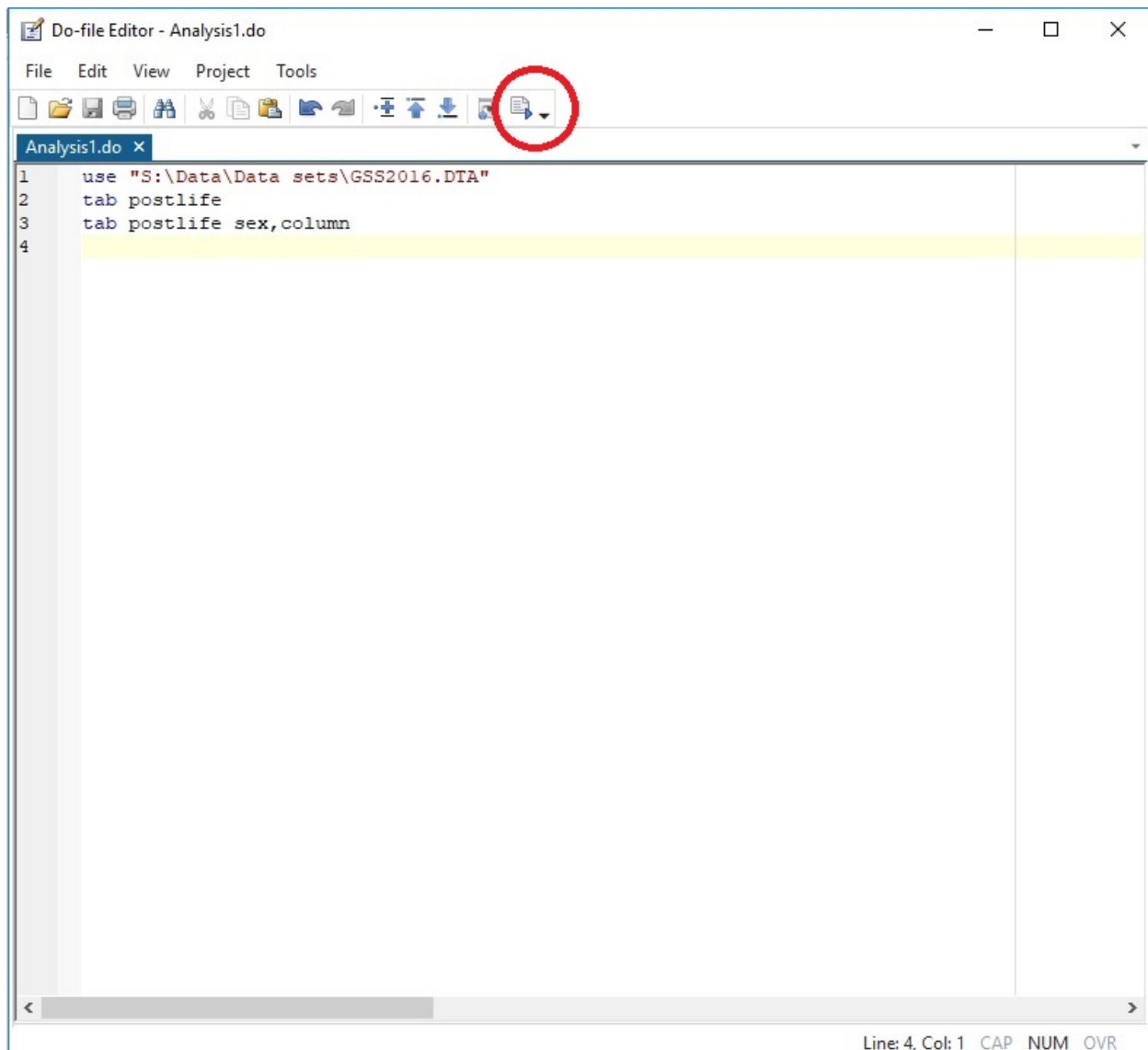
For example, using the GSS2016 dataset, to obtain a frequency table for the variable "postlife" (belief in life after death) and then generate a crosstabulation of the variable "postlife" (rows) against "sex" (columns), one would type the following commands into the do file:

```
use "S:\Data\Data sets\GSS2016.DTA"
tab postlife
tab postlife sex,column
```
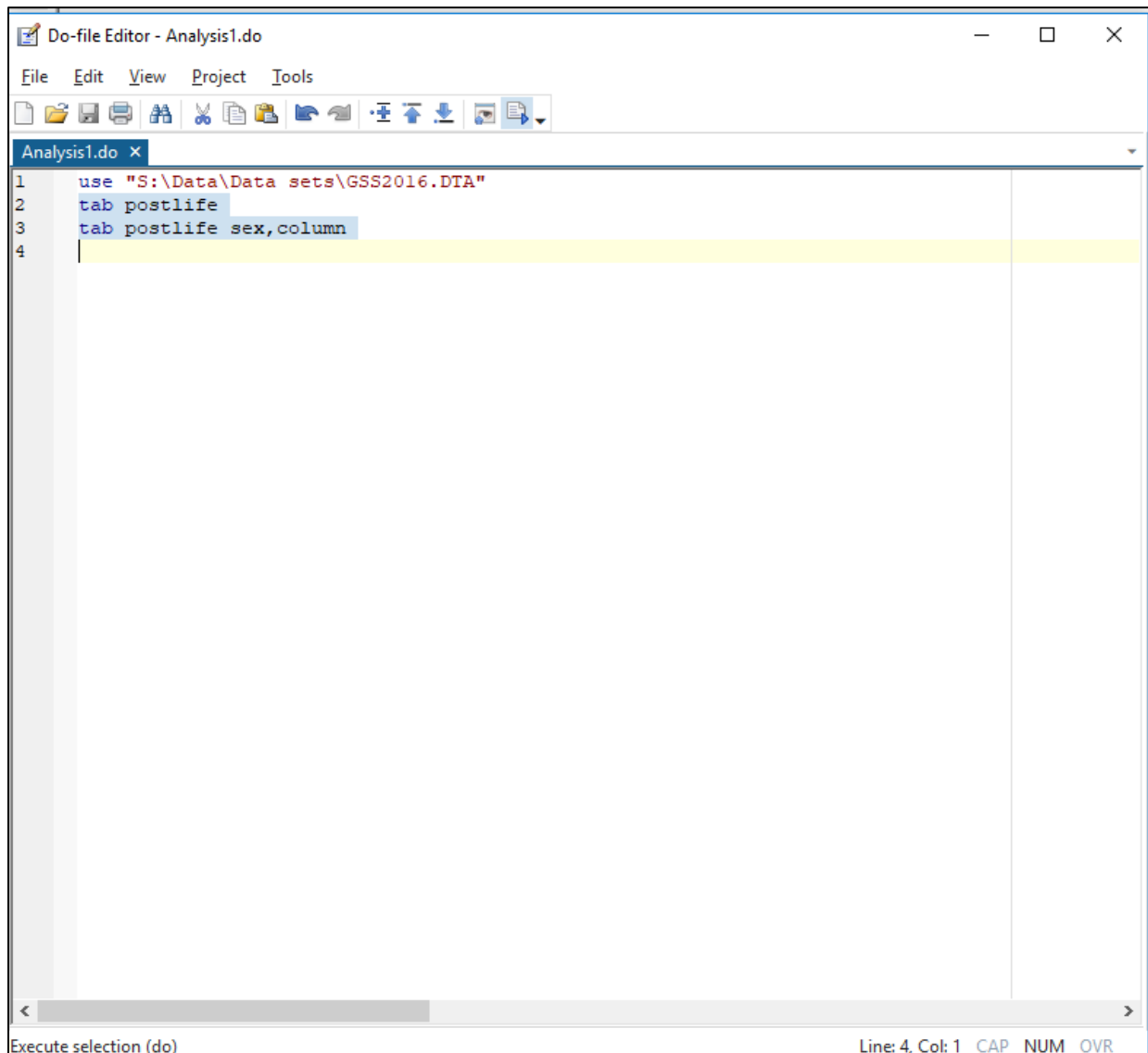
This will first load the GSS2016 dataset, then use this dataset to obtain a frequency table of "postlife" and finally generate a crosstabulation of "postlife" and "sex." (For more information

on these commands, please refer to the following handouts: "Reading in Stata Format Data Files", "Tabulations and Summary Statistics…", and "Crosstabulations…".)

To execute all the commands in your do file sequentially in Stata, press the "Execute (do)" icon, located in the toolbar of the Do-file Editor window. Alternatively, you can click on Tools in the Do-file Editor window, then on Execute (do).

If you would like to execute some but not all commands in your do file, highlight the commands that you want to execute and then press the "Execute (do)" icon (or click Tools → Execute (do)). For example, if you have already loaded the GSS2016 dataset into Stata and only want to obtain the frequency table and crosstabulation of "postlife," highlight the following commands and press the "Execute (do)" icon:

```
Do-file Editor - Analysis1.do                                    —  □  ×

 File  Edit  View  Project  Tools

 [toolbar icons]

 Analysis1.do ×

1        use "S:\Data\Data sets\GSS2016.DTA"
2        tab postlife
3        tab postlife sex,column
4

Execute selection (do)                          Line: 4, Col: 1  CAP  NUM  OVR
```

You can add spaces and comments to your do files so they are easier to read and edit. Blank lines and comments in do files are not executed in Stata. To add a comment, type "*" followed by the comment.[1] Comments are automatically color-coded green in do files. Each line of text that you want to "comment-out" needs to start with an asterisk. For example:

---

[1] If you are interested in learning about other ways to include comments in a do file, see:
https://www.stata.com/manuals13/u16.pdf

```
Do-file Editor - Analysis1.do                                    —   □   ✕

File   Edit   View   Project   Tools

Analysis1.do  ✕

1      * load GSS2016 data set
2      use "S:\Data\Data sets\GSS2016.DTA"
3
4      * frequency table of "postlife"
5      tab postlife
6
7      * crosstabulation of "postlife" and "sex"
8      tab postlife sex,column
9
```
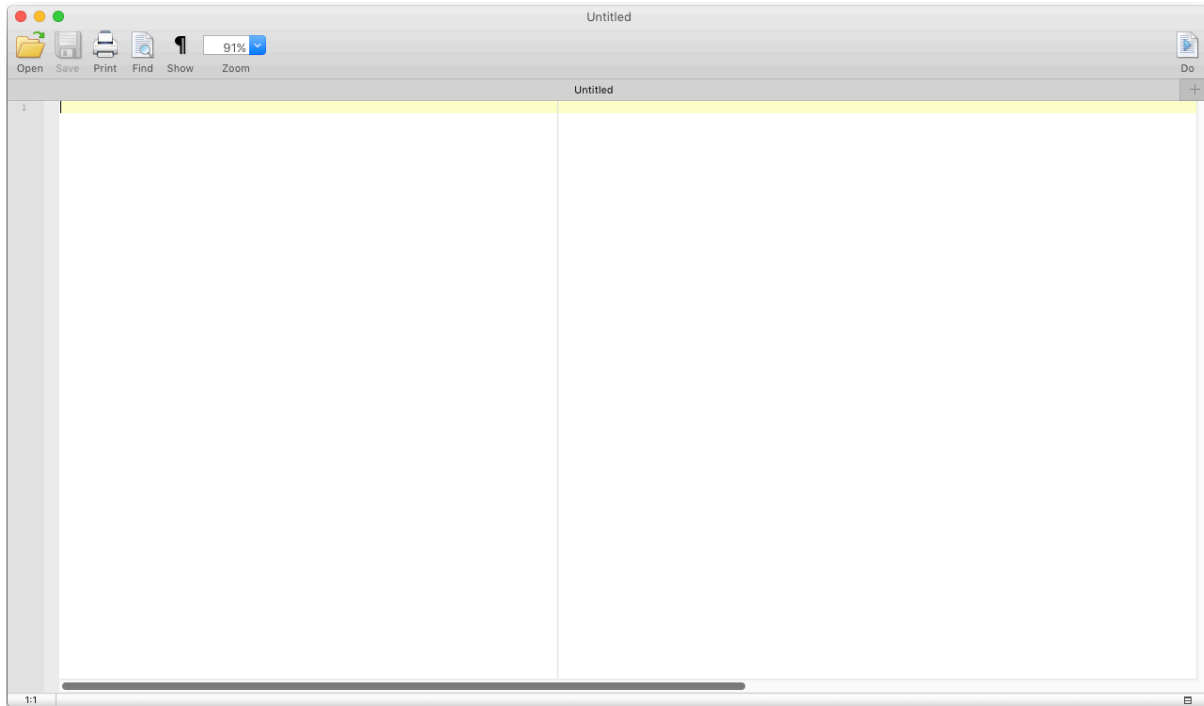
To save a do file, click on File, then on Save As in the Do-file Editor. Navigate to the folder where you want to save your do file and enter the file name. Then click Save. (The name of the do file above is "Analysis1.do".) You can reload it at another time if you want to alter or extend the analysis begun here.

To open an existing do file, click on File, then on Open in the Do-file Editor. Navigate to the folder where the do file you want to use is stored, and then click on that filename.

<u>"Do" files on a Mac:</u>

To create a do file on a Mac, click on File, then on New, then on Do File in the Stata window. Alternatively, you can click on the "Do-file Editor" icon in the Stata window. A new window will appear:
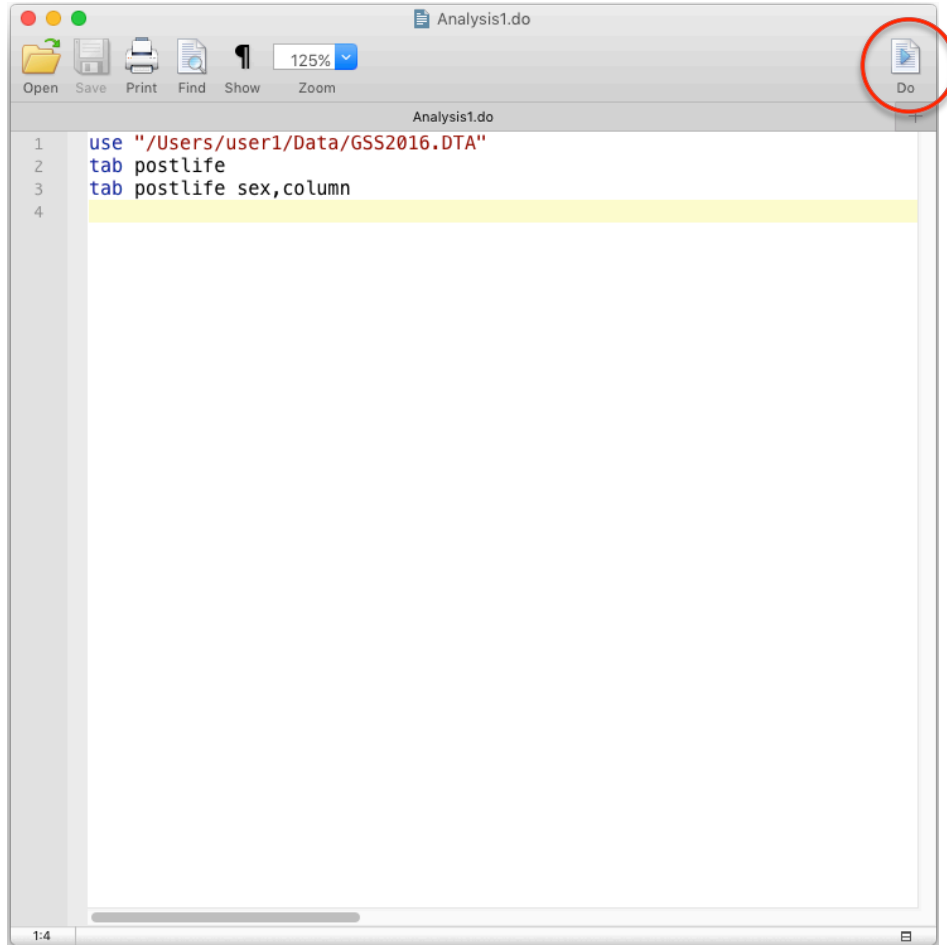

This blank text document is your do file. You can write (and edit) commands in this file as you would in the Stata command window, in the order that you would like to execute them.

For example, using the GSS2016 dataset, to obtain a frequency table for the variable "postlife**"** (belief in life after death) and then generate a crosstabulation of the variable "postlife**"** (rows) against "sex" (columns), one would type the following commands into the do file:

```
use "/Users/user1/Data/GSS2016.DTA"
tab postlife
tab postlife sex,column
```

This will first load the GSS2016 dataset, then use this dataset to obtain a frequency table of "postlife" and finally generate a crosstabulation of "postlife" and "sex." (For more information on these commands, please refer to the following handouts: "Reading in Stata Format Data Files", "Tabulations and Summary Statistics…", and "Crosstabulations…".)

To execute all the commands in your do file sequentially in Stata, press the "Do" button, located in the top-right corner of the do file window:

If you would like to execute some but not all commands in your do file, highlight the commands that you want to execute and then press the "Do" button. For example, if you have already loaded the GSS2016 dataset into Stata and only want to obtain the frequency table and crosstabulation of "postlife," highlight the following commands and press the "Do" button:
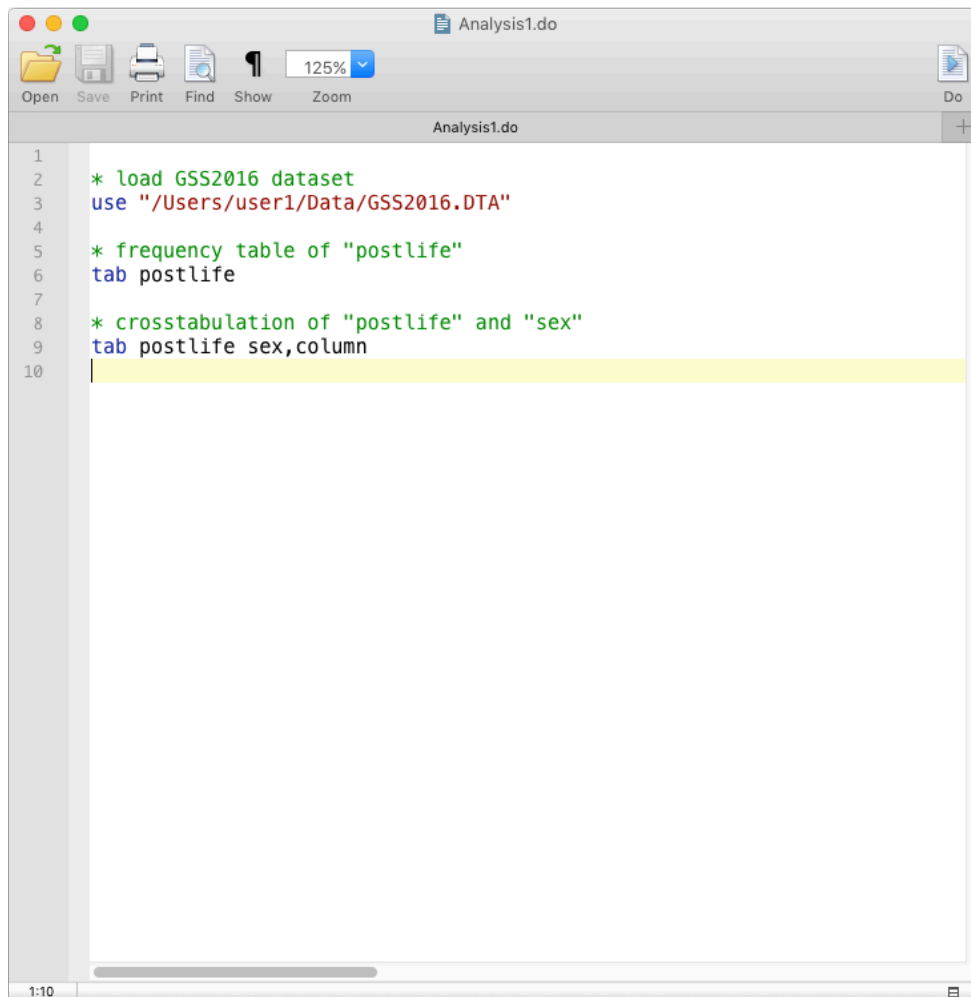
You can add spaces and comments to your do files so they are easier to read and edit. Blank lines and comments in do files are not executed in Stata. To add a comment, type "*" followed by the comment.[2] Comments are automatically color-coded green in do files. Each line of text that you want to "comment-out" needs to start with an asterisk. For example:

---

[2] If you are interested in learning about other ways to include comments in a do file, see:
https://www.stata.com/manuals13/u16.pdf

```
* load GSS2016 dataset
use "/Users/user1/Data/GSS2016.DTA"

* frequency table of "postlife"
tab postlife

* crosstabulation of "postlife" and "sex"
tab postlife sex,column
```

To save a do file, click on File, then on Save As. Navigate to the folder where you want to save your do file and enter the file name. Then click Save. (The name of the do file above is "Analysis1.do".) You can reload it at another time if you want to alter or extend the analysis begun here.

To open an existing do file, click on File, then on Open. Navigate to the folder where the do file you want to use is stored, and then click on that filename.