

Project 2

Finding Stories in New York City's 311 Data

The 311 dataset seems one dimensional at first, but is rich in details about the living conditions of the people of New York City. Choose an aspect of city life that you are interested in and you will find that someone has complained about it.

This project is intended to expose you to working with outside datasets generated by others. Throughout the project, you will iteratively formulate and answer question using the 311 public dataset that is provided to you.

You will make an single page interactive visualization that addresses your question. We will be discussing your progress in small groups in class, but you will be completing this project on your own.

In the final submission, you will be asked to elaborate on your design decisions, as well as discuss potential outside datasets that you would incorporate to better answer your question if you were to take the project further.

You questions and focus on the data may change throughout this process, please keep track of the questions you have asked, and the steps you have taken to explore your data, and any sketches you made in the process.

Key Points

- Individual Project
- 311 Data or subset of 311 Data
- Interactive final output
- Due Week 8

Milestones/Steps:

Week 6

Go to <https://data.cityofnewyork.us> and use the public interface to explore 311 data of New York City. Get a sense of the types of complaints, the pattern, look for subsets of data, characteristics of city departments, types of complaints, how long each type takes to resolve, where they occur, the times that they occur, seasonal changes, yearly changes, or weekday to weekend patterns. You can choose to use the entire dataset, or a subset such as data within a date/time range, for a smaller area, of a complaint type, from one department, etc. You will filter the data and export it through the city's data portal. Even with a subset of the data, there are many ways to represent it. Think of a question that can potentially be answered by the data points that you have selected.

Submit the filters you have used on your data and the question that you will be answering with your tailored dataset.

Week 6 in Class

Bring your question to class along with your filters. In the second half of class, we will be forming groups with common interests to share your ideas with each other, and working through story finding activities to find ways forward to address your question. We will discuss different layers of interaction and we will end the day with sketches of the initial design of the visualizations that you will make that week.

Week 7

You will translate your sketch into a visualization using the real data and write the narrative around them. Code the preliminary visualization and post it online. This visualization does not have to have the full extent of style and interactivity yet. But it must contain the entirety of the real data you will be using, as well as a basic layout of the chart elements you will employ.

Week 7 in class

In the second half of class, we will continue to work on your inprogress interactives and discuss conceptual, technical, and visual improvements. We will pair up to critique each other's work, helping each other improve expressiveness, efficiency, clarity of the final visualizations.

Week 8

In the final week of the project, you will refine your initial interactive sketch based on the feedback you have received and submit it online via your own website. This project will be due before spring break.

Planning Ahead

This project is a good place to start thinking about the final project. For your final project, you are free to use any dataset, including those related to your field or something that coincides with your other coursework. For example, if you are studying a location in one of your studios, you can visualize public data for that location. Or if you have a specific urban issue that you are addressing, you can choose to make that your focus. You can continue with the theme you have chosen for this project or work with a different topic.

Your final project for the class will start after spring break. Briefly, it will be the interactive visualization of 2 or more datasets of your own choosing. The data can be publically available, scraped from the web, or specific to your research. For the final project, you will be asked to combine different datasets to make your visualization and tell your story.

For the final project, you can work in groups of up to 3 students. If you are planning to work in groups for the final project, now is a good time to think about who you want to work with and coordinate your topics.