

## **Writing a Report Based on a Survey**

Subject:            Subject: Relating Students' GPA to Choice of Campus Bars

The three of us surveyed OSU students at nine campus bars on Thursday evening, February 13, 200- to test our hypothesis that people who frequent north campus bars have higher grade point averages than those who frequent south campus bars. Our data suggest that our hypothesis is valid.

### **Purpose**

Our main hypothesis is that people who frequent north campus bars have higher grade point averages than those who frequent south campus bars. In addition, we also wanted to find out why people go out and where they go. This project was interesting because the hypothesis is a widely accepted assumption among north campus students and we wanted to find whether it was true. Furthermore, this topic enabled us to overcome our fear of interviewing complete strangers and have fun in the process.

Knowing about the patrons of different bars might help in a students' decision to pick one particular bar over another and might help bar owners promote their bars and create an appropriate atmosphere for the customers.

### **Procedure**

We used a stratified random sample of bars to make sure that north and south bars were represented about equally. Of the nine bars in our sample, four were from the north end and five were from the south end of High Street. At each bar, we took a convenience sample of 15 people.

On Thursday night, February 13, we met at Bernie's at 10:00. There we decided who would go to which bar. Denise chose The Northberg, Out-it-Inn, and Time Out. Eleny chose Bernie's, Travel Agency, and Mustard's. Jonelle chose Papa Joe's, Mother Fletcher's, and Park Alley. At 10:30 we headed out to conduct our surveys. Asking eight short questions of 15 people in each establishment took about an hour. We interviewed a total of 135 people at nine different bars--82 men and 53 women.

### Questions

1. Student? \_\_\_ Undergrad? \_\_\_ Grad? \_\_\_ Other? \_\_\_
2. Major? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Age? \_\_\_ Sex? \_\_\_M \_\_\_F
4. Fraternity/Sorority? \_\_\_Yes \_\_\_No If yes, which one? \_\_\_\_\_
5. What is your grade point average? \_\_\_
6. What is your favorite bar? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Why do you go out? to drink  
\_\_\_ to dance \_\_\_ to socialize \_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_
8. Where do you live? \_\_\_North \_\_\_South \_\_\_Commute

We designed the question to ask about several other possible factors in addition to where subjects lived. People in “hard” majors may have lower GPA’s than people in easier majors. Some people believe that Greeks have lower GPAs than non-Greeks.

We included the category of “other” in question #7 so that subjects would not be forced to choose one of the choices we thought most common.

### Results

As Figure B shows (see page 6), three of the four north campus bars’ patrons have GPA averages that exceed the overall average of 2.97. In addition, all of the south campus bars were below the average.

Beyond our main hypothesis, we also discovered a strange twist. Even though the average GPA of “north bar respondents” was higher, there was a predominance of difficult majors in the north bars: majors such as engineering, chemistry, physics, mathematics, and microbiology. Figure A on page 5 summarizes our results.

Another trend we discovered, which is not as strong, is that the average age of people in the north bars is 21.7. The average age for those in the south bars is 20.9. Therefore, “north bar respondents” are, on the average, about one year older than those who go south. This is understandable considering that the graduate dorm is on the north side of campus.

Our data also suggest that fewer Greeks frequent the north bars. The percentage of Greeks found in the north bars was 11%, compared to 19% in south bars. This could be due to the location of the Greek houses in relation to the bars. Most of the Greek houses are located on 15th Avenue, which is closer to the south bars. Our data show that most people go to bars near their residence (see Figure A).

Finally, we found that most people go to the bars to drink, not to dance or to socialize.

## Discussion

One difficulty in setting up our survey was dividing the bars between those located toward the north and those located toward the south. Some bars, like Bernie's, are considered to be north bars; however, they are actually located in the middle of High Street. It was difficult to decide if Bernie's was a valid north bar or if it was invalid because of our specific goal. We decided Bernie's was a north bar.

A second limitation was that we interviewed only a small number of people in each bar and did not choose even that small sample randomly. There was a definite source of bias in the way the subjects were chosen. We tended to avoid patrons who were drunk, patrons who were overly flirtatious, and those who appeared to be able to inflict harm to others. However, we did tend to approach men more often than women. To avoid these biases, we could have asked the first fifteen people that walked through the door regardless of what sex they were or what they looked like; we could also have polled people on several nights at several times during each evening.

We have no guarantee that subjects answered our questions honestly. A possible source of error could be "instant improvement of GPA" performed by those interviewed. This could be due to pride or trying to impress the interviewer, friends, or anyone within earshot. There is also the possibility of "instant aging" performed by those patrons who are not old enough to be in the bar legally.

However, we suspect that a scientific survey would yield similar results. People who frequent north campus bars are likely to be older than people in south campus bars. The difference in age may contribute to the difference in GPA. Most students' GPAs rise as they get older and take more courses in their majors. Graduate students usually have higher GPAs than do undergraduates since admission to graduate school is more selective. The difference in GPA may also stem from the fact that the graduate dorm, the honors dorm, and the engineering campus are located on the north side of campus. These three groups tend to have higher GPAs and, as our data suggest, most people go to bars that are near their residences.

Someone who wants to meet older people or people with higher GPAs should go to bars at the north end of campus. Someone who wants to meet Greeks should go to a south end bar. '

The results of our survey are of limited help to bar owners. Since most students go to the bars to drink specials on drinks may be more effective in bringing in patrons than money spent on well-known bands.

Bar owners and police officers may be distressed to learn that the "average" patron of the south campus bar is underage. More stringent carding would solve the problem but would also reduce owners' profits.

One intriguing note is that students in "difficult" majors like engineering have higher GPAs than the students we surveyed whose majors are perceived to be easier. Perhaps the students who choose more difficult majors are prepared to work hard and thus continue to succeed—even though they too have time to go to the bars.

