SE '01

CJ215 - Criminal Justice Research
Meeting: Thursdays, 4:45 - 8:55 p.m.
Instructor: Ken Szymkowiak, Ph.D.
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GOALS: This course will give you a basic introduction to the scientific method and how to use it in your other courses as well as your work and daily life. Many students are intimidated by research courses because they believe it involves complicated manipulation of data in algebraic expressions. Forget that. Here is what you must understand and learn:

"IT'S NOT THE MATH!"

I am not sure how to make it any plainer to you. Mathematics is not your problem. You will need to know how to do addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. You will also need access to a computer and a good word processor which can produce tables similar to the one below. All word processors can do this but not all word processor users learn how.

EXAMINATIONS: There will be two cumulative examinations, a mid-term and a final as scheduled. All readings, handouts, films or work done in class are fair game for the examinations. You may use a calculator to work any problems. All work should be neatly laid out so that the instructor can read the process you followed.

TEXTS: Statistics (6th Ed.) by Witte and Witte.

GRADING: Grades will be calculated based on performance in a variety of areas:

1. **Exams and quizzes**
2. Group presentation
3. **Individual project**
4. **Attendance**

1. Exams and quizzes: These will form the bulk of your grade. Quizzes, based on work completed from the week before, will add additional points.

2. Group presentation: Your group will present your findings on the 8th week as indicated. Each person will take a portion of the findings and explain it to the class. Use handouts or other materials to present your findings. Each presenter is limited to 10 minutes. You will receive up to 10 points for this. I will use the scoring distribution as described below in the "Criteria" section.

3. **Individual project. In addition to group work, build your own report based on your group's effort. Use the same data as gathered but write up a description of the data you are interested in only. This will be worth 25 points and use the same scoring distribution as described below in the "Criteria" section.**

4. Attendance: **This will be taken at the start of each class. If late, check in with me before the end of class.** If **leaving early,** check **with me. Students leaving early or arriving late - for whatever reason - may not receive credit for that class. This is** based **on the judgement of the instructor and I will consider if your were present for or missed the bulk of that classes' work. Make sure your attendance for that class is recorded. Three excuses qualify for absence without penalty - although you are still responsible for the work missed. Here they are: Sickness requiring bed rest (present doctor's note); death in family (present funeral director's note); military orders (present copy of orders from officer including contact phone number). One absence without an excuse results in a grade down.** Two **absences - excused or not - result in failure. (See student handbook for further information).**

Final grade: I determine your final grade by the percentage of points you earn against the percentage of points it was possible to earn in the entire course. Students find it helpful to keep a running tab in the calendar below. Based **on this percentage system, if you earn 90 percent of the points or more, you earn an** A grade, QtC. Here's the **breakdown:**

90-100% = A; 80-89% = B; 70-79%= C; 60-69% = D; 59% or lees = F

Let's talk a bit more about the projects, etc: No hand-written work accepted. No unstapled assignments accepted. All tables must be constructed using a word processor and placed on their own page. Refer to the page in the text. All pages must have one-inch margins and be numbered. The **title page of each assignment should be typed in this or similar sized font. Place the title of the assignment, name of author and the author's id number (last four SS numbers) flush left at the top. Start typing on the next double-spaced** line. **If you do not meet these very minimum and basic criteria, you will lose points. I reserve the right to determine what is an acceptable format.**

Scoring criteria: Here are the point distributions and the criteria used to determine those points:

5(10) - The work is complete and accurate in all of its parts.

4(8) - The work contains some errors but is generally accurate and almost complete.

3(6) - The work contains serious errors but remains satisfactory. The student demonstrates a barely adequate mastery of the material.

2(4) - The work contains serious errors and/or is incomplete in major respects.

0(0) - The work contains little or nothing of value: the information offered is incorrect and/or off the subject.

Tools

Students will need the following equipment to do work in the classroom. If these are not presented for inspection by the second week of class, 5 points will be docked from the final grade-point accumulation of the student:

1. **A 12-inch ruler.**
2. **A cheap scientific calculator that can handle square-root calculations.**
3. **Loose-leaf paper or other kind of scrap paper for calculations.**
4. **Graph paper - large square (optional)**

COURSE **SCHEDULE:**

April 12: Topic: Survey Analysis: Groundwork (1). Choosing a topic for analysis, determining independent and dependent variables and variable types.
April 19: Quiz: Chapter 1 Topic: Survey Analysis - Construction and Collection. Building a proper survey instrument. Refining questions. Testing survey prior to execution. Further refinement.
April 26: No quiz Topic: Describing the Data (Frequencies and Averages) (2, 4) Working through the data to see what you have.
May 3: Quiz: Chapters 2 and 4 Topic: Describing the Data (Averages and Variations) (5) Further work up of the data to see what form it takes.
May 10: Mid-Term Examination. Chapters 1, 2, 4, 5. Topic: Cross-tabulations - A first examination of levels within data. A first run at possible relationships between data. (Handout)
May 17: Quiz: Based on handout Topic: Chi-Square(24) - Looking for differences between groups. Is this stuff happening by chance?
May 24: **Quiz:** Chapter 24 Topic: Correlation(9) - looking for relationships between variables. What seems associated with what?
May 31: Quiz: Chapter 9 Topic: Project presentation. 5 minutes per person per group.
June 7: Final **Exam** - **Comprehensive.** Final individual project due.
NOTE: The instructor reserves the right to **adjust the** schedule as necessary. **Students** must present all materials to the instructor in the **event** of a **grading** discrepancy.