**Data Cleaning and Processing Tips Using Excel/Google Sheets**

1. **Enter** your data into a table format into the spreadsheet. Using one row per participant with data from the same questions in columns is a common format. (If needed)
2. **Save a backup** copy of your original data.
3. **Cleaning:** Identify errors, unusual values, outliers (very high or low numbers) and missing data using tools in Excel or Google Sheets:
   1. Spell check
   2. Filters: Use to look at all values, sort values, and include or exclude values you see in a column. Can be used to quickly identify missing or unusual data.
   3. Find/Replace: Can be used to find all instances of a specific value in a worksheet, and replace those with another value
4. **Recoding Values:** Consider if substituting, combining or re-categorizing data will assist you in your analysis. (e.g. changing a range of four responses into “yes” and “no”)
   1. Create a blank column next to the column you are recoding in the spreadsheet by right clicking the top of the sheet and selecting “Insert” from the menu. You can also can copy the column and its values over for recoding.
   2. Name the column by typing text into the top row
   3. Depending on the recoding, you can use filtering to sort and select values you would like to recode and enter or copy those values into the new, blank column. Find and replace tool can also be helpful in recoding.
5. **Document**: Write down the steps you take to process, clean and recode your data. This helps you repeat the same steps each time you work the data and communicate to others who are working with or looking at the data understand the changes you have made.