

## *SPSS 18.0 for Windows – Introductory Assignment*

**Material covered:** Creating a new SPSS data file, variable labels, value labels, saving data files, opening an existing SPSS data file, generating frequency distributions, obtaining printouts from SPSS.

### To start SPSS 18.0 for Windows

Depending on the computer you find yourself in front of, here's what you'll need to do to open SPSS.

1. There may be an SPSS icon on the desktop. If there is, double-click on it and that's all there is to it.
2. If there's no SPSS icon on the desktop you'll need to do the following (assuming the computer is using Windows 7):
  - Click **Start**.
  - Click **Programs**.
  - Click **SPSS Inc**.
  - Click **PASW Statistics 18**.
  - Click **PASW Statistics 18**
- Two windows should pop up. The window in front is labeled **SPSS 18.0 for Windows**. This opening window gives you several options. For example, it shows you the data files you've used most recently and gives you the option of reopening one. Frankly, what I usually do is to hit the **Cancel** button on this window and get right to the SPSS spreadsheet. Go ahead and do this.
- Now you're looking at the spreadsheet (the Data View). This is the starting point for most of the things we're going to ask SPSS to do. You'll notice a bunch of terms at the top, like **File, Edit, View, Data, Transform, Analyze, Graphs**, etc. Each one gives you a pull down menu with a particular set of options. By and large, if you want something done in SPSS you go to the appropriate pull-down menu, find what you need, click the option that tells SPSS what you want to do and click an **OK** button.

*Here's where you're going to start working with the SPSS book.*

- Pages 10 describes the three main windows involved in working with SPSS: 1) the Data Editor window, 2) the Syntax window, and 3) the SPSS Viewer window (output window).
- Pages 11-16 describe the process of entering data into the SPSS spreadsheet.

- **Please enter the information displayed at the bottom of page 12 into the SPSS spreadsheet.** For the Beer Brand variable I'd like you to enter the numerical code for each brand of beer. In other words type a "1" in the cell for subjects drinking "Bongo Beer", a "2" for those drinking "Swiller Light", a "3" for Lights-Out Lager, a "4" for "Budget Brew", "5" for "Belcher's Pride", and "6" for "Cirrhosis Light".
- Add the *Variable Names* **beerweek** and **beerbrnd** that we've recommended (p. 13).
- Add the *Variable Labels* recommended in the book (p. 13).
- Add the *Value Labels* recommended in the book (p. 13-14).
- Select the option to display the *Value Labels* in the Data View (p. 15).
- In the book we recommend deleting cases that have missing data (p. 16). This was written for people with relatively few variables in their data sets. For larger data sets it's possible the researcher will want to address a question that doesn't involve the variable that has missing data. So, as a data Pack Rat, my recommendation to you in this class is that you keep all the data you have. If data are missing for a variable involved in the analysis, SPSS will just ignore that subject's data. *No harm will come to you!*
- There's one other thing about the Variable View that I'd like to note that's not in the book. Take a look at the column labeled **Type** in the Variable View. Notice that the term **Numeric** is in that column for each of the two variables entered. Go to the row for the variable **beerweek** and click on the term **Numeric**. A grey box with three little dots shows up just to the right of **Numeric**. Click on the grey box. A new window labeled **Variable Type** pops up. This window displays a number of options for the type of variable you're working with. The default option of Numeric should already be selected. This is because most of the variables that people use are recorded as numbers. However, occasionally a researcher wants to record a variable in the form of text. For example, a possible variable name might be a subject's name. SPSS's term for a variable that is recorded as text is a *String Variable*. So, if you want to have SPSS record information about a subject as text instead of a number, you've got to select the **String** option in this window. If the text has more than the default of eight characters, you'll need to go to the **Width** column and change the value to include the longest string of text you think you'll use.

- Save the data file using the file name recommended in the book (pp. 17-18). At this point I recommend that, if you're on campus, you create a folder in your RU campus network account (h: drive) for 610 and save the file in that folder. P. 18 also covers how to open an existing SPSS data file.
- Follow the steps presented on pages 18-21 for using Syntax files, including using the syntax files to generate frequency distributions for both variables.
  - On page 19, Figure 2.6 shows the steps involved in generating the syntax for getting frequency distributions for the two variables. Here are written instructions to do the same thing:
    1. Click the **Analyze** pull-down menu.
    2. Go down to **Descriptive Statistics**.
    3. Click on the **Frequencies** option. You should now get a **Frequencies** window.
    4. Click on the variable **beerweek** to select it. Now click on the arrow just to the right of the list of variables. The variable **beerweek** should move in the box labeled **Variable(s)**.
    5. Click on the variable **beerbrnd** to select it. Now click on the arrow just to the right of the list of variables. The variable **beerbrnd** should move in the box labeled **Variable(s)**.
    6. Click **Paste**.
- Use the SPSS Viewer (i.e., output window) generated above to follow the text on “Navigating the Output” presented on pages 21-22.
- Read the text on printing and saving output on pages 22-24.
- **Please e-mail as attached files both your spreadsheet (Data View) file and your output (SPSS Viewer) files.** My e-mail address is [tpierce@radford.edu](mailto:tpierce@radford.edu)
- Go find something fun to do.