

OVERVIEW

SOC 3112 – SOCIAL STATISTICS

Instructor: Megan Reynolds (megan.reynolds@soc.utah.edu)

*Please contact the Instructor for issues related to: course accommodations, course concerns, and any other matters that are specific to you and do not pertain to your classmates. If you're not sure who to contact, just take your best guess-no demerits are given.

Teaching Assistant: Sahlil Ahmed (sahlil.ahmed@utah.edu)

**Please contact our TA, Shalil, for issues related to: general course expectations, specific assignments, Excel, and textbook access. If there is anything she can't address, she will get you to the right person.

Course Summary

Designed for the math-minded and math-phobic alike, this course will introduce students to the fundamentals of statistics and their use in the social sciences. It is important to note that emphasis will be placed on the conceptual underpinnings of statistics. Thus, advanced algebra may be helpful, but only basic math is necessary for your success in the course. We will study a wide variety of subjects this semester related (but not necessarily limited to) a.) the importance and language of statistics; b.) tabular and graphical “descriptive statistics” summarizing groups of data; and c.) “probability distributions” linking outcomes to their likelihood of occurrence; and d.) “hypothesis testing” evaluating the existence of a significant relationship between social factors.

This course meets the General Education Quantitative Reasoning B (QB) requirement as well as the Bachelor Degree Quantitative Intensive (QI) requirement. Throughout the semester, this course will address the following Learning Outcomes: Critical Thinking, Quantitative Literacy, Foundation & Skills for Lifelong Learning

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- comprehend the fundamental rules of probability
- apply learning to calculate a variety of basic descriptive and inferential statistics synthesize knowledge of various techniques to assess whether a statistic was appropriately chosen, calculated and interpreted
- educate others about why statistical literacy is important

REQUIRED MATERIALS

The required text for this course is the interactive version of Statistics for People Who (Think They) Hate Statistics Using Excel (5th edition) by Neil J. Salkind. This will be made available through the University's Digital Inclusive Access (IA) Program. The text is available on the first day of class via Canvas. The IA fee is added to course tuition, eliminating the out-of-pocket expense. There are several points at which you can choose to opt out of the IA program, but please note that the print (or even e-book) version is more expensive (and lacks many of the features) of the interactive version via IA. To access the textbook, please use the 'Bookshelf' tab in the Canvas navigation pane. This will bring you to an external website, VitalSource, where you can click on 'Read Now'. Although there is a price listed for the Interactive text, you do not have to pay to "open" the book; the fee will be/has already been charged automatically to your student account unless you elect to opt out. If you have trouble accessing the book in Canvas, please contact the TA, who can refer you to technical assistance if necessary.

To further support your learning, you will also have (free) access to a Study Guide. Please note that there is no study guide for Salkind's 5th edition of the text using Excel (our textbook), but that the Study Guide for his 7th edition using SPSS (*not* our textbook) has the same chapter outline, (non-spss-related) learning objectives, summary/key points, key terms, true/false, multiple choice, exercises, short-answer/essay questions, and just for fun/challenge yourself sections. (Just ignore the SPSS questions, where applicable.) The table of contents for the SPSS 7th edition is structured the same as the Excel 5th edition except that there is one chapter at the beginning

of the Excel 5th edition that is not in the Study Guide (Chapter 2 Getting Started in Excel). This means the chapters in the Study Guide are one chapter off from the chapters in the Excel 5th edition. (For example, 'Creating Graphs' is Chapter 5 in the text but Chapter 4 in the Study Guide.)

In addition to the textbook, you will also need a calculator (or phone application) with a square root function.

LEARNING ASSESSMENTS

Semester Grading Scheme

Your final grade will depend on your performance on five types of assessments. Three of these (quizzes, discussions, labs) will be completed every week and the other two (exams, final assignment) on specific dates. The five assessment categories include: (1) weekly quizzes (20% of your final grade); (2) weekly labs (20% of your final grade); (3) weekly discussions (20% of your final grade); (4) (approximately) monthly exams (20% of your final grade); and (5) a final assignment (20% of your final grade [5% practice, 15% final]). The grade breakdown is as follows:

A+	97% - 100%
A	93% - 96.9%
A-	90% - 92.9%
B+	87% - 89.9%
B	83% - 86.9%
B-	80% - 82.9%
C+	77% - 79.9%
C	73% - 76.9%
C-	70% - 72.9%
D+	67% - 69.9%
D	63% - 66.9%
D-	60% - 62.9%
F	0% - 59

Quizzes

There is one quiz per week/module of the course, excepting weeks during which there is an exam. (Most weeks/modules, excepting those towards the end of the semester, correspond to one chapter in the assigned textbook.) Quizzes are:

- designed to evaluate your comprehension of the material introduced via readings and lectures
- accessible via the 'Assignments' section in a given Canvas module comprised of 25 multiple-choice questions
- set up such that the correct answers are shown after completion
- available to be taken only once
- graded on a scale of 1-25

Labs

There is one lab per week/module of the course, except during weeks for which there is an exam. Most weeks/modules, excepting those towards the end of the semester, correspond to one chapter in the assigned textbook. You will also see a section in each module titled 'Supplementary/Optional Readings'. In this section are two types of resources that will

- further support your learning: (1) Open-Access Multimedia Resources and (2) Sage Premium Videos. The former was created by a variety of sources and are available publicly on the web; the latter were created by the textbook author and are available privately via Inclusive Access. All resources reinforce chapter-specific content; some also go into greater depth on chapter-specific equations and how to solve them. Labs are:
- designed to evaluate your application of concepts introduced via readings and lectures accessible via the textbook (inclusive access or print) at the end of each chapter under the heading 'Time to Practice'.
- comprised of your choice of four open-ended questions with two mandatory Excel questions, if available,

tapping conceptual, mathematical and/or Excel-related course material

- graded by you on a scale from 0 – 4 points
- graded using a link within the Canvas module, which also provides completion and grading instructions/suggestions

Discussion Questions

There is one discussion question per week/module of the course, excepting weeks during which there is an exam. (Most weeks/modules, excepting those towards the end of the semester, correspond to one chapter in the assigned textbook.) Discussions questions are:

- designed to stimulate engaging classroom interaction (and reinforce content knowledge) accessible via the appropriate Canvas module
- comprised of one chapter-specific discussion topic graded on a scale of 0-4
- graded using the rubric available within the Canvas discussion assignment via the inline menu accessed using the 'kebab'/three dot button

Exams

There is one non-cumulative exam for each of the course's three sections, for a total of three exams (see 'Schedule' below). The Salkind Study Guide, which was negotiated into your inclusive access package at no cost to you, provides ample opportunity to review and practice the material upon which you be examined. Please familiarize yourself with this resource (also available through the Canvas Bookshelf tab. *Important Note: Excel will not be required to use on any of the exams in this course*. Exams are:

- designed to evaluate your synthesis of material introduced via readings and lectures accessible via the appropriate Canvas module
- comprised of roughly 10 multiple-choice, 10 true/false and 10 short-answer questions graded on a scale of 1-30 points
- available within the Canvas exam assignment, along with completion instructions/suggestions.

Presentation

There is one presentation for the course. Before submitting your presentation, you will be asked to (and graded on) a practice presentation. The practice presentation, worth 5% of your course grade, is designed to help you prepare for your Presentation by determining beforehand how you will go about recording and/or narrating a presentation. The final assignment is:

- designed to evaluate your ability to educate others about why statistical literacy is important
- comprised of a roughly 10-minute digital presentation including slides and commentary graded on a scale of 1-50 points (see rubric in 'Assignments' section in the 'Finals Week' Canvas module)
- to be uploaded to Canvas on or before the end of the final exam period for the course graded using rubric and instructions/suggestions available within the 'Finals Week' Canvas module

TEACHING GOALS

As a first-generation college student, I experienced doubts, anxieties, and setbacks that threatened my success. I also came late to the realization that learning can be a vehicle not only for career advancement, but for personal enrichment. With my teaching, I hope to help boost your academic confidence and your overall appreciation for learning. I try to use the knowledge, experience, and skills I have gained throughout my own educational journey (Northern Vermont University B.A., University of Massachusetts-Boston MA, and Duke University PhD) to help you connect with your strengths and engage with course materials in a way that is meaningful for you outside of the course. I place great value on student feedback as a means of determining how best to meet my teaching goals. To gather student feedback beyond that provided in the formal course evaluation, I use several tools. First, I regularly assign (and award credit for) "minute papers" in which I ask you to share with me (in addition to key insights) questions arising from the week's work. You are invited to share questions related to the course material, but also to course organization, expectations, assessments etc. (You can read more about the minute papers below.) Second, I administer (and award extra credit for) a mid-semester evaluation, in which I ask you to rate specific aspects of the course and comment on what you think works well and not-so-well in the

course. Third, I ask you at strategic points in the semester to describe how you think you are doing in the class and identify at least one thing you thing you have done well at and one thing you could improve upon. Together, these tools provide me with a thorough picture of how students experience the course and what sorts of modifications might help them to meet course objectives, but also enhance their wellbeing and their relationship to learning.

EXPECTATIONS

Instructor Expectations

As your course instructor, I am committed to the following expectations for this course:

- I will interact with the class via feedback on assignments, the Canvas Inbox, and Canvas Announcements among other methods.
- I will be available for individual consultation via email, phone, or video conference.
- I will respond to emails in a timely fashion. “Timely” in this instance means within 48 hours, not including weekends and holidays.
- Unfortunately, illnesses, death in the family, and other traumatic events are part of life. Because I understand how difficult these times are, I will gladly arrange a new due date for your assignment if you contact me within 24 hours of the event and provide documentation, as appropriate. I will consider awarding partial credit on late submissions for other reasons as long as you contact me before the due date.
- I will repair broken links and inaccessible files as soon as I am made aware of them. In the case of a significant delay in repair, I will notify the class of workarounds via announcement.
- Although my personal notes will not be made available to students, I will furnish pdf versions of the lecture videos.
- This syllabus (and the associated course calendar) is meant to serve as a guide for the course; I may modify it to accommodate the course as a whole. In the rare instances I do modify the syllabus or the calendar, I will provide reasonable notice to you via Canvas Inbox or Announcements.
- I will be sensitive to the fact that you are not just my students, but people—who take other classes and who have other roles and responsibilities unrelated to college. I will respond with this in mind if you reach out with information regarding challenges to your academic or overall wellbeing. I may also send periodic “wellness checks” that encourage you to share any issues that are adversely impacting your capacity to learn or to maintain your physical and mental health.
- I will provide sufficient information to determine how you are doing in the class. This includes timely grading of assignments, proper configuration of the Canvas gradebook, and a video describing how you can use the Canvas gradebook to ascertain your grade. I may also send communications about the status of your grade, as appropriate.
- This is an online asynchronous course, in which student interaction is necessarily somewhat circumscribed. That said, I will support meaningful peer exchange however I am able. This includes the use of rapport-building exercises (e.g., our introductory discussion question), instructional activities (e.g., our regular discussion questions), and technology (i.e., the creation of an online space where students can meet.)
- I will not ask you to meet in person with me or with peers.

Student Expectations

As my students, I hope that you can commit to the following expectations for this course:

- You will familiarize yourself with the content of this syllabus and course calendar in its entirety and consult the syllabus before bringing questions to me regarding all course expectations.
- You will begin preparing for assignments well in advance of due dates and contact me at least 72 hours in advance with questions related to upcoming assignments.
- If you wish to dispute a grade, you will do so first in writing via email, explaining why a grade adjustment is warranted. If we cannot resolve the matter satisfactorily, you may then request a meeting. Records of student participation are not open to debate.
- If you have questions, are struggling to meet course expectations for academic or personal reasons, or

would otherwise benefit from my input, you will contact me via the Canvas Inbox feature or personal email.

- If you have not heard back from me 48 hours after sending a message, you will reach out to me with a polite follow-up.
- You will update your Canvas ‘Notifications’ settings to ensure you receive timely communications about the course through both Inbox and Announcements.
- You will check your @utah.edu email on a frequent basis for class-related Inbox messages or Announcements.
- You will notify me immediately if you notice broken links or inaccessible files in the course.
- You will work to resolve any accessibility issues you have before the first week of class concludes. The ‘Technology Access Quiz’ I have placed on the Start Here page can help you to identify any hardware, software, or configuration needs you may have and any University resources available to meet them.
- You will maintain your computer and related equipment. In the event that technical problems prevent you from submitting an assignment on time, you will contact me immediately via email or the Canvas Inbox and attach a copy of your assignment (where possible). *It is not appropriate to send me an email about tech problems after an assignment due date.* You will then immediately contact the Canvas help desk to begin resolving the problem. For more detailed information about getting tech help, visit the Tech Help page of the course.
- The issues we deal with in this course are often controversial, personal, or otherwise sensitive. Consequently, you may be exposed to arguments in the video lectures, readings, and discussions that conflict with your core beliefs or that challenge long-held assumptions in which you take comfort. You are welcome to disagree with the views raised in the material or by others in the class, but you will observe the rules of good discussion and do so *respectfully*. That entails refraining from: 1.) using insensitive, angry, or abusive language (or imagery); 2.) making personal attacks; 3.) dominating the conversation; and 4) contributing off-topic comments or imagery.
- Relatedly, [you will follow the core rules of netiquette](#). You will also abstain from using ALL CAPS (except in titles/headers) or overuse of certain punctuation marks such as exclamation points and question marks.
- You will not cheat (<http://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.php>).

STUDENT SUPPORTS

1. The Americans with Disabilities Act. The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services, and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in this class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability & Access, 162 Olpin Union Building, (801) 581---5020. CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodation. All written information in this course can be made available in an alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability & Access.
2. Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender (which Includes sexual orientation and gender identity/expression) is a civil rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, color, religion, age, status as a person with a disability, veteran’s status, or genetic information. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, 135 Park Building, 801---581---8365, or the Office of the Dean of Students, 270 Union Building, 801---581---7066. For support and confidential consultation, contact the Center for Student Wellness, SSB 328, 801---581---7776. To report to the police, contact the Department of Public Safety, 801---585---2677(COPS)
3. The University of Utah values the safety of all campus community members. To report suspicious activity, call campus police at 801-585-COPS (801-585-2677). You will receive important emergency alerts and safety messages regarding campus safety via text message. For more information regarding safety and to view available training resources, including helpful videos, visit safeu.utah.edu.

4. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name as well as "Preferred first name" (if previously entered by you in the Student Profile section of your CIS account, which managed can be managed at any time). While CIS refers to this as merely a preference, I will honor you by referring to you with the name and pronoun that feels best for you in class or on assignments. Please advise me of any name or pronoun changes so I can help create a learning environment in which you, your name, and your pronoun are respected. If you need any assistance or support, please reach out to the LGBT Resource Center. https://lgbt.utah.edu/campus/faculty_resources.php.
5. Undocumented Student Support. Immigration is a complex phenomenon with broad impact—those who are directly affected by it, as well as those who are indirectly affected by their relationships with family members, friends, and loved ones. If your immigration status presents obstacles to engaging in specific activities or fulfilling specific course criteria, confidential arrangements may be requested from the Dream Center. Arrangements with the Dream Center will not jeopardize your student status, your financial aid, or any other part of your residence. The Dream Center offers a wide range of resources to support undocumented students (with and without DACA) as well as students from mixed-status families. To learn more, please contact the Dream Center at 801.213.3697 or visit dream.utah.edu.
6. Personal concerns such as stress, anxiety, relationship difficulties, depression, cross-cultural differences, etc., can interfere with a student's ability to succeed and thrive at the University of Utah. For helpful resources contact the Center for Student Wellness at www.wellness.utah.edu or 801-581-7776.
7. If you are a student veteran, the U of Utah has a Veterans Support Center located in Room 161 in the Olpin Union Building. Hours: M-F 8-5pm. Please visit their website for more information about what support they offer, a list of ongoing events and links to outside resources: <http://veteranscenter.utah.edu/>. Please also let me know if you need any additional support in this class for any reason.
8. If you are an English language learner, please be aware of several resources on campus that will support you with your language and writing development. These resources include: the Writing Center (<http://writingcenter.utah.edu/>); the Writing Program (<http://writing-program.utah.edu/>); the English Language Institute (<http://continue.utah.edu/eli/>). Please let me know if there are any additional supports you would like to discuss for this class.
9. The University of Utah has implemented reasonable health and safety protocols, considering recommendations by local, state, and national public health authorities, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. For the most up-to-date information on COVID-19 protocol, please refer to <https://coronavirus.utah.edu/>. Other resources are 1. Student Guidance: What Steps to Take for a Possible or Confirmed COVID-19 Exposure 2. Registrar's Office COVID-19 Information and FAQ's 3. Housing & Residential Education