MMC 6936: Mass Communication Statistics

Thursdays 9:35am-12:35pm, Weimer 3024

PROFESSOR
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OFFICE HOURS
3067 Weimer Hall
Wed 8:30am-9:30am; Thur 8:30am-9:30am
Also available by appointment

REQUIRED READINGS

No required textbook; All readings will be posted to Canvas

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Mass communication statistics (MMC 6936) provides an introduction to the fundamentals of descriptive and inferential statistics commonly used in the field of communication science. Topics to be covered include central tendency/dispersion, index reliability, factor analysis, chi-square, t-test, ANOVA, regression, and path analysis, among others. Ethical issues germane to the replicability and reproducibility of empirical findings will also be discussed.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Course objectives include (1) the ability to conduct statistical analyses, (2) the ability to interpret statistical output, and (3) familiarity with key terminology from the social sciences.

GRADING

Attendance/Participation: 20%

Exam 1: 20%

Exam 2: 20%

Exam 3: 20%

Data Plan: 20%

Grading scale: A, 100-93; A-, 92-90; B+, 89-87; B, 86-84; B-, 83-80; C+, 79-77; C, 76-74; C-, 73-70; D+, 69-67; D, 66-64; D-, 63-60; E, 59 and below

ASSIGNMENTS

Attendance/Participation (20%): Attendance is mandatory. All students are expected to come to class on a weekly basis, completing all assigned materials in advance. Your grade for attendance/participation will be determined based on the frequency and quality of your contributions to class discussion.

Exams (60%): Three exams will be conducted, each worth 20% of your final grade. Exams will be comprised of multiple choice and short answer questions, some of which will require the analysis and interpretation of data using the IBM SPSS statistical package. Exams will not be cumulative, but do assume incremental knowledge of statistical concepts introduced throughout the course.

Data Plan (20%): The data plan will require students to develop a set of hypotheses for a prospective empirical study. For each hypothesis, identify the level of measurement for all relevant variables. Based on the level of measurement, identify the appropriate statistical tests to be used to answer each of your planned hypotheses. Finally, identify the sample size necessary for the proposed study based on a consideration of the anticipated effect size and desired statistical power. The final data report should produce the methods section of the proposed study, including sections devoted to sampling, measurement, procedure, and the anticipated data analysis approach.

CLASSROOM CONDUCT

It is expected that all students will arrive to class on time and be respectful of fellow classmates during lecture and student presentations. Please turn all cell phones to silent. While laptops are allowed, it is expected that they will only be used for class-related work such as note-taking or group assignments. In the event that you need to answer an emergency phone call, please excuse yourself from class and answer the call in the hallway. The professor reserves the right to revoke the use of personal devices during class if the above policies are not followed.

LATE WORK POLICY

One letter grade (-10 points) will be deducted per day for work submitted past the assignment's deadline. If an exam is missed, official documentation must be provided for the absence, with a makeup test scheduled within one week of the original examination. If students anticipate that they will be unable to meet a deadline due to university documented issues (e.g., health condition, death in family), please contact me as soon as possible to arrange an extension. In

general, I am quite willing to work with students when issues arise that prevent you from submitting work on time.

HONOR CODE POLICY

This class strictly adheres to the UF honor code. Any prohibited behavior such as plagiarism, data fabrication, or cheating will result in a failing grade for the assignment in question and referral to the honor court, who may administer additional penalties such as a failing grade for the course or dismissal from the college. More information about the university honor code is available online at the following link: https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/

STUDENTS REQUIRING ACCOMODATIONS

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, **www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)** by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

COUNSELING AND WELLNESS

Contact information for the Counseling and Wellness Center: http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

COURSE EVALUATION

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at https://evaluations.ufl.edu. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/.

Schedule

August 24th: Introduction to Mass Communication Statistics

August 31st: Basics of Mass Communication Statistics; Introduction to SPSS

September 7th: Reliability/Validity; Factor Analysis; Index Formation

September 14th: Visualizing Data; Introduction to Inferential Statistics; Chi-Square

September 21st: Test #1

September 28th: *t*-test, independent sample vs. paired sample

October 5th: ANOVA & ANCOVA, one-way vs. factorial

October 12th: MANOVA; Repeated measures

October 19th: Test #2

October 26th: Basics of Correlation and Regression

November 2nd: Multivariate, Logistic, and Hierarchical Regression

November 9th: Introduction to Path Analysis

November 16th: Test #3

November 23rd: University Holiday

November 30th: Data Report Presentations

December 7th: Reading Day

December 14th: Data Plan Due