Utilizing the SAS® Macro Facility to Interface with PROC COMPARE
Robert Adams, Merck & Co., Inc., North Wales, PA

ABSTRACT
SAS® is used in a variety of ways in pharmaceutical drug development, including to validate the data sets from which tables, figures, and listings are derived. The SAS procedure PROC COMPARE is useful when validating data sets since it can compare the contents of two data sets, selected variables in different data sets, or variables within the same data set. In addition, the procedure uses an automatic macro variable to store a return code that provides information about the result of the comparison. This paper will show how to use the value of the macro variable populated by PROC COMPARE to conditionally execute parts of a SAS program based on the result of the comparison.

KEYWORDS
Automatic macro variable, procedure return code

INTRODUCTION
One of the ways that PROC COMPARE reports the results of its comparisons is by storing a return code in the automatic macro variable SYSINFO. The value of the return code provides information about the results of the comparison. By checking the value of SYSINFO after PROC COMPARE has run and before any other step begins, subsequent SAS steps can use the results of a PROC COMPARE step to determine what action to take or what parts of a SAS program to execute.

EXAMPLE DATA SETS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>subj</th>
<th>visit</th>
<th>test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>5150</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>5150</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>subj</th>
<th>visit</th>
<th>test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>5150</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>5150</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MACRO RETURN CODES
The possible values for the SYSINFO variable after PROC COMPARE has run are listed below. Keep in mind that the value of SYSINFO must be obtained before another SAS step starts because every SAS step resets SYSINFO.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bit</th>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Hex</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>DSLABEL</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0001X</td>
<td>Data set labels differ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>DSTYPE</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0002X</td>
<td>Data set types differ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>INFORMAT</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0004X</td>
<td>Variable has different informat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>FORMAT</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0008X</td>
<td>Variable has different format</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>LENGTH</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0010X</td>
<td>Variable has different length</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>LABEL</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>0020X</td>
<td>Variable has different label</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>BASEOBS</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>0040X</td>
<td>Base data set has observation not in comparison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>COMPOBS</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>0080X</td>
<td>Comparison data set has observation not in base</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>BASEBY</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>0100X</td>
<td>Base data set has BY group not in comparison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>COMPBY</td>
<td>512</td>
<td>0200X</td>
<td>Comparison data set has BY group not in base</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>BASEVAR</td>
<td>1024</td>
<td>0400X</td>
<td>Base data set has variable not in comparison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>COMPVAR</td>
<td>2048</td>
<td>0800X</td>
<td>Comparison data set has variable not in base</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>VALUE</td>
<td>4096</td>
<td>1000X</td>
<td>A value comparison was unequal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>TYPE</td>
<td>8192</td>
<td>2000X</td>
<td>Conflicting variable types</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>BYVAR</td>
<td>16384</td>
<td>4000X</td>
<td>BY variables do not match</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>ERROR</td>
<td>32768</td>
<td>8000X</td>
<td>Fatal error: comparison not done</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notice that the return codes are scaled to enable a simple check of the degree to which the data sets differ.

CODING TO USE MACRO RETURN CODES
To conditionally execute a SAS program based on the result of PROC COMPARE, the procedure must run, the value of the SYSINFO macro variable must be obtained, then conditional logic can be applied. For example, to check that two data sets contain the same variables, observations, and values without concern for differences in labels, formats, etc. the following statements can be used:
```sas
proc compare base = files.a compare = files.b ;
run ;
%let rc = &sysinfo ;

data _null_; 
  if &rc ge 64 then do ;
    put 'WARNING: The number of observations, BY groups, or variables are unequal' ;
    put 'or the variable values, variable types, or BY variables do not match' ;
  end ;
run ;
```

LOG OUTPUT

628 proc compare base = files.a compare = files.b ;
629 run ;

NOTE: There were 2 observations read from the data set FILES.A.
NOTE: There were 2 observations read from the data set FILES.B.
NOTE: PROCEDURE COMPARE used (Total process time):
       real time           0.01 seconds
       cpu time            0.01 seconds

630
631 %let rc = &sysinfo ;
632
633 data _null_;
634 if &rc ge 64 then
635   do ;
636     put 'WARNING: The number of observations, BY groups, or variables are unequal' ;
637     put 'or the variable values, variable types, or BY variables do not match' ;
638   end ;
639 run ;

WARNING: The number of observations, BY groups, or variables are unequal
or the variable values, variable types, or BY variables do not match

APPLICATIONS

Obtaining the return code from the automatic macro variable populated by PROC COMPARE lends itself very easily to the development of a macro that can handle the different scenarios that result from the comparison. For example, a programming group frequently validating data sets using PROC COMPARE could develop a macro that can take the return code from PROC COMPARE as a parameter and perform error handling or provide simple feedback instead of the cumbersome output normally produced by the procedure.

CONCLUSIONS

This paper uses a simple example to show how macro return codes can be used to conditionally execute parts of a SAS program. This approach can serve as a welcome alternative to the normal output from the procedure and could lead to greater efficiency if coupled with a macro that accepts the return code as a parameter.
REFERENCES
SAS OnlineDoc 9.1.3:   http://support.sas.com/onlinedoc/913/docMainpage.jsp

CONTACT INFORMATION
Your comments and questions are valued and encouraged. Please don’t hesitate to contact the author at:

Robert Adams
Merck and Company, Inc.
UG1D-10
351 North Sumneytown Pkwy
North Wales, PA 19454
267-305-8249
robert_adams2@merck.com

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