

Sociology 311
Introduction to Social Statistics
Fall 2008

Instructor: J.S. Frideres
Office: ET 1414
Phone: 220-2554
Office hours: 9:15-11:00 T & Thurs. or by appointment

Class: Lecture 01 T Th :0800-0915
Class Room: SB 144
Lab 01 ST 128 T 1530-1820
Lab 02 ED 284 T 1530-1820

Teaching Assistants

Alyssa Jovanovic Office _____ Phone _____ e-mail: alyssa@cybersolid.com
Jill De Grood Office _____ Phone _____ e-mail: gjde@ucalgary.ca

Course Goals/Objectives

“You haven’t told me yet.” Said Lady Nuttal. “What it is that your fiancé does for a living.” “He’s a statistician,” replied Lamia, with an annoying sense of being on the defensive. Lady Nuttall was obviously taken aback. It had not occurred to her that statisticians entered into normal social relationships. The species, she would have surmised, was perpetuated in some collateral manner, like mules.

“But Aunt Sara, it’s a very interesting profession,” said Lamia warmly. “I don’t doubt it,” said her aunt, who obviously doubted it very much. “To express anything important in mere figures is so plainly impossible that there must be endless scope for well-paid advice on how to do it. But don’t you think that life with a statistician would be rather, shall we say, humdrum.”

Lamia was silent. She felt reluctant to discuss the surprising depth of emotional possibility which she had discovered below Edward’s numerical veneer. “It’s not the figures themselves,” she said finally, “it’s what you do with them that matters.” (M. Kendall & A. Stuart, The Advance Theory of Statistic,— K.A.C. Manderville, The Undoing of Lamia Gundlneck).

Sociology is a research-based discipline and statistics are part of its everyday language. To join the conversation, you must be literate in the vocabulary of research, data analysis, and scientific thinking. As such, this course is a “tools” course for sociology students. It will help you understand the research produced in your discipline as well as research results presented in less scholarly outlets, e.g., newspapers, magazines.

Statistics will allow you to achieve statistical literacy and move you closer to being a critical thinker and one who can be analytical in assessing the results or claims of others. I can’t seriously argue that “statistics is fun” but you will find that it opens doors that might have remained shut if you did not have the statistical skills you will gain in this class. I think you will

find the investment of time and energy required to master the concepts and applications will add value to your analytical skills. Moreover, I believe you will find the class informative, exciting, and useful as you continue your academic career. And, as past students have noted, much of what you learn will be applicable to the job you eventually take.

The field of statistics is concerned with methods of organizing, summarizing and interpreting data. Data means information of any kind. Thus, statistics really amounts to a collection of techniques for dealing with sets of numbers; organizing them, summarizing them, figuring out what they mean. The goal of this course is to produce a statistically literate person who understands and appreciates the role of statistics in the everyday world.

At the end of this course, you should be able to read and appreciate the professional research literature in your field of study as well as any research reports you encounter in everyday life. You should be able to understand the relevance of statistics for social research; you should be able to analyze and interpret the meaning of a statistical test and you should be able to select an appropriate statistics for a given purpose and a given set of variables. In short, you will become numerate in both critical and analytical activities.

Required Reading

Chava Frankfort-Nachmias and Anna Leon-Guerrero, *Social Statistics for a Diverse Society*, Thousand Oaks, California, Pine Forge Press.

Paul Allison, *Multiple Regression: A Primer*, Thousand Oaks, California, Pine Forge Press.

NOTE: Other readings will be required during the course.

Exam Schedule: (Dates are tentative, they may change)

First Exam: October 7

Second Exam: November 6

Final Exam: (some time between December 8 and 17th)

Exams will consist of multiple choice, essay and problem solving questions.

Evaluation

NOTE: You must pass the final exam to pass the course.

Course Evaluation will be based upon: (1) examinations and (2) lab assignments.

Examinations:	Exam #1	20%
	Exam #2	20%
	Final Exam	30%

Laboratory Assignments: Thirty (30%) of your final exam will be based on your lab assignments. The number of labs has not yet been determined but all lab assignments are equally weighted, e.g., if there are 6 labs, each will be worth 5% each.

Letter Grade Assignment

A+	97-100	C+	77-79	F	<55
A	93-96	C	73-76		
A-	90-92	C-	70-72		
B+	87-89	D+	65-69		
B	83-86	D	60-64		
B-	80-82	D-	55-59		

Deferrals:

If at all possible you must provide advance notice to the instructor if you are unable to take a test or pass in an assignment or essay on time. All requests for deferral of a course component due to health reasons must be accompanied by written documentation as outlined in the University Calendar and should be obtained while the student has the physical or emotional problem rather than after recovery. Deferrals will be allowed in the following circumstances: illness, domestic affliction or religious conviction. Travel arrangements and misreading of the syllabus are not valid reasons for requesting a deferral. Deferrals will not be granted if it is determined that just cause is not shown by the student.

If you have missed a test for a legitimate reason, the instructor can require you to write a “make up” test as close in time to the original test as possible or can choose to transfer the percentage weight to another course component. If the instructor schedules a “make up” test for you, its date and location will be at the convenience of the Sociology Department.

Please note that requests to defer a final examination or to defer term work past the end of a term go through the Undergraduate Programs Office (UPO) and must be processed by the deadlines that are established in the U. of C. Calendar. You can find the forms you need at:

Deferred Final Exam Application:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/files/registrar/Winter2008DEFERREDFINALEXAMINATION S.pdf>

Deferred Term Work Form:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/files/registrar/defTW.pdf>

You must submit these deferral forms to the Social Sciences Associate Dean (Students) through the UPO office: Undergraduate Programs Office, 4th Floor, MacEwan Student Centre.

To make an appointment with the Associate Dean, phone (403) 220-8155.

Only the Associate Dean approves requests for deferrals which extend beyond the end of a term. Instructors are not involved in such decisions.

Intellectual Honesty:

Intellectual honesty is the cornerstone of the development and acquisition of knowledge. Knowledge is cumulative and further advances are predicated on the contributions of others. In the normal course of scholarship, these contributions are apprehended, critically evaluated and utilized as a foundation for further inquiry. Intellectual honesty demands that the contribution of others be acknowledged.

Academic Misconduct: cheating is regarded as a serious academic offense. Students are advised to consult the University Calendar, which presents a Statement of Intellectual Honesty and definitions and penalties associated with cheating, plagiarism, and other academic misconduct.

The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) legislation disallows the practice of having students retrieve assignments from a public place, e.g., outside an instructor's office or the Department main office. Term assignments must be returned to students individually, during class, or during the instructor's office hours; if a student is unable to pick up her/his assignment s/he may provide the instructor with a stamped, self-addressed envelope to be used for the return of the assignment.

Universal Student Ratings of Instruction:

As part of the contract in this course, all students will be asked to complete an evaluation form near the completion of the course.

Safewalk: The University of Calgary provides a "safe walk" service to any location on Campus, including the LRT, parking lots, bus zones, and campus housing. For Campus Security/Safewalk call 220-5333. Campus Security can also be contacted from any of the "Help" phones located around Campus.

Academic Accommodation

_____ Students with a disability, who require academic accommodation, need to register with the Disability Resource Centre (MC 295, telephone 220-8237). Academic accommodation letters need to be provided to course instructors no later than fourteen (14) days after the first day of class. **It is a student's responsibility to register with the Disability Resource Centre and to request academic accommodation, if required.**

Handing in Papers Outside of Class, Return of Final Papers, and Release of Final Grades

1. When students are unable to submit papers at class, they should make arrangements to hand in their papers directly to the instructor or teaching assistant rather than at the Sociology Department main office.

2. Final papers will not be returned through the Sociology Department main office. The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) legislation disallows the practice of having students retrieve assignments from a public place, (i.e., outside an instructor's office, the department office, etc.). Students who want their final papers returned by mail must attach a stamped, self-addressed envelope with the paper. Otherwise final papers will only be available for pick-up during the instructor's office hours at the end of this term or the beginning of the next term.
3. Final grades are not posted by the Sociology department. They are only available online.

