

**SYA 4400, sections 02, 03
Social Statistics**

Fall 2008

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COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

Although most people believe they know nothing about statistics, we all encounter and interpret statistics in our daily lives: in classes, in the news, in sports, and even in the weather. Statistics are simply a way of organizing, summarizing, and communicating numerical information. The more you know about how the statistics you encounter each day are generated and what they mean, the better you will understand the world around you.

The goal of this class is to enable you to produce and interpret basic social statistics — the tools that sociologists and other social scientists use to describe and explain the social world. When you have completed this class, you will:

- understand the value of statistics in everyday life and the role of statistics as an important tool in social science research;
- be able to calculate and interpret a variety of basic social statistics, including descriptive measures, measures of association, and inferential statistics;
- be able to apply SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) to large-scale data sets to produce statistical reports.

Mastering these objectives will enhance your understanding of the material you're encountering in other Sociology courses and provide you with the analytical skills employers and graduate school admissions committees expect of social science graduates.

COURSE PREREQUISITES

There are no formal prerequisites for this course. Students enrolling for this class should be aware of the following:

- You will use basic mathematical operations to calculate statistics and ***knowledge of the following is assumed: multiplication, division, addition, subtraction, squares and square roots, and the order of operations.***
- Success in this course is dependent on the willingness to ***work through recommended problem sets*** and ***seek help*** as necessary from Professor Brewster and the Graduate Assistant.

COURSE MATERIALS

text

The text, available at Bill's and the FSU Bookstore, is:

Chava Frankfort-Nachmias and Anna Leon-Guerrero. *Social Statistics for a Diverse Society*, 4th edition. Pine Forge Press, 2006.

other stuff

- calculator
- notebook, preferably a three-ringed binder so that you can insert copies of the PowerPoint slides with the notes you take in class

computer access

This course is supplemented by a course web site powered by BlackBoard. The site includes contact information for Professor Brewster and the Graduate Assistant, links to useful web sites, lecture notes, practice exercises, and sample exam questions. A syllabus quiz will be administered through the site during the first week of the semester.

COURSE POLICIES AND REQUIREMENTS

class meetings

Learning statistics requires a lot of hands-on experience. Therefore, most class sessions will include a lecture *and* in-class exercises, done either singly or in small groups. ***Please bring your calculator to every class meeting.***

attendance

Course attendance is ***required*** and will be registered daily by sign-in sheet. The only absences that will be "excused" are those due to: hospitalization, court appearance, jury duty, traffic accident, university-sanctioned travel. Work and doctor's appointments are not excused absences.

missed exams

All students are expected to take exams at the scheduled time. Only students who provide documentation of a hospitalization, court appearance, jury duty, traffic accident or other emergency will be allowed to schedule a make-up exam. Missing a scheduled make-up exam will result in a grade of zero for that exam.

grade calculation

Three tests:	Each test is worth 30% of the course grade
One quiz:	Counts toward 5% of the course grade
Attendance:	Counts toward 5% of the course grade

grade scale

Course grades are calculated on a 100 point scale. This translates to the letter scale used by FSU as follows:

93 - 100 = A 90 - 92 = A- 87 - 89 = B+ 83 - 86 = B 80 - 82 = B- 77 - 79 = C+
73 - 76 = C 70 - 72 = C- 67 - 69 = D+ 63 - 66 = D 60 - 62 = D- 59 or below = F

classroom behavior

All students enrolled in this course are entitled to have class periods that are free from distraction and all students share with Dr. Brewster the responsibility for creating an environment that is conducive to learning. Some guidelines:

- All electronic devices must be turned off. This includes cell phones, mp3 players, PDAs, and personal laptops.
- Classroom computers should be on *only* at the professor's request.
- Don't engage in personal conversations.
- Be on time for class and stay for the duration. If you have another commitment (work, child care issues) that would cause regular tardiness or early exits, **do not register for this class**. If you must enter late or leave early, be as unobtrusive as possible.

Students who repeatedly engage in actions that distract others in the classroom will be required to withdraw from the course.

getting help

It is **your** responsibility to seek help from Professor Brewster in a timely fashion if you're having trouble mastering course material. ***How will you know if you're having trouble?*** If you cannot obtain the correct answers on the practice exercises without looking at the solutions, you're having trouble! ***Do not neglect the practice exercises; they are the only reliable gauge of your grasp of course material.***

FSU ACADEMIC HONOR POLICY

ALL students enrolled in this course are expected to abide by the Academic Honor Policy. Two aspects of the Honor Policy are particularly relevant to this course:

- (1) **Unauthorized collaboration.** Collaboration is when you copy or share test answers.
- (2) **No unauthorized materials may be used during exams.** "Unauthorized" means *anything* that was not given to you by the professor or graduate assistant at the exam's start.

Academic dishonesty **will result in a failing course grade** and **all** students involved will be reported to the Dean of Students. A full explanation of the Honor Code is available on-line at: <http://www.fsu.edu/~dof/honorpolicy.htm>

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

*During the **first two weeks of class***, students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should (1) register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center; and (2) present to Professor Brewster documentation from the Center indicating the need for and type of accommodation.

For information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact the Student Disability Resource Center at the Dean of Students Office. They're located in the Student Services Building. Phone them at: (850) 644-9566 (voice) or (850) 644-8504 (TDD), email them at SDRC@admin.fsu.edu or visit their web site at <http://www.fsu.edu/~staffair/dean/StudentDisability>

TEST DATES

Test 1: 9-30-08

Test 2: 10-28-08

Test 3:

- Section 02: 12-10-08, 7:30 to 9:30 AM
- Section 03: 12-12-08, 3:00 to 5:00 PM

SYLLABUS CHANGE POLICY

This syllabus is a guide for the course and is ***subject to change with advance notice.***

Class Calendar

Meeting	Date	Topic	Reading
1	8-26	Introduction to class	
Unit 1: Organizing and describing data			Chapters 1-5
2	8-28	The research process	Ch. 1 Syllabus quiz opens
3	9-2	Levels of measurement	
4	9-4	Frequency distributions	Ch. 2
5	9-9	Frequency distributions, continued	Syllabus quiz closes
6	9-11	Graphic presentation of data	Ch. 3
7	9-16	Measures of central tendency	Ch. 4
8	9-18	Measures of central tendency, continued	
9	9-23	Measures of variability	Ch. 5
10	9-25	Measures of variability, continued	
11	9-30	TEST 1	Unit 1
Unit 2: Relationships between two variables			Chapters 6-8
12	10-2	Correlation and bivariate regression	Ch. 8
13	10-7	Correlation and bivariate regression, continued	
14	10-9	Correlation and bivariate regression, continued	
15	10-14	Cross-tabulating variables	Ch. 6
16	10-16	Cross-tabulation, continued	
17	10-21	Measures of association for nominal and ordinal variables	Ch. 7
18	10-23	Measures of association, continued	
19	10-28	TEST 2	
Unit 3: Probability and statistical significance			Chapters 9-12
20	10-30	The normal distribution	Ch. 9
21	11-4	Normal distribution, continued	
22	11-6	Sampling and sampling distributions	Ch. 10
23	11-11	Veteran's Day: no class	
	11-13	Sampling and sampling distributions, continued	
24	11-18	Point and interval estimation	Ch. 11
25	11-20	Point and interval estimation, continued	
26	11-25	Evaluating statistical significance	Ch. 12
	11-27	Thanksgiving: no class	
27	12-2	Evaluating statistical significance, continued	
28	12-4	Review for final	
	Finals week	Section 02: 12-10: 7:30-9:30 PM Section 03: 12-12: 3:00-5:00 PM	