COM 408/508 Syllabus

Quantitative Research Methods in Communication
Spring 2018

Course Description

This class is an introduction to quantitative research methods and basic statistics. The majority of the course focuses on how statistics are calculated, using and understanding SPSS as a statistical software package, understanding the substantive meaning of statistical results, and being able to describe these results in writing. No previous experience in statistics is assumed or required.

Learning Objectives

1. Understand statistical procedures employed in Communication research
2. Select appropriate statistical tests to answer research questions
3. Conduct a variety of statistical procedures "by hand" and using SPSS
4. "Write-up" the results of statistical procedures you perform

Required Texts & Materials

- Privitera, G. J. (2017). *Statistics for the behavioral sciences* (3rd ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Access to APA 6th edition guidelines
- A calculator *with* a square root button and *without* text capabilities
- Access to Blackboard and email
- Access to SPSS (available on ASU Computing Commons computers and for download to personal computer)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Reading

Your reading of the assigned textbook chapters should serve as your first introduction to course material. Read each assigned chapter prior to attending class. Often the material will be presented somewhat differently in text and in lecture, or information covered in one source will not be discussed in another. Maximize your learning by exposing yourself to the text and lecture.

Attendance

Class attendance is linked directly with your success in the class. While there is no formal attendance policy, I will take attendance each day. Students who miss class have the responsibility of contacting another student to understand what we covered in class.

Students with an unexcused absence will not be allowed to make up exams or other course requirements. Excused absences include: religious holidays, university-sponsored events, or a documented extreme illness or emergency. In all three cases, for your absence to be excused, you will need to provide appropriate documentation.

Labs: 125 points

Labs provide a more formal means to solidify and apply your knowledge. There will be 5 labs. Each of these labs will ask you to analyze some data using the methods discussed in the course, and write the results of the analysis in APA format. You may be asked to turn in a printed copy of your SPSS output with each lab. This means that either a) the computer you use to run your labs needs to be connected to a printer, or b) you need to export your completed output to a word file and print it that way. Each lab should be handed in at the beginning of class on the due date indicated on the course schedule. I do not accept unstapled papers. Each lab is worth 25 points.

Exams: 200 points

Exams will evaluate your mastery of the procedures and concepts presented in readings, lectures, and class discussion. There will be 4 exams. Exams will include multiple choice, true-false, short essay, calculation questions, and interpretation of statistical results. Exams will cover both the lecture and text. Exams (including the final) will not be cumulative; however, the course content is cumulative, so understanding early concepts is important for fully capturing latter concepts. Exams will take place during class time. Each exam is worth 50 points.

Final Project: 175 points

You will be working on your final project throughout the semester. As such, small portions of your final paper will be due at various points throughout the semester.

COM 408 Students: You will work in groups for your final project. This project should be based on one or more of your group members' 308 final paper (research proposal). As a group, you will select a topic, research questions/ hypotheses, and variables. You will select appropriate validated measures, collect and analyze your data, and then write-up your results, discussion, and limitations.

COM 508 Students: You will work as the sole author of your final project. This project should be based on your research interests. You will select a topic, research questions/ hypotheses, and variables. You will select appropriate, validated measures, collect and analyze your data, and then write-up your results, discussion, and limitations.

GRADING PROCEDURES

Grade Breakdown

Examinations (200 points)		
Exam 1	50 points	Your Points: _____
Exam 2	50 points	Your Points: _____
Exam 3	50 points	Your Points: _____
Exam 4	50 points	Your Points: _____
Labs (125 points)		
Lab 1	25 points	Your Points: _____
Lab 2	25 points	Your Points: _____
Lab 3	25 points	Your Points: _____
Lab 4	25 points	Your Points: _____
Lab 5	25 points	Your Points: _____
Final Project (175 points)		
Phase 1: Topic	10 points	Your Points: _____
Phase 2: Measurement	20 points	Your Points: _____
Phase 3: Qualtrics	20 points	Your Points: _____
Phase 4: Draft	25 points	Your Points: _____
Final Paper & Presentation	100 points	Your Points: _____
Total Points Possible	**500 points**	**Your Points: _____**

Grading Scale

485-500	A+	435-449	B+	385-399	C+
465-484	A	415-434	B	350-384	C
450-464	A-	400-414	B-	300-349	D
299 and below	E				

**NOTE: STUDENTS MUST COMPLETE *ALL ASSIGNMENTS* TO RECEIVE A PASSING GRADE IN THIS COURSE. That is, no one may receive a passing grade (C or above) without completing *all* assignments.

COURSE POLICIES

Late Assignments

No late assignments will be accepted. Note that computer problems are not a valid excuse for a late assignment.

Missed Exams

Makeup exams will be available only to those who can provide extensive written documentation of an excused absence.

Grade Reviews ("24/7")

I aim to be clear in my expectations of assignments and fair in assessing the grade a submitted assignment has earned. I may make mistakes in grading, or you may disagree with me on a grade, therefore I have a 24/7 policy. Use the first 24 hours after a graded assignment is returned to review the instructions, your work, and my feedback. After the initial 24 hours, you may come see me or email asking me for clarification on why you earned the grade you did. I will do my best to reply promptly. You have seven days to make requests; after seven days, I will assume all scores are accurate and the grade earned is understood.

Academic Integrity

The mission of a university can only be accomplished in an environment where academic integrity is valued. The Hugh Downs School of Human Communication and the College of Liberal arts and Sciences are strong proponents of academic integrity. Thus, I expect that all of your work will be original. Therefore, cheating on exams, quizzes or other assignments will not be tolerated. Similarly, plagiarizing other people's ideas, thoughts or works will not be tolerated. This includes but is not limited to: Turning in all or part of your own or someone else's work previously turned in for another course, purchasing all or part of another's work (this includes purchasing papers online), ***lacking citations, and/or improper citations (e.g., direct quotes that are cited as paraphrases)***, cheating on exams or quizzes, or using another's words or ideas without properly acknowledging the original source of the information. **You may not re-use papers from other courses, including COM 207**. Academic dishonesty will be dealt with on a case by case basis and will result in one of the following: failing the assignment, failing the class, receiving an XE in the course (which goes on your transcript as failure due to cheating), or being removed from the program.

ASU defines "plagiarism [as] using another's words, ideas, materials or work without properly acknowledging and documenting the source. Students are responsible for knowing the rules governing the use of another's work or materials and for acknowledging and documenting the source appropriately."

You can find this definition at: http://provost.asu.edu/academicintegrity. "I didn't know" or "I didn't mean to" will not be tolerated as excuses for engaging in any form of academic dishonesty.

If you have any questions about what may or may not constitute academic dishonesty, please ask BEFORE turning in your final paper (to avoid sanctions).

Special Circumstances

If you have any learning or physical challenges that could affect your performance in this class, it is your responsibility to provide the necessary paperwork by the end of the first week of class. I am happy to work with students who utilize DRC (Disability Resource Center). For more information, check out: http://www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/ed/drc/

Right to Privacy

Right to Privacy (FERPA): The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ensures that your student records (for any students over 18 years of age) are kept confidential. I will not release your grades to anyone other than you or school officials who are given permission to view your progress. Anyone other than you (or an approved school official) may not request any information (beyond simple directory information) about you, your progress, or your status as a student in my class – this includes parents, partners, and other students. For more information, see: http://students.asu.edu/policies/ferpa.

Spring 2018 Daily Course Schedule

The course schedule is subject to change.

Date	Material Covered	Have Read / Assignments Due
T 1/9	Introductions	
Th 1/11	Syllabus & Mindset	
T 1/16	COM 308 Review	Chapter 1
Th 1/18	Introduce Final Project Summarizing Data: Univariate Frequency Distributions	 Chapter 2
T 1/23	Summarizing Data: Central Tendency & Variability	Chapter 3 & Chapter 4
Th 1/25	SPSS Day: Univariate Frequencies, Central Tendency, Variability Writing up your Descriptive Statistics	*Due: Phase 1 of Final Project*
T 1/30	Exam 1 Review	*Due: Lab 1*
Th 2/1	**Exam 1**	
T 2/6	Reliability & Validity Composite Measures	
Th 2/8	SPSS Day: Reliability and Validity/Composite Measures Reporting & Writing Reliabilities	*Due: Phase 2 of Final Project (at the start of class, bring a printed copy).*
T 2/13	Normal Distribution and z-scores	Chapter 6
Th 2/15	Hypothesis Testing SPSS Day: Normal Distribution, z-scores	Chapter 8
T 2/20	No Class due to Regional Conference	

Th 2/22	Exam 2 Review	
T 2/27	**Exam 2**	
Th 3/1	Introducing Qualtrics Independent Samples t-test	Chapter 9
T 3/6	Spring Break: No Class	
Th 3/8	Spring Break: No Class	
T 3/13	SPSS Day: Independent Samples t-test; Preparing your Data in SPSS How to write up results for a t-test	*Due: Phase 3 of Final Project*
Th 3/15	One-way ANOVA	Chapter 12 *Due: Lab 2 & Lab 3*
T 3/20	SPSS Day: ANOVA	
Th 3/22	Exam 3 Review	*Due: Lab 4*
T 3/27	**Exam 3**	
Th 3/29	Test of Association: Correlation & Regression	Chapter 15
T 4/3	SPSS Day: Correlation and Linear Regression How to write up results for a correlation and Linear Regression	
Th 4/5	Chi-square Test of Independence	Chapter 17 *Due: Lab 5*
T 4/10	SPSS Day: Chi-Square How to write up a Chi-Square test	
Th 4/12	Exam 4 Review	
T 4/17	**Exam 4**	

Th 4/19	Workshop Day	*Due: Phase 4 of Final Project*
T 4/24	Managing your Data	
Th 4/26	Managing your Data	
Sunday 4/29 by 11:59pm	Submit one paper per group to Blackboard.	*Due: Final Group Research Paper*
Th 5/3	Thursday, May 3 12:10-2:00pm *Attendance is required. Absence on finals day will result in an automatic 20% deduction from your total grade.*	*Final Presentations of Project*