

One Fully Composed Chart

Data Visualization Using R
Spring 2020
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Due Monday February 24 by start of class
In class, on paper & online

Broadly, the goal of this class is to help you communicate a story told with numbers in a picture. To this end, we make charts.

To properly communicate, charts require many parts – axis labels, data annotations – to clearly succeed. It may not be obvious when you start your policy brief how painstaking this process is. It is also not a good idea to become aware of how painstaking it is two days before your policy brief is due!

To avoid learning about this two days before your brief is due, this assignment, worth five percent of your final grade, requires you to submit one fully composed chart and relevant R code. I will give feedback within two weeks and this feedback – and the process of making the chart itself – should give you a sense of the work required for the final policy brief.

An incomplete list of things that a fully composed chart:

- a title that makes the point of the chart*
- a subtitle that tells us what the data are in the chart*
- clear axis labels
- annotations as needed on the chart to highlight relevant points/levels
- colors that highlight the story
- a graphic form that is consistent with the point you're trying to make
- as needed, an easily legible legend

* These first two are not mandatory. However, if you don't use this method to tell us what the point of your graphic is and what the data are, you need an alternative method that makes this clear.

As for substance, the topic of the chart is your choice. If you would like to make a chart for your policy brief and get feedback, you're welcome to do that. You're also welcome to make a chart on an entirely different topic.

Finally, you're very welcome to make a chart on something specific to the Washington, DC region. If there are enough high quality charts, I will make a data graphics book for the Center for Washington Area studies and promote it to media outlets. This is contingent, however, on enough high-quality graphics. I suspect that some graphics will be acceptable contingent on revisions, which you may or may not wish to undertake (and that is entirely up to you!).

In a few weeks, I will post a set of data sources if you're interested in making a DC-area chart.

Turn in the final product to [this google folder](#), and title it [last_name].pdf. So, my chart would be Brooks.pdf

Late assignments receive a grade of zero. It is better to turn in a bad chart on time than a better chart late.