

INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL STATISTICS

Fall 2009, Sociology 230.205/230.600

TuTh 9:00-10:15am, 301 Hodson Hall

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Office Hours:
Tuesday 12:00-2:00pm (drop-in)

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Office Hours: Friday, 12:00-1:00pm

Sections - 526 Mergenthaler Hall
Friday 9:00 -9:50 (Section 1)
Friday 10:00 -10:50 (Section 2)
Friday 11:00 -11:50 (Grad Section)

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course will cover the elementary and intermediate quantitative techniques most commonly utilized in sociological investigation. Your goal should be to understand the logic of quantitative social research and the statistical analysis of social data. You will learn how to answer theoretical and practical sociological questions, and will gain a solid base of knowledge from which you can critically evaluate the quality of statistical evidence produced by social scientists. This course will emphasize the application of statistics over mathematical calculations. This is not to imply that we will be unconcerned with the mathematics underlying the procedures, however; our focus will be on developing a conceptual understanding of the intent of such calculations. Topics covered in the course include descriptive and inferential statistics, hypothesis testing, and elementary causal models. No prior knowledge of statistics is required or assumed. You will, however, need to have a good working knowledge of high school algebra. If your algebra is rusty, you should consider taking or auditing an algebra course prior to or concurrent with this course.

COURSE TEXTS

Required:

Frankfort-Nachmias, Chava, and Anna Leon-Guerrero (2006). *Social Statistics for a Diverse Society* (4th Edition). Pine Forge Press. ISBN 978-1-4129-6824-9

Hamilton, Lawrence C. (2004). *Statistics with Stata* (updated for version 10). Duxbury Publishing.¹ ISBN 0-495-55786-2

Other materials to be distributed.

Statistical software is available for use at Krieger Computer Lab.

¹ Required for graduate students *only*.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Homework Assignments	B	10 @ 30 pts ea.	300
	-	2 @ 50 pts ea.	100
Quizzes	B	4 @ 10 pts ea.	40
Midterm Exams	B	2 @ 50 pts ea.	100
Final Exam	B	1 @ 100 pts (final)	<u>100</u>
<i>Total points for course</i>			640

In addition to these 640 points, **extra credit assignments** (worth 5 points each) will be made available to all students. Extra credit points are all or nothing; you will not be penalized for poor performance on extra credit assignments. Extra credit points will be added on to the final course points at the end of the semester.

Your **final grade** in the course is first determined by dividing the total number of points earned by the total number of points attempted (assigned and extra credit). That percentage is then adjusted for the class curve (meaning that it is calculated as a proportion of the top student's score) and then is adjusted further for such things as strong improvement made over the course of the semester, outstanding participation in section, and effective use of office hours. Such adjustments, if awarded, are always made in the upward direction, never downward.

It is vital that you read the text assignment(s) **prior to the day of lecture**. Your ability to grasp one idea is largely determined by your successful grasp of ideas discussed just prior; thus, keeping up with the reading material is essential. **Always bring your course text to class.**

Violation of any student ethics codes will be not be tolerated. Please consult the following:

Cheating is wrong. Cheating hurts our community by undermining academic integrity, creating mistrust, and fostering unfair competition. The university will punish cheaters with failure on an assignment, failure in a course, permanent transcript notation, suspension, and/or expulsion. Offenses may be reported to medical, law or other professional or graduate schools when a cheater applies.

Violations can include cheating on exams, plagiarism, reuse of assignments without permission, improper use of the Internet and electronic devices, unauthorized collaboration, alteration of graded assignments, forgery and falsification, lying, facilitating academic dishonesty, and unfair competition. Ignorance of these rules is not an excuse.

In this course, you are encouraged to work in groups, but always be sure that ultimately you perform the assigned work **on your own**. That is, you may work in groups to better understand what is requested in the homework assignments and to produce statistical output when computing is required. You may not, however, turn in photocopies of computer output **nor may you ever be in the possession of completed homework assignments, quizzes, or exams from previous years.** Bottom line: Be sure that what you ultimately turn in is your own original work. Written responses to homework questions must be of your own construction. Obviously, homework items requiring numeric or one- to two- word responses are not expected to be unique from student to student. If you have questions about this policy, please ask the instructor.

On every exam, you will sign the following pledge: "I agree to complete this exam

without unauthorized assistance from any person, materials or device. [Signed and dated]"
(For more information access the Board's webpage at <http://www.jhu.edu/~ethics/> .)

The dates of lectures, assignments, and exams are approximate and may change slightly depending on class progress. The course material is cumulative, so exams and quizzes will cover topics discussed in the course to date. Textbooks cannot be used during quizzes or exams. All three **exams are open-note**, meaning that you may use your own class notes (reduced to no more than 2 double-sided pages) and any handouts given to you by the instructor or teaching assistants. **Quizzes on the other hand are closed-note**, and are administered during the first 10 minutes of that section meeting. There are no make-up exams or quizzes.

Late Work and Make-up Policy (Strictly Enforced)

All assignments are to be turned in to the instructor or your TA by 9:00 a.m. on the dates that they are due unless otherwise announced; the work is considered late if the day's lecture has already begun. Late work will not be accepted and graded except under extenuating circumstances.

If you know ahead of time that you may miss a deadline (because of a doctor's appointment or because you are habitually late to morning classes), make arrangements to turn the work in to your TA in advance. The instructor and TAs will go out of their way in most cases to avail themselves to you for assistance with course work, but they will not make concessions for those who do not seek help in a timely manner or who regularly miss class lectures and section meetings.

Incompletes are not awarded for this course. If you see that you are struggling early on, consider dropping the course and taking it again next year. Consult the instructor before making that decision.

Section Meetings

Sections will begin on Friday, September 11. If you find that you need to switch sections, consult your TA to make sure there is space available – not the Registrar -- and be sure that the final decision is recorded by the TA. *Then* proceed to switch your section number with the Registrar. You may find it worth your while to attend more than one section per week at times when you are having difficulty understanding a particular topic. Your attendance is recorded only when you attend the section in which you are officially enrolled, however, so if you attend only one section in a given week make sure it is that section.