

Political Science 585
Spring 2007
Assignment #2

The assignment is due in full on May 8. If you wish to turn in the homework on a day-by-day basis, turn in Problems 1 and 2 on May 3, and Problems 3 and 4 on May 8. Do all rounding to two decimal places, except as noted otherwise.

1. We previously recoded each of our two variables of interest in Lijphart.xls into dummy variables. Now, pretend you have decided that each variable (issue dimensions and party systems) should be changed into an ordinal level variable, each with three categories, as follows:

Issue Dimensions

- “Simple” Less than 2 issue dimensions
- “Moderate” 2-2.5 issue dimensions
- “Complex” 3 or more issue dimensions

Party Systems

- “Two-party” Less than 2.49 parties
- “Three-party” 2.50 to 3.49 parties
- “Multiparty” 3.50 or more parties

In SPSS, recode the two new variables using these categories. Then, create a cross-tabulation with row percentages to eyeball the relationship between these two variables. Does the pattern in this crosstab still support Lijphart’s argument?

2. In the Excel file Squire.xls, you will find data that ranks the level of “professionalism” for each of the fifty state legislatures in the U.S. Professionalism is an interval level variable that indicates how Congress-like a legislature is, with 1.00 meaning it is as professional as Congress and 0.00 indicating it is highly “amateur”. Using this data:

- a.) Find the median of this entire dataset in Microsoft Excel. For this, and all parts of this problem, round to three digits rather than two.
- b.) Assume that “region” is an important independent variable in your study of state legislatures. Determine the mean, median, and standard deviation of professionalization for each region, doing one by hand rather than in Excel.
- c.) By hand, create a histogram to represent the entire data set. Then, create a histogram for each of the four regions.
- d.) Give a substantive interpretation of your results, based on parts b and c. See the notes from May 1 regarding the types of information that a substantive interpretation entails.

3. Using SPSS and the NES2000 file, find the mean value of *gorepre* (an Al Gore feeling thermometer rating) for each of the categories of *partyid7*, the standard party ID scale. Then, find the mean value of *gorepre* for individuals who approved of Clinton and those who disapproved, using the variable *jobclnt2*. Finally, do a controlled mean comparison. Is the pattern between either *gorepre-partyid7*, or between *gorepre-jobclnt2*, spurious?

4. Complete question #12 in Chapter 5 of Levin and Fox.