

Eleventh Annual  
*Sloboda and Bukoski SPR Cup*  
Competition Rules

1. The co-chairs for the *SPR Cup* are the Chair of the SPR Training Committee and the Chair of ECPN. The primary contact throughout the *SPR Cup* pre-competition process will be the current Chair of the SPR Training Committee.
2. Each year, the *SPR Cup* theme will follow the SPR main conference theme for that year. An announcement of the *SPR Cup* theme and invitation for teams to participate will be issued to members in early January. The dataset will be announced at the end of March.

The dataset will be selected from University of Michigan's Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) or similar publicly available data bank. Especially in the case of large datasets, portions of a dataset may be selected by the SPR Training Committee, rather than the full dataset. Teams will apply for the competition by February 15 and will be informed of acceptance by March 1.

Rules regarding the members of a team are listed on the *SPR Cup* announcement on the Society for Prevention Research (SPR) [website](#). Teams designate a team captain and a primary mentor.

3. Conference calls with applicants are held between February and May to explain the competition and review the rules. The SPR Training Committee co-chairs will also hold a conference call with team mentors to explain the competition process and the role of mentors in the process.
4. Teams will be provided with a de-identified dataset from the University of Michigan ICPSR (or similar public database) approximately 8 weeks before the SPR Annual Meeting. Additional information about the dataset will be disseminated during a conference phone call and over email shortly after the release of the data set.
5. Prior to accessing the data set, all team members must agree to and sign a dataset release form. Depending on the dataset that is used, there may be some stipulations about use that are required by the principal investigator (PI) and/or institution connected to the data.
6. Teams must submit a data analysis proposal to the *SPR Cup* co-chairs within one week after the release of the data set (i.e., the deadline will be the following Monday at 2 p.m. Pacific time). The proposal should be a maximum of one page long and include hypotheses or research questions. Teams are encouraged to be creative in their proposed methodological approaches. Teams are allowed to bring in other information to their analyses or presentations besides that which exists in the dataset, as long as it is publicly

available information. In this regard, teams are strongly encouraged to consider the geographical, cultural, social, historical, and political contexts, as well as other pertinent factors, within which the data were collected. Further, in the past, most high scoring teams have employed cutting-edge statistical techniques, including accounting for missing data and data clustering, as appropriate given the nature of the proposed work. Feedback will be provided to the teams about their proposals within 48 hours.

7. After approval is granted for a proposal, a team has until the SPR Annual Meeting to conduct a literature review, conduct analyses, and prepare a presentation for a 15-minute talk (maximum) on their results (note that the length of the talk varies from year to year based on the consensus of the competing teams and is usually 10 minutes). Teams set the presentation time together when reviewing the competition rules earlier in the winter. At the end of their talk, teams are encouraged to discuss the implications of their findings for prevention practice, policy, and future research. Keeping the talk within the time allotted is very important.
8. During the period leading up to the conference presentation, the members of each team are welcome to discuss their work with any mentor they choose, not just their primary mentor. However, mentors are allowed to provide advice only. Mentors are not allowed to make decisions for a team or to conduct work of any type. All mentors that a team consults with must be acknowledged during the presentation. *SPR Cup* co-chairs are not allowed to be mentors.
9. Presentations may be conducted by as many team members as is desired. In the past, some teams have chosen one presenter, some teams have had two presenters, and other teams have had all team members present together. Prior to the meeting, teams are encouraged to practice and experiment with different combinations and numbers of presenters to determine the optimal format for their presentation.
10. Presentations should employ PowerPoint or a similar software program (note that one laptop will be used by all teams during the competition). Teams are welcome to use any type of media that can be accessed from within such a program (or easily from another standard program that is accessible from a laptop that *is not* connected to the internet) to enhance their presentation. Teams should consider the use of relevant photos or video, easy to read tables and figures, and readable text, and complement these with a well delivered and well organized presentation style. Teams should consider balancing technical details and statistics with illustrations and illuminating discussion at various points during the presentation. Teams are advised to use text, tables, figures, photos, video, etc. only to *enhance* their presentation, rather than to *be* their presentation. In the past, some of the highest quality presentations during the entire SPR Annual Meeting have occurred during the *SPR Cup*. Teams are encouraged to carry on this tradition.

11. Teams are strongly encouraged to practice their presentation with multiple audiences prior to the day of the competition, to request feedback, and to make necessary modifications and improvements after each practice session.
12. Prior to the competition, the order of presentation will be determined by a random draw. Teams will be informed of the order during a final conference call approximately two weeks before the Annual Meeting.
13. Each team must bring copies of a one-page handout on their presentation to distribute to the judges and audience members on the day of the competition. In terms of the number of handouts to bring, attendance can vary widely depending on the conference location, the weather, the other presentations going on at the same time, how close the meeting is to the home base for participating teams, and other unknown reasons. During the past decade, attendance is usually somewhere between 25 and 100 people, but has been lower and has been higher (maximum of 150).
14. The day before the competition, each team must upload their presentation to the laptop that will be used during the presentation, and must make ensure that any technical issues with the presentation (e.g., playing video) are resolved.
15. The competition will be held in at the SPR Annual Meeting. The competition will most likely be on Thursday morning. The awards ceremony is typically Thursday in the late afternoon. All teams are required to attend the awards ceremony.
16. If a situation occurs during the competition that is not covered under these rules, the designated Master of Ceremonies for the competition will serve as the sole referee. The Master of Ceremonies may choose to either make a ruling at the time the situation occurs, or to consult with others first and defer a ruling until after the competition.
17. Teams may add any other appropriate, professional flourishes to their presentation that they desire. In the past, some teams have chosen to have members wear the same types of clothes, hats, or scarves. Some teams have worn special t-shirts. Some teams have played music just prior to their talk (e.g., the “fight song” of their university). Some teams have handed out candy to audience members and judges. A key aspect of the competition is for team members to have fun together throughout the process.
18. After the presentation, the members of a panel of judges, none of whom will be from the same institutions as the teams in the competition, and audience members (i.e., the “raters”), including colleagues from the same institution as team members, will fill out a rating form. The rating form includes seven items, each rated on a 1 to 10 scale:

Innovation of Project, Depth and Usefulness of Statistical Analyses, Ability to Draw Meaningful Conclusions from the Data, Significance of Project to Prevention Science, Quality of Verbal Presentation, Quality of Visual Presentation, and Overall Impression. The total score for each rater is the average of their seven item ratings.

19. For the audience, potential conflicts of interest will be asked about on the rating form, but a conflict of interest will not disqualify an individual from providing a rating for a team with which he or she may have a conflict of interest. Of note is that in the past, a variety of approaches have been taken concerning conflicts of interest in the audience, including disallowing rating forms from individuals with declared conflicts of interest. However, teams have consistently chosen not to disqualify audience members with conflicts of interest, and this is now standard practice for the competition. Teams are encouraged to invite as many people as possible from their institutions to cheer them on, but also to encourage their colleagues and friends to rate all teams fairly.
20. After all teams have presented, time will be provided for raters to review all of their scores, make any desired adjustments, and confirm their final ratings.
21. After all final ratings are complete for all teams, judges will be invited to make comments about the presentations. Judges will be encouraged to make comments that focus on the positive aspects of the presentation.
22. Following the comments of judges, at least two members of each team will be invited to join a panel discussion. During this time, the audience and judges will have the opportunity to ask questions. The panel will convene first and then judges and audience will comment.
23. As judges and audience members leave the competition room, rating forms will be collected.
24. During the afternoon, forms will be scored and a final score will be calculated for each team. The final score for a team will be the average of all scores and will be computed as follows:  $\text{Score} = (0.65) \times (\text{average score of all judges}) + (0.35) \times (\text{average score of all audience members})$ . The highest scoring team will be declared the *SPR Cup* Champion. (this weighting system was designed by the teams over the years, and after some initial modification, has remained at 0.65/0.35.)
25. If two teams have the same highest score to the second decimal place, the *SPR Cup* will be jointly awarded (this situation has never occurred).

26. All teams are required to attend the SPR Awards ceremony (on the evening of the competition day). If team members dressed similarly (e.g., wore the same t-shirts) during the competition, they are encouraged to do so as well for the ceremony. All teams and team members will be introduced and invited up to the awards podium, and the winning team will be announced. If the captain or another member of the prior year's winning team is present, he or she will be invited to open the envelope and present the current winning team. If not, either the MC will open the envelope or a designated senior person, such as the SPR President or one of the namesakes for the *SPR Cup*.
27. The winning team (and other teams) may be encouraged by one or more judges to submit a manuscript to SPR's journal *Prevention Science*. All submissions will go through the regular review process. Publication is not guaranteed. Several teams in past competitions have submitted manuscripts for peer review. Several such manuscripts have been published, and some of these have been in *Prevention Science*.
28. All teams are welcome to submit a manuscript for peer review to any journal regardless of whether or not they are invited to do so by the judges.
29. If two teams conduct the same or very similar analyses, teams can choose to collaborate on a manuscript, or to change certain aspects of their analyses to create a different manuscript altogether. If teams decide to collaborate on a manuscript, depending on the rules governing the use of a specific dataset, a new proposal may need to be submitted to ICPSR for approval.
30. Unless otherwise stated in the dataset release form, the data set will be available for the production of a manuscript according to the guidelines on the ICPSR website.

*Contact Leslie Leve and Marie-Hélène Véronneau, 2016 SPR Cup Co-Chairs, with any questions.*