Homework 5

Climate Change Ecology, Spring 2013

Due Thursday, April 18, 2013

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Please answer the following questions in a different font (**like this**) to help me find your answers. Turn in a print out of your homework. In this homework, you must work alone.

Climate Change Communication

For this homework, you will interview two people about climate change, one who does not think climate change is happening or is unsure, and one who accepts that climate change is happening. During the interview of the person who does not think climate change is happening or is unsure, you will ask a set of questions at the beginning of the interview; describe your favorite storylines about the evidence for climate change and its impacts; then resurvey the individual.

You are replicating a study (“NSEE report”) conducted over several years by Drs. Christopher Borick and Barry G. Rabe, The Center for Local, State, and Urban Policy, University of Michigan, with the exception that you are surveying only two people, and during one interview you will survey a person twice, providing information about climate change between surveys.

1. Download and read the NSEE study report: http://closup.umich.edu/national-surveys-on-energy-and-environment/2/nsee-findings-report-for-belief-related-questions.

You may wish to review this cheat sheet as well: http://climatedesk.org/2013/03/this-cheat-sheet-will-make-you-win-every-climate-argument.

2. Select two individuals for interviewing. Choose someone whom you know (friend, family member, etc.) and who has not had a college-level course that discussed climate change. Pick someone you can have a conversation with, not an argument. If you have trouble finding someone, let me know soon!

One person must answer “Yes” to Question 1 below and a second (different) person must answer “No” to Question 1.

(6 points) Fill out the below table about the interviewees.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Person 1 | Name |  |
| Initial answer to Question 1 |  |
| Your relationship with the person |  |
| Optional: other pertinent data (approximate age, gender, education, etc.; see characteristics in Table 2 of NSEE/U. Michigan report) |  |
| Person 2 | Name |  |
| Initial answer to Question 1 |  |
| Your relationship with the person |  |
| Optional: other pertinent data (approximate age, gender, education, etc.; see characteristics in Table 2 of NSEE/U. Michigan report) |  |

3. Interview each person and record answers to the survey questions as well as your experience.

a. For the person who answered “Yes” to Question 1, ask Questions 2-5.

b. For the person who answered “No” to Question 1,

i. ask Question 6;

ii. describe 1-3 storylines about climate change that you think may help persuade the interviewee that climate change is happening;

iii. re-ask Question 1, following up with Questions 2-5 if the person responds with “Yes”.

4. Write up your interviews.

a. (8 points) Fill out the Google document so I can compile the numbers: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/ccc?key=0AiyzUhScaaHfdGJwMjBPNXNDWjNCcnhJMzBaU01wRkE#gid=0. Add a line with your name and fill in the answers (“a”, “b”, etc.). Make sure to fill out information for both interviews, and two surveys for one interview (the second survey might only have a “No” for Question 1).

b. Summarize…:

i. (20 points) …the first interview in 2-3 paragraphs. How did it go? Was the person receptive, attentive, interested, disengaged, apathetic, dismissive, etc.? What was the person’s overall impression of climate change? What did the interviewee particular like or dislike about climate change? How were your interviewing skills? Were you able to change the interviewee’s mind? Please use complete sentences and proper grammar/syntax/spelling.

ii. (20 points) Same for the second interview.

**Survey**

Question 1. “Is there solid evidence that the average temperature on Earth has been getting warmer over the past four decades?”

a. Yes

b. No

c. Not sure

If “Yes” to Question 1, then

Question 2. “How confident are you that the average temperature on Earth is increasing?”

a. Very Confident

b. Fairly Confident

c. Not Too Confident

d. Not Confident At All

Question 3. “Is the Earth getting warmer because of human activity such as burning fossil fuels, or mostly because of natural patterns in the Earth’s environment?”

a. Human Activity

b. Natural Patterns

c. A Combination

Question 4. “What is the primary factor that has caused you to believe that temperatures on Earth are increasing?”

a. Glaciers Melting

b. Warmer Temps

c. Weather Change

d. Scientific Research

e. Gore Documentary

f. Media Coverage

g. Declining Species

h. Human Activity

Question 5. “For each factor that I mention, please indicate if it has had a very large, somewhat large, not too large, or no effect on your view that the Earth is getting warmer.”

a. Declining glaciers and polar ice throughout the globe

b. Computer models that indicate the earth is getting warmer

c. The strength of hurricanes hitting the United States

d. Reports from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

e. Milder winters in your area

f. Extreme weather events such as major storms and floods

If “No” or “Not sure” to Question 1,

Question 6. “What is the primary factor that makes you believe that temperatures on Earth are not increasing?”

a. Personal Observation

b. Natural Patterns

c. Lack of Evidence

d. Media has Misled

e. Evidence Disproves

f. Religious Factors

g. Politically Driven

h. No Particular Reason

i. Not Sure or Other

Finally, ask the interviewee if s/he has any further comments about climate change, and discuss with him/her climate change to the extent you wish.