EVERY LEARNER IS UNIQUE SO WHY COULDN'T THEIR ASSIGNMENTS BE UNIQUE? THE USE OF SIMULATED DATASETS IN INFERENTIAL STATISTICS COURSES.

Brian Leventhal, James Madison University, U.S.A.
S. Jeanne Horst, James Madison University, U.S.A.
leventbc@jmu.edu

Data simulation is a technique used for robustness studies, model estimation, and investigation of new analytic methods. We incorporated simulated data into inferential statistics course assignments. Throughout the course, students completed formal assignments to answer identical research questions, performing analyses on their own unique instructor-provided simulated dataset. Using simulated data allowed the instructor to control outliers, assumption violations, and results. Course evaluation ratings of the assignments showed that students exhibited greater passion compared to more traditional assignments. Additionally, compared to traditional assignments, the technique minimized honor code violations by eliminating the ability to copy results and interpretations. To expedite the grading of unique analyses, solution syntax is developed that automates the process. Example assignments, solution syntax, and student evaluation of the assignments are presented.