

News Report Critique

Overview The main goal for this assignment is to sharpen your skills as a critical reader of statistical content in news reports. You will find a news report with some statistical content and then apply your knowledge of statistics in writing a summary and critique. Here's the basic plan:

- Find a news report that contains some statistical content.
- Get my approval on the news report.
- Write a critique and submit it for an initial score.
- (Optional) Revise your critique for an improved score.

Details

- Find an article from within the last three months that reports on something with substantial statistical content. When you find a news report that you think is suitable, provide me with a copy or link. Within a few days, I'll let you know if I also think it is suitable for this assignment. If someone else has already submitted the same report for approval, I'll ask you to find a different report.
- Write a critique of the news report. Your critique should include the following
 - a description of the relevant population, parameter(s), sample, and statistic(s)
 - a summary of the study design
 - a summary of the main statistical finding(s)
 - a summary of real-world implications or conclusions
 - critical comment (positive or negative) on the reporting of statistical content
- If you submit a critique by Friday, April 11, you will have one opportunity to submit a rewrite for an improved score.
- The final deadline for submitting a critique (original or rewrite) is Friday, May 2.

Comments

- The news report you propose should come from an established source aimed at a broad audience such as a newspaper or magazine. You can use an online source but should take care in evaluating the rigor of a source that is not widely known.
- You might want to find the original version of the news report. Often, local papers use reports from national papers or wire services. The version that appears in the local paper is often edited to be briefer than the original version.
- The news report you use may not include sufficient detail on some aspects of the statistical content to give a complete summary of things such as the study design or statistical findings. If so, you should include commentary on this, including a judgment on how much the omission of detail affects the integrity of the news report.
- You might find it informative to trace the original source for the news report. The original source might be a press report or a study published in an academic journal. These are sometimes available online. Try searching on any authors or institutions mentioned in the news report.
- If relevant, comment on the headline (and any sub-headline) in your critique.