Sociology 3112-002
Social Statistics
Spring Semester, 2010
Time: Tuesday/Thursday 9:10-10.30
Location: Beh S 102

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Office Hours: Tuesday/Thursday 12.30-1.30, or by appointment
Website: http://www.soc.utah.edu/courses/soc3112
Please also check WebCT for updates and announcements!

Course Summary

This course teaches basic statistical concepts and techniques in the context of social science research. Statistics is a set of tools and techniques researchers use to describe and draw conclusions about the world. In the course, these tools and techniques will be illustrated with examples of current social issues. In the first part of the class we study descriptive statistics including frequency distributions, and measures of central tendency and variability. In the second part of the class we will study basic inferential statistics and learn how to use sample data to draw well-reasoned conclusions about one or more populations. Finally we study ways to describe relationships between variables, including measures of association and bivariate regression. The goal is that students will learn how to construct and interpret descriptive statistics and how to make statistical inferences.

Required Course Materials

Frankfort-Nachmias, C. and A. Leon-Guerrero. 2009. *Social Statistics for a Diverse Society*, Fifth Edition. Thousand Oaks, California: Pine Forge Press. (REQUIRED)

A lab manual will be available online. You need a calculator that can do basic calculations as well as logs and exponents. Please bring your calculators to every class for in-class exercises and quizzes.

Course requirements and grading

Your final grade will be based on exams, quizzes, homework, and lab performance.

3 exams	300 points (100 each)
Quizzes	75 points
Lab performance	75 points, and
Homework assignments	50 points.
Total	500 points

For final letter grades, convert your accumulated points into a percentage and use the following breakdown:

A: 93-100%	B-: 80-82%	D+: 67-69%
A-: 90-92%	C+: 77-79%	D: 63-66%
B+: 87-89%	C: 73-76%	D-: 60-62%
B: 83-86%	C-: 70-72%	F: 0-59%

Prior approval is necessary to miss an exam and will only be given in extreme cases. Exams and quizzes are unique to each section of this course. Attendance is perhaps even more important for this course than for others. To encourage class attendance, there will be several unannounced quizzes during the semester. No makeup quiz will be given, but I will drop your lowest quiz grade. You will receive no credit for taking quizzes or exams from the section in which you are not officially enrolled. Homework for each chapter will be announced in class and will be due in one week after it is announced. No late homework will be accepted, although you may miss one homework assignment without penalty.

Following the Student Code, I adopt a zero tolerance policy for academic misconduct. "*Academic misconduct,*" according to the University of Utah student code, "*includes, but is not limited to, cheating, misrepresenting one's work, inappropriately collaborating, plagiarism, and fabrication or falsification of information...it also includes facilitating academic misconduct by intentionally helping or attempting to help another to commit an act of academic misconduct."* For detailed definitions and possible academic sanctions please see: http://www.admin.utah.edu/ppmanual/8/8-10.html

Labs

This course has a lab component. The lab is designed for you to practice statistical analysis using a computer. You will learn the mechanics of using SPSS to solve problems related to topics covered in the class. In your first class you will be required to sign up for ONE hour of lab time per week:

- Mon or Wed 10:45 am -11:35 am,
- Tues or Thurs 7:30 am - 8:50 am, or
- Thurs evenings 5:00 pm - 6:00 pm.

All labs meet in BEH S 101. Your teaching assistants will conduct lab sessions. *Please come to the lab section that you have signed up for unless you get permission from the lab instructor.*

There are 10 lab exercises to be completed throughout the semester. They are contained in the lab manual. It is especially important for you attend first lab which is an introduction to the software and data sets you will be using.

Contact the teaching assistants or me **immediately** if you are having difficulty with any aspect of this course. Do not wait until the day before an exam to ask for help! By then it may be too late!

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
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 the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All written information in this course can be made available in alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services.

Advice
Many of you may feel anxiety a course that involves numbers and equations. It would be dishonest to claim that statistics employs no math, but this course requires only the most elementary mathematics–arithmetic and very simple algebra. Do not be put off by this minimal math: You can do it!

It is a bad idea to fall behind in any course, but this particularly true for this course. Understanding the topics covered in later weeks requires a good grasp of material covered in earlier weeks. Because we have a great deal of material to cover, this course is necessarily fast paced. Attend the lectures regularly and do the homework on time. This is not the kind of course in which it will be easy to bring your grade up at the end of the semester by studying extra hard for the last exam and later quizzes. Just get off to a good start and don't fall behind.

Course outline and reading schedule
Note that this outline is tentative. Class schedule and exam dates may change.

Week 1 (January 12 & 14)
Introduction and Chapter 1: The What and Why of Statistics
Chapter 2: Organization of Information: Frequency Distributions

Week 2 (January 19 & 21)
Chapter 3: Graphic Presentation & Chapter 4: Measures of Central Tendency

Week 3 (January 26 & 28)
Chapter 5: Measures of Variability

Week 4 (February 2 & 4)
Review and **Exam 1: Descriptive Statistics**

Week 5 (February 9 & 11)
Chapter 6: The Normal Distribution

Week 6 (February 16 & 18)
Chapter 7: Sampling and Sampling Distributions