

MMC 6455: Mass Communication Statistics

Thursdays 11:45am-2:45pm, Weimer 2056

PROFESSOR

Frank Waddell, Ph.D.
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OFFICE HOURS

3067 Weimer Hall
Tue, 830am-930am; Thu, 10:00am-11:30am

REQUIRED RESOURCES/READINGS

Access to latest version of IBM SPSS statistical package

All readings will be posted to Canvas or available via UF library access

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Mass communication statistics (MMC 6455) 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.

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

Exam 1: 25%

Exam 2: 25%

Exam 3: 25%

Exam 4: 25%

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

Exams: Four exams will be conducted, each worth 25% of your final grade. Exams will be take-home and open-note. Each exam will be short answer and require analysis of data using the IBM SPSS statistical package. No collaboration with others is allowed. Exams will not be cumulative, but do assume incremental knowledge of statistical concepts introduced throughout the course. Optional practice problems will be posted weekly to assist with exam preparation; problems can be submitted via email for feedback. Optional weekly workshops will also be conducted for practice problem/exam consultations.

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

January 10th: Class Introduction; Empirical Methods Primer

January 17th: Basics of Descriptive Statistics; Introduction to SPSS

January 24th: Reliability/Validity; Index Formation

January 31st: Exam #1

February 7th: Basics of Inferential Statistics; *t*-test

February 14th: ANOVA, Part One

February 21st: ANOVA, Part Two

February 28st: Exam #2

March 7th: Spring Break; No Class

March 14th: Regression, Part One

March 21st: Regression, Part Two

March 28th: Exam #3

April 4th: Basics of Mediation Analysis

April 11th: Chi-square; Factor Analysis

April 18th: Exam #4

April 25th: Reading Day; No Class

May 2nd: Grades Posted