

Class 02: Data, Variables, and Distributions

Held: Friday, 25 January 2008

Summary: We begin our exploration of statistics by looking at some basic terminology and doing some experiments with describing data.

Notes:

- We will soon be posting answers to the homework activities online. The answers are intended as a tool to help you study. You should not share the answers with people outside of Grinnell.
- A colleague sent me 10 MB of attachments, which caused my mailbox to shut down. I think it's open again.
- Homework for Monday is three activities in topic 2: 2.9, 2.11, and 2.14
- Data for 2.9 distributed separately.
- Preparation: All of Topic 1: Data and Variables (on your own); Preliminaries for Topic 2: Data and Distributions.
- Handouts: penny.txt, penny-summary.txt, states.txt, and value-of-statistics.txt.
- Due: Course Survey.

Overview:

- Quick review of Topic 1.
- Workshop activity: Topic 2.
- Debriefing.

Quick Review of Topic 1

- Are there questions on topic 1?
- Topic 1 special activity.
- What, from your perspective, were the key points of topic 1?

Topic 2: In-Class Exercises

- Work on the in-class exercises.
- We'll look at the penny data in two ways:
 - This class (surveyed manually)
 - All intro stats sections (surveyed electronically); Results are 82 say retain, 29 say abolish
- State distributions distributed on paper
 - We won't ask you to do all 111 or so responses: Pick three columns of data, and do those.

Reflecting on In-Class Exercises

- Did we all get the same answers for the penny data, for the state data?
 - Why or why not?
 - What were some high points of trying to learn via exercises?
 - What were some low points?
 - Are there possible factors that might bias the handwashing survey?
 - Other thoughts?
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