

Sample Exercise for Project 3: Research Summary

For instructors

This exercise is designed to help students understand that all problems affect multiple populations and that these populations likely conceive of the given problem differently. This understanding will help students develop more nuanced solutions in their final collaborative report by challenging them to think of multiple stakeholder groups.

This exercise can be completed as a homework assignment or done in class. If done as homework, have students present their findings in class and then lead a discussion of the results. If done in class, allow ample time, as the students will need to leave the classroom to gather data. If you do the exercise in class, put the students in groups.

Students should prepare some brief interview questions. Also, make sure they gather basic demographic data from their interview participant (e.g., are they a student (type?) or employee (type?). How often do they drive on campus?)

Once the interviews have been completed, have students share their results. Record these in some way (write on the board, type on the projector, etc.) and begin to categorize the responses by different impacted populations. Your goal is to show students that while there are some connections between impacted populations (e.g., frustration with the time it takes to park), each group has its own interests and issues.

NOTE: You can do this exercise using the problems the students are working with for the Research Summary, as well. When you lead the results discussion, since the problems will be different, focus on differences/similarities between interviewees and how interviewee perspectives inform the interviewees understanding of the problem.

For students

Any given problem can be defined differently by the multiple audiences it affects. For example, the difficulty of finding a parking spot on USF's campus affects more than just students who commute to campus. To prove this, this exercise asks you to conduct some primary research of your own.

To better understand how the parking at USF impacts different populations, go talk to the people affected.

1. Write two or three interview questions.
2. Go find two or three people to interview.
3. Gather demographic data from interviewees (e.g., are they a student (type?) or employee (type?).
4. Bring your results back to class for discussion

