



Syllabus
SOC 576 Data Analysis in Social Research
Fall 2013
Meets M 7:20pm-10:00pm
Location: SS 309

Professor: Dr. Filip Wiecko

Office: SS 204

Email: filip.wiecko@tamuc.edu

Phone: (903) 468-5493

Office Hours: 10am-11am MW and noon-4 pm MW and also by appointment

COURSE INFORMATION

Required Textbook

**Data Analysis with SPSS: A First Course in Applied Statistics, 4/E Sweet and Grace
Martin, Allyn and Bacon**

Course Overview

This is a course on how to do theoretically informed quantitative social research. The emphasis will be on data analysis, and interpreting and writing up the analytic results. By the end of the course, you should be fairly adept at making sociological sense out of a body of quantitative data. I will concentrate on analytic techniques based on regression analysis. At the minimum, I will cover the following techniques: regression analysis in its various forms, including dummy variable regression analysis; factor analysis (for scale construction); logistic regression. This will give you a basic preparation for more advanced courses and practical application in the job field.

Student Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this course, student will have knowledge and understanding of course objectives.

1. The student will demonstrate an understanding of applied quantitative methods.
2. The student will be able to choose the correct technique for a given statistical task.
3. The student will demonstrate fluency in SPSS or other statistical package.

Course Outline by Topic and Chapter

Chapter 1 • Key Concepts in Social Science Research

Chapter 2 • Getting Started: Accessing, Examining, and Saving

Chapter 3 • Univariate Analysis: Descriptive Statistics

Chapter 4 • Constructing Variables

Chapter 5 • Assessing Association through Bivariate Analysis

Chapter 6 • Comparing Group Means through Bivariate Analysis

Chapter 7 • Modeling Relationships of Multiple Variables with Linear Regression

Chapter 8 • Logistic Regression

Chapter 9 • Writing a Research Report

Chapter 10 • Research Projects

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Expectations

Your grade will be based on **three exams, each one worth 100 points**. You are encouraged to maintain a record of your grades throughout the semester. If you turn in an assignment and do not receive it back or have a dispute about the grading, I need to know immediately. I will not entertain any disputes after one week from the time the assignment has been returned to you.

Assignments

Exams : You will have 3 exams during the course (each exam is worth 100 points). The exams, in general, will not be cumulative, however some of the material presented later in the course builds on topics previously discussed. Exams are to be taken on the date listed on the syllabus. Exams are in essay format.

Reflection Papers: There are 4 reflection papers due throughout the semester and I will announce the topic and related material during the semester.

Overall, your final grade (based on a total of 500 points) will be calculated as follows:

Exam 1 100 pts

Exam 2 100 pts

Exam 3 100 pts

Reflection Papers (4x50 pts total 200pts)

Total 500 pts

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

- Internet access/connection – high speed recommended (not dial-up)
- Word Processor (i.e. MS Word or Word Perfect)

Additionally, the following hardware and software are necessary to use eCollege:

Our campus is optimized to work in a Microsoft Windows environment. This means our courses work best if you are using a Windows operating system (XP or newer) and a recent version of Microsoft Internet Explorer (6.0, 7.0, or 8.0).

Your courses will also work with Macintosh OS X along with a recent version of Safari 2.0 or better. Along with Internet Explorer and Safari, eCollege also supports the Firefox browser (3.0) on both Windows and Mac operating systems.

It is strongly recommended that you perform a “Browser Test” prior to the start of your course. To launch a browser test, login in to eCollege, click on the ‘myCourses’ tab, and then select the “Browser Test” link under Support Services.

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

eCollege Access and Log in Information:

This course will be facilitated using eCollege, the Learning Management System used by Texas A&M University-Commerce. To get started with the course, go to:

<https://leo.tamuc.edu/login.aspx>.

You will need your CWID and password to log in to the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact Technology Services at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Interaction with Instructor Statement:

In this course we will use eCollege to facilitate communication between you and myself. I will do my best to respond to emails within one business day and I will grade your assignments within two weeks of the due date. My office hours are listed at the top of the syllabus and I will make all reasonable efforts to be available to you. Simply put, my door is always open but, please make an appointment or show up during the scheduled office hours.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Make-up Policy

Any make-up opportunities are allowed *only at the discretion of the instructor* and immediate notification from the student is imperative. Obviously, missed attendance cannot be made up at a later date.

Note: University policy does allow excused absences in certain situations such as: school sponsored events, jury duty, and military service (consult the university catalog for all rules and procedures). All of these excuses require proper documentation. Family emergencies, illnesses, births, deaths, incarceration or other events and calamities are **NOT** excused absences and decisions regarding such absences are left to my discretion.

Academic Integrity and Honesty

I take plagiarism and other forms of cheating very seriously. *All the work you do in this course is to be your own.* I encourage you to study with friends, but be sure that everything you turn in is your own, original work. Regarding references, anytime you use someone else's work and do not accompany it with a proper citation to the author, you have committed plagiarism regardless of whether or not you intended to do so. It is also inappropriate to use your own work for multiple classes and any such actions will be treated just like plagiarism. Do not copy anything off the internet, out of books/articles, from friends, or from any other source or person. This includes direct cutting-and-pasting, summarizing or quoting without citing, and changing the original wording just enough so that you think you can pass it off as your own. **If I find that you have engaged in plagiarism, you will receive an F in the entire course and I reserve the right to take further disciplinary action(s) at the university level. Do Not Do It!**

Students with Disabilities:

I am committed to assisting students with documented disabilities to succeed in this course. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Gee Library

Room 132

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

StudentDisabilityServices@tamc.edu

Statement on Student Behavior

As stated in the student handbook: "All students enrolled at the university shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment." (See Student Guide Handbook, Policies and Procedures, Conduct, for more information)

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Schedule:

This schedule is **tentative** and I reserve the right to modify it, with notice, as needed during the semester. We will cover the material in the order it appears in your text. My goal is to cover one chapter per week but I am also aware that some concepts are more difficult than others. For this reason I am keeping this schedule flexible to accommodate our needs as they arise. All alterations to the schedule will be announced in class and it is your responsibility to be aware of these changes. Important dates are listed below:

August 26, 2013	First day of class—Syllabus and course introduction
September 16, 2013	First Exam
October 28, 2013	Second Exam
December 9-13 (Final Week time period for finals).	Third Exam (during the university scheduled