

Exploring Demographic Data and All Things Elided: An Interactive Poster Experience

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Elide – (transitive verb) to leave out; suppress, omit, or ignore.

Elide. (n.d.) In Collins English Dictionary online. Retrieved from <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/us/dictionary/english/elide>

Background

The University Library at Roseman University of Health Sciences conducts a regular instruction session with the Bachelors of Science in Nursing students on locating, interpreting, and responsibly using demographic and health data at the federal, state, and local level. The session includes discussion about how demographic data can be biased or misleading due to factors like the pre-set definitions of groups, the structure and content of questions, and nonresponse by vulnerable and marginalized populations.

American FactFinder is one of the main resources we examine during the session, focusing mostly on data from the Decennial Census and the American Community Survey. However, there is often a conceptual disconnect for students between the process of people taking the Decennial Census or the American Community Survey and the resulting data. It is easy to intellectually understand how people might experience discomfort with answering these questions, without gaining deeper, compassionate, and actionable knowledge of how this affects those community members, the available data, and the possible and responsible uses of that data. Many of our students have never filled out either the Decennial Census or the American Community Survey themselves.

Directions

1. Pick a scenario. Do a Person Scenario first. Then try a Research Scenario.
2. Using the scenario, try to respond to the mock census as if you are the **person** or try to figure out if you could get the **research** data you need when people answer the census. If you feel comfortable doing so, submit your answers to a Person Scenario by filling out the form and writing the number of the scenario at the top.
3. Reflect on how easy or hard it was to use the census based on the scenario. How stressed out or confused did you feel? Did you feel like you “counted”? With that in mind, play around with the questions and answer options on the board. What other question structures or answer options would have made this easier? What might have made this process feel more inclusive or respectful? Feel free to use the sticky notes to suggest more options.

Description

The intent of this project was to provide students an opportunity to engage with a mock census from the perspective of a marginalized population member or as a health care provider seeking information on a marginalized population. Students would then reflect on this experience by exploring ways to adjust the mock census to be more inclusive.

Learning Outcomes

The learning outcomes for this project were:

- Learners will complete a mock census to increase experiential awareness of the census process.
- Learners will make complex intellectual and affective decisions on how to answer the census as a member of a marginalized population and given unclear, imprecise, or missing option for answers.
- Learners will modify the census answer options to account for unclear, imprecise, or missing answer options for marginalized populations.

The space around this poster is an interactive learning activity that can be done either during an instruction session or can be set up in whole or part as a “passive” learning opportunity within the library. All of the components for this project are available in an Open Science Framework project at <https://osf.io/gst5e>.