

INTRODUCTION TO SPSS

The purpose of Problem Set #1A is to get you familiar with using SPSS and the SETUPS Data7208 data file. First read these three handouts (in the Course Pack or from the course website):

- (a) Handout #1A: *SETUPS: NES 1972-2008 Data*
- (b) Handout #1B: *SETUPS: NES 1972-2008 Codebook*
- (b) Handout #1C: *Data Analysis Using SETUPS and SPSS: American Voting Behavior in Presidential Elections 1972-2008*
- (c) Handout #1D: *Using SETUPS 1972-2008 NES Data and SPSS for Windows*

Then go to one of the PC labs with the following material:

- (a) the login name and password for your student computer account;
 - (b) this problem set; and
 - (c) the four Handouts listed above.
1. Follow the first few pages of instructions in Handout #1D verify that you can get into SPSS and open the Data7208 file. (*Note*: see the back of this page, or the version of Handout #1D posted on the webpage, for a slight revision of p. 3 of this handout.) Is the information displayed in the SPSS Data Editor spreadsheet consistent with the four “corners” shown in Figure 1 of Handout #1B? (You may find additional columns beyond V70 and WT1.)
 2. Now try to follow some or all of the SPSS procedures explained in the sections V through X of Handout #1D. Since the illustrative examples in that handout pertain to tables in Handout #1C, you should verify that you can duplicate these tables on your SPSS screen duplicate the content of these tables (though their formatting may differ somewhat).
 3. Finally, *write a brief report* (a brief paragraph may be sufficient) in which you recount your experience in doing #1 and #2 above. If you had little trouble in making things work, you need not say much more than this but please attach a page or two of printed SPSS output (duplicating one or two tables from Handout #1C) to verify your success. If you did run into some difficulties but were able to overcome them, explain what these difficulties were. If you run into difficulties that you cannot overcome, please contact me. In any event, if you found some of the instructions in Handout #1D to be unclear or confusing, let me know so that I can address the issue in class (and also revise the handout for future semesters).

Note. Students ask whether they can do POLI 300 exercises using the SETUPS data using MicroSoft Excel (which they have on their own computers), rather than SPSS (typically available only on UMBC computers). This answer is: maybe. You can try to do this by going once to a UMBC PC lab and carrying out the operations requested above. When you are done, save the SPSS data in Excel format (i.e., save as file type *.xls). To do this you will need a CD or jump drive rather than diskette, since the EXCEL.xls file is about 26MB (versus about 2MB for the SPSS.sav file). However, I cannot provide instructions for using EXCEL to analyze the SETUPS data.

OVER =>

IV. HOW TO GET INTO SPSS AND OPEN THE SETUPS 1972-2008 DATA (Revised for Fall 2009)

You will now get the Windows “Desktop” screen that is blank except for some icons on the left side. If you see an SPSS icon, double click on it. Otherwise click on Start => All Programs => SPSS 17. A blank SPSS Data Editor (spreadsheet) will open (maximize this window if necessary), with a *dialog box* in the foreground. Click on Cancel to remove this box. Click on File => Open => Data to get an Open File dialog box. Click on the drop-down drive menu (which will probably say My Documents) in the Look In box, and then double click labapps on ‘fs1.ad.umbc.edu (O:) => Class Data => POLI 300 => Data7208.sav’. (Regarding the Master.sav, see Section XV at the end of this handout.)

The SETUPS data will now open in the Data Editor spreadsheet. You will see that the columns are labeled caseid, v01, v02, v03, v04, etc., and the rows are labeled 1, 2, 3, 4, etc. What you are looking at is the extreme “northwest” corner of the SETUPS 1972-2008 data array, the four “corners” of which are reproduced in Figure 1 of the accompanying handout on *Data Analysis Using SETUPS and SPSS*. You can scroll to the right and then downwards (using the slider bar — there’s a long way to go) to verify that the other corners are accurately reproduced in the figure. (You will soon be given a similar but *much* smaller printed spreadsheet of the Student Survey data.) This spreadsheet has 72 columns corresponding to the 72 variables (caseid, v01 through v70, and wt1) in the Codebook and 19,973 rows corresponding to the 19,973 (unweighted) cases. (You may also find additional columns, the first labeled filter_\$, at the extreme right.)