

Potential Topic Proposal

Note: We did ABC from the shorter outline

CMU Perceptions of Academic Integrity & Old Course Material Archives

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A. Why is this topic interesting? Is there a client for whom you might do the survey?

This topic is very interesting because Carnegie Mellon University well-known for its rigorous academics and competitive students, who hope that their academic performance will translate into successful careers or graduate school admissions.

Given this, students are very hard on each other in terms of pointing out unfair advantages that peers may have (see: *The Tartan*, November 2008). Specifically, it is well-known that certain organizations such as Greek fraternities/sororities maintain stockpiles of old tests, notes, and other course materials. We intend to survey overall student knowledge of CMU academic policies and what they state/don't state, student attitudes toward old test stockpiles, and student reactions to proposed solutions.

B. What question(s) do you propose to study? Give a brief answer that would have been understandable by a non-statistician.

As previously stated, our questions revolve around studying student attitudes toward old academic material being used (old tests, notes, etc). As a follow up, we would also study student reactions to potential/proposed solutions.

To study trends in the data, we would ask about background information such as Student Year Level, Major, Gender, Citizenship status. We would also seek to measure basic facts such as the overall percentage of students with personal access to old course materials, if they have ever utilized this access, and through what means they have such access.

Finally, one of the questions we would ask would be about a campus-wide, official university-sanctioned system modeled after that of the one recently proposed at Case Western Reserve University (see Part C).

C. What research has already been done on the topic or on the theoretical construct of central importance to your topic? What could be learned from survey results? Each group member should locate and review 1 relevant piece of research (e.g., article, report, book, etc)

- CMU's *The Tartan* published an article in late 2008 surveying members and leaders of Greek organizations, clarifying official CMU academic policies on the issue of old stockpiles, and referring to Case Western Reserve University's approach. It can be found here: <http://www.thetartan.org/2008/11/10/news/greeks>
- The Journal of College Student Development also published an article about an examination involving academic dishonesty between sorority and non-sorority women. The article talks about the significant differences between the frequency of occurrence of academic dishonesty between greek and non-greek students, which helps to show a divide between the greek and non-greek student population. It can be found here: http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/journal_of_college_student_development/v048/48.6williams.html

- Case Western's *The Observer* published an article in late 2007 reviewing the actions of the Academic Integrity Board there and highlighting the ambiguity of the issue. It can be found here:
http://observer.case.edu/Archives/Volume_40/Issue_9/Story_2145/
- A good potential reference to the scale of the problem can likely be found by Case Western Reserve University's statistics on how many students were investigated for academic dishonesty (essentially, how many were "caught" as opposed to the estimated percentage of students who have used questionable material before):
<http://studentaffairs.case.edu/groups/aiboard/statistics.html>
Although these are not CMU statistics, they provide a good baseline estimate for Carnegie Mellon student population proportions, and our group feels that it might be possible to obtain additional CMU statistics by asking the proper faculty/administrators

Bar Workers' Perspective of Law Requiring Establishments to Close at 2AM

A. Why is this topic interesting? Is there a client for whom you might do the survey?

This topic affects the proprietors, workers, and clients of local bars. The time limitation does not allow establishments to operate during hours that could provide revenue. This survey would serve as a medium to show whether bars feel that this law negatively affects their business. It would take into consideration the financial, personal, and security costs and benefits for bar workers, such as doormen, waiters, and bartenders. They would reflect upon their experiences and would determine if this law benefits them. This survey would serve a client that is trying to determine the affect of the law on a bar's staff. This could benefit local establishments in either opposing or defending this law.

B. What question(s) do you propose to study? Give a brief answer that would have been understandable by a non-statistician.

A primary question of interest to our study is: "How would additional hours of operation benefit or disable regular bar-attending clientele, bar employees, and general residents of Pittsburgh?" Laws currently exist that prohibit Pittsburgh bars from being open past 2am (3am if they are membership-based, which most are not). But if those laws were to be extended beyond those boundaries, how would the aforementioned subgroups react to such a change? Would bartending staff be willing to work extra late-night hours if it promised additional profitability? Would clients continue to attend bars after 2am, or will research prove that most customers leave bars by 2am anyway? Would non-drinking residents resent such a change because it has the potential to promote late-night drinking and thus additional noise to communal areas? We hope to find that such a change would have some sort of impact on community members and are very interested to discover as to whether a reaction would be perceived positively or negatively.

C. What research has already been done on the topic or on the theoretical construct of central importance to your topic? What could be learned from survey results? Each group member should locate and review 1 relevant piece of research (e.g., article, report, book, etc)

- The article below discusses why laws, such as the one in Pittsburgh, have been put into effect. It suggests that limiting hours could reduce the number of cases of alcoholism among the drinking population
<http://www2.potsdam.edu/hansondj/LawAndPolicy.html>

- This article lists the various “Last Call” hours for multiple countries and states. A very strong tool for comparison. It also discusses the reasons for the time limitations. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Last_call_\(bar_term\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Last_call_(bar_term))
- This article discusses why these laws are put into place. It lists the dangers of having bars that are open for too long http://www.marininstitute.org/alcohol_policy/last_call.htm
- This article serves as an example of a lawsuit in California that dealt with a bar being forced to close at a restricted time. It is an example of a suitable use for our potential survey. <http://www.judicialview.com/Court-Cases/Entertainment/Bar-Sues-Over-Restricted-Liquor-License/6/8392>

This survey can demonstrate how bar workers feel that they are affected by this law: whether they believe it is of benefit to them to remain open, even if for an hour more, or if they believe that having the law is crucial for the city’s security.