

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Social Work Statistics

Course Number:	SW 318	Instructor:	Max Kassler, Ph.D.
Unique Number:	64629	E-mail:	maxkassler@gmail.com
Semester:	Spring 2008	Contact #:	512.809.3406
Meeting Time:	T / TH, 3:30-5:00	Office Location:	SSW 3.104-A
Meeting Place:	SSW 1.214 (IT Classroom)	Office Hours:	Tuesday 3:00-3:30, or by appt

I. Standardized Course Description

This course is one of the two courses in research for undergraduate social work majors. Completion of the liberal arts math requirement is a prerequisite for this course. This course provides a basic introduction to the conceptual and quantitative tools used to describe and interpret data in the conduct of social work practice and research. Students will learn how to select, calculate, and interpret appropriate statistics applicable to common data analysis situations related to direct practice, administration and planning, and policy. The course provides students with the opportunity to acquire personal computer skills in Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS), version 13.0 to calculate statistics and present results. Students are required to complete SW318 prior to entering the major. Students majoring in social work must earn a grade of C or better in this course.

II. Standardized Course Objectives

The goal of the course is to help students develop critical eyes for adopting research. It is important to develop keen eyes to statistical information provided and to understand the fundamental reasoning of the use of particular statistical methods in obtaining the result. Upon completion of this course the students should be able to:

1. Explain the logic of the research process and its relationship to social work knowledge and practice;
2. Explain, calculate, and interpret descriptive statistics including: basic terminology, scales, notations, frequency distributions, measures of central tendency, measures of dispersion, and the normal distribution;
3. Read and analyze basic charts and graphs, contingency tables, and SPSS output results;
4. Explain, calculate, and interpret inferential statistics including probability and hypothesis tests;
5. Identify and apply the correct statistical technique to the research question;
6. Understand that statistics are value neutral, but can be used to support discriminatory and prejudicial value positions contrary to the values of social work, especially against special populations (e.g., women, people of color, people with disabilities, gays and lesbians);
7. Use computer technology to compute descriptive and inferential statistics; and
8. State several examples of how statistics are used as a tool in the "real world" by social service agencies to analyze client outcomes.

III. Methods of Instruction

The primary methods of instruction are interactive lectures, class discussion, written homework, and an SPSS exercise. Assigned reading and written homework assignments are to be completed before each class.

IV. Required Course Materials

1. Required Text

De Veaux, R., Velleman, P., Bock, D. (2006). *Intro Stats*. Boston, MA: Pearson / Addison Wesley.

2. Supplementary Chapter Resources

The book comes with a CD that contains ActivStats. It can be used as additional material to that covered in the book.

3. Computer Requirements

We will use SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) to do a statistical calculations project in this course. There are school computers with SPSS available to students — all of the computers in the IT classroom, computer labs located at the Social Work LRC (Learning Resources Center), and computers at the Flawn Academic Center. You will need to have your UT EID and password ready. If you do not have an accessible PC at hand, it is best to check the availability and accessibility in advance. In order to inquire about their business hours and available services, go to <http://www.utexas.edu/computer/fac/>. Dr. Robert Canon (office 1.212AA located at the LRC entrance) is also available for installing the SPSS software or with setting up UT EID accounts to obtain authorization to use the LRC computer lab.

4. Blackboard Use

Class materials (e.g., syllabus, PowerPoint lecture notes, data sets as needed) will be posted on Blackboard. Grades and other announcements will also be posted on blackboard.

V. Student Evaluation

1. Attendance and Class Participation, 0%

Class attendance is highly recommended. Even though attendance and participation will not directly affect your grade, your participation will make a difference. It is expected that students will attend class where many topics are explained in better detail than the text offers, and it is expected that students will participate in class by asking questions, answering questions posed by the lecturer, and participating in group projects. Furthermore, it is expected that students will only miss class for medical emergencies, doctor's appointments, and university sanctioned activities that may occur during the semester.

2. Homework Assignments, 30% (6 at 5% apiece)

There will be six homework assignments to be completed across the semester. All homework assignments will be done by hand and a calculator (i.e., there will not be an SPSS component).

Homework must be handed in at the beginning of the class period in which it is due. Late homework *will not be accepted* without a prior agreement.

After homework has been graded and returned, you may submit a corrected homework assignment for half of the points that were deducted from the original submission. For example, a homework that initially scored an 84% could be corrected and resubmitted for a score of 92% (assuming all of the corrections were correct).

3. SPSS Assignment, 10%

There will be one SPSS assignment given this semester. It will be near the end of the semester and will encompass much of the material that has been covered.

4. Exams, 60% (3 at 20% apiece; optional final exam)

There will be three exams given during the course of the semester.

A cumulative final exam will be given at the end of the semester. This exam is optional. If you choose to take it, and score better on it than one of your previous exams, it will replace your lowest regular semester exam grade. Your grade on the final exam will not lower your current grade.

5. Grading

Letter grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

A	90.00%	—	100%
B	80.00%	—	89.99%
C	70.00%	—	79.99%
D	60.00%	—	69.99%
F	0%	—	59.99%

Point totals will not be rounded up to a higher grade. Since students have the opportunity to correct homework assignments to improve their grade, and a chance to replace their lowest test grade with the optional final, there is ample opportunity to assure that they have sufficient extra points to secure a desired grade

VI. Class Policies

1. Attendance and Participation

Your attendance, attention, and participation are expected for all class sessions for the entire class period. Students are expected to demonstrate respect for others, be willing to share ideas and opinions, and participate in class exercises. Please turn off cell phone ringers and refrain from text messaging and other non-class activities during the class period. If a student needs to miss class, notification is required in advance.

2. Scholastic Dishonesty

Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, the student may refer to the Web Site of the Student Judicial Services, Office of the Dean of Students (<http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/academicintegrity.html>).

3. Accommodations for Students with Learning Challenges

Any student with a documented disability (physical or cognitive) who need academic accommodations are required to discuss and resolve special needs with the instructor within the first two weeks of semester. The student is also highly encouraged to contact the Services for Students with Disabilities in the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259 (voice) or 471-4641 (TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing) as soon as possible to request an official letter outlining authorized accommodations.

4. Safety

Students should notify the instructor regarding any safety concerns.

VII. Course Schedule

Subject to change ...

#	DATE	DAY	CHAPTER	TOPIC	NOTES
1	01/15	Tuesday	—	Class Introduction; Syllabus Review	
2	01/17	Thursday	1, 2	What and Why of Stats; Math Review	
3	01/22	Tuesday	3, 4	Organization of Information (tables)	Distribute HW#1
4	01/24	Thursday	3, 4	Organization of Information (graphs)	
5	01/29	Tuesday	5	Describing Distributions Numerically	HW#1 Due
6	01/31	Thursday	5	Describing Distributions Numerically	Distribute HW#2
7	02/05	Tuesday	6	Standard Deviation, Z-scores	HW#1C Due
8	02/07	Thursday	6	Standard Deviation, Z-scores	
9	02/12	Tuesday	—	Jeopardy I	HW#2 Due
10	02/14	THU	—	EXAM I	
11	02/19	Tuesday	—	Review Exam I	HW#2C Due
12	02/21	Thursday	14-17	Probability	Distribute HW#3
13	02/26	Tuesday	18	Sampling Distributions	
14	02/28	Thursday	19	Confidence Intervals	
15	03/04	Tuesday	20, 21	Hypothesis Testing	HW#3 Due
16	03/06	Thursday	23, 24	T-tests	Distribute HW#4
-	03/11	Tuesday	—	Spring Break	
-	03/13	Thursday	—	Spring Break	
17	03/18	Tuesday	24, 25	T-tests	HW#3C Due
18	03/20	Thursday	—	Jeopardy II	HW#4 Due
19	03/25	TUE	—	EXAM II	
20	03/27	Thursday	—	Review Exam II	HW#4C Due
21	04/01	Tuesday	7, 8, 9	Correlation / Regression	Distribute SPSS Project

22	04/03	Thursday	7, 8, 9	Correlation / Regression	Distribute HW#5
23	04/08	Tuesday	7, 8, 9	Correlation / Regression	
24	04/10	Thursday	CD	ANOVA	
25	04/15	Tuesday	—	SPSS REVIEW DAY	
26	04/17	Thursday	26	Cross tabs / CHI-square	
27	04/22	Tuesday	—	Jeopardy III	SPSS Assignment Due
28	04/24	THU	—	EXAM III	
29	04/29	Tuesday	—	Review Exam III	
30	05/01	Thursday	—	Final Exam Review	
31	TBD	TBD	—	Final Exam	