

Psychology 302: STATISTICAL METHODS

142 Straub Hall, MonWed 14:00-15:20 (2-3:20 pm)

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TA Office, Office Hours, Phone: TBA (changeable during fall quarter due to building transitions)

Text: Gravetter, F. J., & Wallnau, L. B. (2011). *Essentials of statistics for the behavioral sciences* (7th ed.) Belmont, CA: Thomson/Wadsworth. (choice of: e-book or hard copy)

Course Objectives (or, what's the purpose of this course?)

Welcome to Psychology 302. Statistical methods are a crucial part of research in many sciences, including psychology. Statistical analyses help scientists (and everyday people) discern patterns in phenomena, determine the relative generalizability of these patterns, and estimate how high is the probability that these patterns have real existence -- rather than being merely reflecting someone's imagination or ideology or wishful thinking. And statistics is an important *conceptual* structure for thinking in a rational and scientific way about phenomena, helping people make good sense of the world – and stay in touch with reality! This course is designed to help you gain:

1. Ability to understand and explain to others the statistical analyses and concepts in reports/articles
2. Preparation for learning about research methods, and about more advanced statistical methods.
3. Ability to identify the appropriate statistical procedure for many basic research situations and to carry out necessary computations, whether by hand or computer.
4. Further development of your quantitative and analytic thinking skills and reasoning ability.

This Statistical Methods course is a combination of math/numbers with useful and critical ways of thinking about research. Reasoning in a logical manner is more important to understanding of psychological statistics than is manipulating complex equations. Inescapably, the course involves numbers, but if you have basic arithmetic and algebra skills, the mathematical part of the course is straightforward. Much concerns conceptual approaches for thinking about observations (about data), how to describe these observations, and how to make proper inferences from them.

What Methods Are Used for Learning?

1. Reading the assigned material. That includes following the numeric examples closely and writing down questions about anything not entirely clear. *You are expected to read the text*, in full. In this course, the first reading assignments are long, but their pace slows down especially in the last part of the course when the material becomes more advanced.
2. Completing the assigned homework practice problems (and turning them in on time). Statistics involves learned SKILLS, so it necessary to do statistics, not just read and understand.
3. Attending the class sessions, listening closely, asking questions -- be sure to have done the reading *first*. *Do not fall behind!*
4. Studying for, taking, and reviewing answers for quizzes.
5. Attending your lab section. Be sure to bring questions from the reading with you. This is a great chance to get real help with what is not completely clear and to pursue deeply whatever has excited you (yes, there can be exciting things in statistics!). Lab sections will also be the

place to develop some computer data-analysis experience.

The class format is mainly prepared presentations (i.e., lecture) with response to questions, but there will be some in-class exercises and student participation in work teams. Whereas lab sessions are especially oriented toward homework problems that emphasize calculations, class sessions have more emphasis on a conceptual comprehension of statistical methods and are more directly oriented toward the content of quizzes. This is a very important difference in emphasis (on two complementary aspects of the course), although there is certainly crossover between lab and class.

Summary of Basis for Evaluation

Your ***final course grade*** is based on the following components:

- 38% Score on the homework assignments (sometimes called problem sets)
- 4% Responses to reading (you need to send in two, including at least one before Oct. 31)
- 4% Sufficient participation in in-class exercises (groups and EFOs, see below) and lab sections
- 4% Score on the half-hour “small quiz” given on October 3
- 10% First midterm-quiz score
- 15% Second midterm-quiz score
- 25% Score on the final quiz (exam)

This final percentage is then converted into a grade. **A** range is 90% to 100%, **B** range is 80% to 90%, **C** range 70% to 80%, **D** range 60% to 70%, with ‘+’ and ‘-’ being assigned if the percentage is within the top or bottom 1/3, respectively, of each of these ranges. **F** is 59.99% or lower (there is, of course, no F+ or F-). Note that there is no grade for class attendance *per se*, but if you miss most of the class sessions that will lessen your “sufficient participation” credit.

Lectures and Laboratories

At the end of the syllabus is a list of lecture topics and reading assignments. Please read the relevant section of the text before the lecture to which it corresponds. Note also that lecture notes will be available on the Blackboard web site (see below) by about 11 am, 3 hours prior to each class. To avoid copying down the content on class slides, you can bring these notes to class. In addition to attending lectures, you must also enroll in and attend one of the 4 weekly statistical laboratories run by the class TAs. The labs will be held in 180 Straub, the Psychology Department’s computer lab (open 8am-9pm Monday through Thursday, and 8-5 Friday). The labs will provide an opportunity to gain hands-on computing experience relevant to concepts discussed in lectures. The statistical software for this course is a recent version of SPSS for Windows that is installed on the computers in 180 Straub. The labs will also involve discussion of the homework, going over quizzes, as well as allowing you the chance to raise any questions you have concerning lectures or the textbook. Labs begin in Week 1 including an introduction to the SPSS computer package and to frequency tables. The follow-up course to 302 is 303 (Research Methods in Psychology), and computer stats are usually a major part of 303. They’re also very useful in the world of work beyond the university.

Components of Your Performance in Psychology 302

In order to give ongoing performance feedback, and help students keep focus on the important subject matter of this course (a prerequisite to upper division courses in psychology), the course

does have quizzes. The quizzes include a “small quiz” at the end of week 2, two midterm quizzes and a final quiz (i.e., exam). These quizzes consist of a combination of “problem” items, multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, and mini-essay items. *Compared to homework, quizzes place far more emphasis on conceptual understanding and less on calculations.* The midterms will begin approximately 10 minutes into the class session (i.e., at 2:10 pm) on the day scheduled for each quiz; the first 10 minutes of these midterm class-sessions will be devoted to presentation or review of material that will make up part of the quiz, so it makes sense to come to class on time that day (like every day). If you *must* miss a quiz, talk to the instructor, as it may be possible (e.g., with a signed medical excuse) to arrange a make-up quiz (different version than the one given earlier in class) on the first day of the final exam period; there will be no make-up quizzes prior to the final-exam period.

All quizzes are cumulative, but all have an emphasis on more recent material, and are closed-book. Because comprehension rather than memorization is the goal, we will provide a list of mathematical formulas on the quiz form; your job will be to know what formula is relevant to a particular problem and how to use it correctly. It will be helpful to have a calculator for the quizzes but to receive credit for calculation problems you will need to show each step of your calculations; do not rely on advanced calculators that directly compute complex formulas. Individuals may submit written challenges to their quiz grade immediately after quizzes are administered. Grades will be adjusted only if the challenge is successful and ONLY for the individual that submitted the challenge.

Sufficient participation credit is gained from in-class exercises, which are of two major kinds. First, we will have in-class groups to carry out learning-focused exercises during class sessions. These groups will often be responsible for producing a written product/report when they meet, and your credit for “sufficient participation” will be based on how often you are around to sign these products/reports, and on your being reasonably cooperative with other group members. EFO (early feedback opportunity) exercises are essentially “one-minute tests” designed not so much to evaluate your performance as to enable you to check how well you understand key course material, providing valuable performance feedback. Credit on these EFOs is based not at all on whether you got the right answer, but only on whether you put in effort to see how well you could do. Consistent inattendance at lab sections may also factor into sufficient participation credit.

Like sufficient participation credit, the purpose of responses to readings is to give students incentive for putting themselves in a position to learn something (via reading and attending class). Two responses to readings are due overall. They can be submitted prior to any class session except those with quizzes or exams or those with no new reading assignment. At least one must be submitted by October 31 (11 am), the other one can be at any point in the term. You are assigned to send by e-mail to the instructor (with a cc to your lab instructor) **by 11 am** (three hours before class) a response to the assigned chapter(s) for that day. Please begin the subject line of the e-mail with the number “302.” To get credit, responses must be on time and do one of the following: (1) state one specific question you would like answered, or (2) describe one topic or specific point about which you are confused and would like to get some clarification, or (3) give a summary of what you think are the three most important points in the reading for that session (use this option if you can’t think of a question or unclear point). Refer to specific page numbers. Keep responses short, no longer than 1 page if it were printed. To get credit, *an RTR cannot be late (after 11 am on day of assignment)*! Example of a good specific RTR question: "On page 1357, it says that the Scheffe test is extremely cautious and safe. Does this mean it is better than the Tukey test on page 1356? If not,

how do we choose?" Example of a vague non-question "I don't understand chapter 13." Always identify what *specifically* you don't understand. *Note:* Questions about reading material are welcome any time, by any communication medium, not just via the RTR assignment for credit!

Statistics is a skill and not a spectator sport -- you must *do it* to *learn it*, you must get in the pool to learn to swim. To help you get yourself into the pool, homework assignments – problem sets -- will be assigned most weeks. The course TAs will have responsibility for the timing, content, and grading of the homework, including policies regarding homework turned in late. This term, it may be assignments to be done and handed in on paper, or may be assignments to be done and submitted online, or may be some combination of these. Traditionally, our Psychology 302 homeworks have been assigned and submitted on a once-weekly basis, but there may be some variations from this tradition this term. Some weeks of the term may feature much more extensive homework than other weeks. More information and discussion of the format will be a topic in the first few of the lab sessions during the term.

If you have difficulties with the problems, please consult with the TAs or with the instructor. Collaborative learning is encouraged: If you want to discuss the problems with other students, feel free to do so. Homework helps you learn skills by practicing. Talking over the problems and reworking them when you discover that others got different answers promotes deeper understanding of concepts and gives you more practice in applying skills. However, *each student must submit separate homework*, and you must show your work (no photocopies or word-for-word copying). In other words, the answers you turn in should be written independently.

You are strongly encouraged to use a **calculator** for doing your assignments. You are permitted to use a calculator during tests, though one is not required. A *simple calculator that adds, subtracts, divides, multiplies, and takes square roots* should be of great help. Since you must show your work on all assignments and quizzes (and too fancy a calculator might prevent your doing this), calculators that also do complex statistical calculations are not of real help. No pressure to spend a lot of money: less (maybe far less!) than \$10 should do. Solar calculators are environmentally friendly.

Academic Integrity

This instructor takes academic integrity seriously. Insuring the "validity" of grades requires seeing that they reflect honest work and learning rather than cheating. **Cheating** is defined as providing or accepting information on an quiz or exam, plagiarism or copying anyone's written work. Students caught cheating will be given an "F" for the course, and UO's student conduct coordinator will be informed. This instructor does have a record of failing students for cheating. The instructor retains the right to assign seats for tests, to change individual's seating for test security purposes, to require and check ID for admission to tests.

Top Six Suggestions for Doing Well in This Course

1. Be an active learner, keep a pen/pencil/etc. moving, don't become passive, keep trying things...
2. Don't rely on cramming in a statistics course, where *gradually developed* skills are so important
3. Ask for help if you get stuck (as everyone does get at some point in this course)
4. Work hard even in the early part of the course – that material is a necessary foundation...
5. Don't treat this as strictly a math class, pay attention to the *conceptual* frameworks you find
6. Find something that is to you interesting or fun in statistics (find a bit of intrinsic motivation)

PSYCHOLOGY 302 SCHEDULE: *What Happens When*

Date	Topic	Text Reading	
Sept. 24 *	Introduction to course		
Sept. 26	Populations and samples; frequency distributions	chs. 1 & 2	
Oct. 1	Central tendency and variability	chs. 3 & 4	
Oct. 3	Standardized distributions, z-scores; “small quiz”	ch. 5	
Oct. 8	Probability	ch. 6	
Oct. 10	The distribution of sample means	ch. 7	
Oct. 15	Hypothesis testing	ch. 8:201-229	
Oct. 17 *	<i>Midterm 1</i> (focuses on chs. 1-7, ch. 8 pp. 201-229)		
Oct. 22	Effect size, types of error, statistical power	ch. 8:229-240	
Oct. 24	The <i>t</i> statistic (as compared to <i>z</i> statistic)	ch. 9	
Oct. 29	The <i>t</i> test for two independent samples	ch. 10	
Oct. 31	The <i>t</i> test for two related (paired) samples	ch. 11	
Nov. 5	Estimation and confidence intervals	ch. 12	
Nov. 7	Analysis of variance (ANOVA): simple (one-way)	ch. 13	
Nov. 12	ANOVA: two-factor and repeated measures	ch. 14†	
Nov. 14 *	<i>Midterm 2</i> (focuses on chs. 8-14)		
Nov. 19	ANOVA and eta; correlation; <i>r</i> as effect size	ch. 15	
Nov. 21 *	Correlation and regression		
Nov. 26	Chi-square tests; phi coefficient	ch. 16	
Nov. 28 *	Chi-square tests; phi coefficient; integration		
Dec. 3, Monday, 3:15 pm*	Final exam; (mostly cumulative of whole course, but about 1/3 of it will focus on chs. 15-16)		

* - One of the days for which you cannot submit an RTR (because there's no reading assigned)

† - Parts of chapter 14 that will be emphasized most are pp. 414-421 and pp. 428-448