

Visitor and Judging Guidelines Sample

ASA DataFest Visitor/Consultant & Judging Guidelines

Location

[Enter location here]

Directions and Parking

Maps are available at [enter link to campus map if available]. You can park at [enter parking information here].

For non-[School] visitors: [Enter parking information for outside guests / and judges].

Your Task

The most important thing is to keep the mood light and encouraging! I suspect by sometime Saturday afternoon things might seem rather dire to some of the students.

On Friday night, students will be busy trying to make sense of the data. We expect that some of them might have technical problems with getting started (loading the data, viewing it, etc.). Throughout the weekend the teams will be on their own, though we might have intermittent “check ins”. We imagine they will get stuck and need advice. Sometimes, the advice could be highly technical and, depending on your background, outside your expertise. Don't worry. They know that you are not there to solve their problems, but to offer advice. See if you can steer them towards standard problem-solving techniques: break the problem into smaller pieces, go online for advice, etc. Guide them to think about context. What sort of distribution do they expect? Why? What might cause that? How does that compare to what they saw?

This is a competition, but it is supposed to be friendly and collaborative, so don't worry about revealing any special knowledge. This is not an exam, and so if someone asks, please answer if you can, and don't worry about other teams over hearing. I'm hoping that, after the first evening, teams will be sharing basic technical advice on their own.

The Data

This year's data set is provided by [Name of data sponsor]. [Enter information about data sponsor here].

Students will not know the source of the data until Friday evening. At that point, a representative from [Name of data sponsor], [Name of presenter], will present the data and the outlines of a challenge.

Although these questions point to a particular type of challenge, we will encourage the students to think about [context of data] in as large a context as possible, and will certainly encourage any special findings and encourage them to explore any hypotheses they might generate.

Students will download the data on Friday, which consists of [number of files] files:

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- [itemized list of description of files]

Students will also be provided a codebook along with some links to reference material.

These data pose particular challenges (and we expect these challenges will be different for undergraduate and graduate students):

- [itemized list of expected challenges]

A note about software

Most students will use R but we also expect many to use Matlab, Python, SAS, Excel, etc. as well. If asked for support on a platform you're not familiar with, simply stating so is sufficient. [Modify for your institution if need be]

Judging

Judging will begin on Sunday at 1pm [or update]. The presentation and judging schedule is as follows:

1pm – 3:30pm	Presentations
3:30pm – 4pm	Judges deliberations
4pm - 5pm	Award ceremony

Teams will have 5 minutes and 3 slides to make their case. You will be provided note cards to help keep things straight. It's strongly recommended that you make note of teams that are especially strong as you're watching the presentations so that the deliberation conversation can be as efficient as possible.

There will be three prize categories:

- Best in Show
- Best Visualization
- Best Use of Outside Data
- [these might change slightly from year to year]

The latter category is meant to encourage students to find supporting information and/or data beyond what we give them.

Winners will receive [enter any prize information].

If you are judging, please be at [judging location] no later than 1pm on Sunday. If you want to watch the presentations and get some food, please arrive a little earlier. We should be done by 5pm. We are starting presentations a little earlier than previously planned since we have a huge number of participants this year, and we want to leave ample time for the award ceremony.

Feedback

DataFest has become an annual event that is now being held at [number of locations] locations with participation from [number of institutions] universities and colleges. We hope to grow the event further in the coming years. With that in mind, please send me any advice or constructive criticisms that will help us improve this event in the future.

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Our primary goal is to provide a rewarding experience for the undergraduates, an experience that sharpens their analytical skills and gives them some confidence that they can take what they learn here out into the "real world".

List of judges, visitors, and organizers

Please let me know if any corrections need to be made to your affiliation listed below. This information will be posted on the ASA DataFest website.

Judges	
[Name]	[Affiliation]
Visitor/Consultant	
[Name]	[Affiliation]