Assignment 3
CRP 272 Fall 2008
This is due in class no later than December 11th
This is worth 15 points!

This is an assignment to develop and apply some of your research and analysis skills. First, you must select a relevant topic to study relating to the planning profession, the economy, public health, society, politics, or science. Examples could include highway statistics, land use, business or job growth, marriages and divorces, birth or death information, crime rates, illness, poverty, voting behavior, or any primary or direct data associated with a hard or social science project.

Second, you must analyze several variables of information – no fewer than 3 but no more than 6. (If you can make a case for including more variables, you will not be penalized for doing so).

Third, you must gather information for an entire population of something. That could be all of the states of the U.S., all of the counties in Iowa, all of the census tracts in Des Moines, all of the cities over 50,000 in the Midwest, all of the teachers in Ames School District, or all of the traffic in Story County, as examples.

Fourth, you will develop at least one working hypothesis for testing. For example, you might believe that states with higher per capita incomes had lower infant mortality rates. Or that states with higher interstate speed limits had higher traffic fatality rates.

Fifth, you will organize your data to test your hypothesis. You can use simple tabular statistics, for example 2 X 2 or some other kind of tables, graphics like line or column charts, or sets of descriptive statistics. You are encouraged to use correlation statistics to see what kinds of associations your variables might have with one another if they apply to your research question.

The entire project should not exceed 5 pages in total. It should contain

- a very good description of the area that you are studying and why,
- the basic research question that you are addressing,
- a description of the variables that you are working with and why you feel that they are important,
- nicely formatted and labeled tables and graphs, and
- a professional look with clear and concise language usage.

These are just a few places that you can find a lot of data:
American Fact Finder of the U.S. Census
http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?_lang=en
The U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, State or Local Area data:
http://www.bea.gov/bea/regional/statelocal.htm
The State of Iowa Data Center
http://www.iowadatacenter.org/
The State of Iowa Department of Transportation
http://www.dot.state.ia.us/
The State of Iowa Department of Education – education statistics site
http://www.iowa.gov/educate/content/view/346/299/
The State of Iowa Department of Health – vital statistics
http://www.idph.state.ia.us/eh/health_statistics.asp#vital
The State Department of Human Services – reports and publications
http://www.dhs.state.ia.us/navigation/PublicInformation/ReportsPublications.html
The Iowa Secretary of State – Voting information
http://www.sos.state.ia.us/

There are literally dozens of others to include the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Internal Revenue Service, the National Centers for Disease Control, the USDA Economic Research Service, the Small Business Administration, the U.S. Department of Education, the U.S. Department of Transportation, the Occupational Health and Safety Administration, and the Environmental Protection Agency.

Do not limit your search to what I’ve recommended. You are welcomed to find your own data on your own subjects, provided the rules above are adhered to.

**Take this seriously! It is 15 percent of your grade and worth the same as your final exam.**