PADM212 - Administrative Research Methods

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Professor Haas
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Clark 231
Tues., 6pm

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Logging onto Desire2Learn ("D2L") course shell: use your first name, period, last name ("peter.haas," for example) as your user ID. Your password default is your student ID number, but you can change it. You will use the Desire2Learn site to send email, submit assignments, etc. (If you recently added the class, your name is probably not yet in the system, so please wait a few days!) You can also adjust the settings on D2L so that you will be notified at another address when you receive D2Lemail.

Introduction

The purpose of this course is to familiarize the student with techniques, and applications of social science research in the context of public administration. With an emphasis on quantitative, survey-derived data analysis, we will examine the research process from hypothesis construction and research design to data collection, processing, analysis and report-writing. In doing so, the class will be exposed to a specific statistical analysis application for microcomputers. We will also consider several non-quantitative approaches to administrative research. An important purpose of the course is to get the class comfortable with statistical issues that are relevant to many research designs. Public Administrators need to have a command of basic statistical and research concepts in order to be intelligent consumers of policy-related research.

Class Format

The class will consist of readings, lectures, and class participation, culminating in a class research project. Because of the "how to" emphasis of much of the course, formal lectures will be minimized in favor of class interaction. Attendance to all class meetings is therefore essential. If you must miss a class meeting, you are responsible for any changes in the schedule made in your absence

Texts

The following texts are required for the course as indicated. Students may wish to consider purchase of the recommended texts, or their equivalent, to facilitate their use of computer software for the course.

Berman and Wang, *Essential Statistics for Public Managers and Policy Analysts* (3rd Ed). Sage.
Berman and Wang, *Exercising Essential Statistics* (3rd Ed). Sage.

Requirements and Grading Criteria

Grading will be based on completion of the following:
(1) class participation (10%),
(2) a short written assignment (10%),
(3) a group research project (15%),
(4) an individual research project (35%),
(5) written quizzes (30%).

Please note that your classmates will participate in the evaluation of your contribution to the group project, which will involve creation of a research design and data instrument. As a group, the class will create and implement a survey for an actual public or nonprofit client. Details on each assignment will be forthcoming separately.

Announcements
Assignments and test dates are subject to change at any time. The individual student is responsible for all announcements and all material covered during the semester, regardless of attendance of a particular class session.

Class Outline and Assignments

(all reading assignments refer to Berman and Wang, unless indicated otherwise)

January 31: Review syllabus, late adds, etc.

February 7: Introduction to Policy Research / Statistics for Public Managers (Chapter 1)

- the usefulness of methods and statistics for public administrators
- how and where research for public agencies is generated

Online reading: http://pri.sfsu.edu/reports/AC_Transit_Systemwide_Results.pdf
(Please read and be prepared to discuss (1) the intended audience, (2) the information needs it addresses, and (3) how it could have been improved to be more valuable to its client.)

Background reading: Applied Policy Research, Chapters 1-3 (see Content tab)

Objective: students will understand the role of research in government agencies, including the typical contexts under which research is conducted.

Prepare answers for Applications Exercises 1-1, 1-3, and 1-4.

February 14: Fundamentals of the research process (Chapter Two)

- basics of research design
- hypotheses, variables, operationalization
- planning research projects
- validity and error
- Prepare answers for Critical Thinking exercises 2-1, 2-2, 2-4, 2-5, 2-6, 2-7, 2-10.
- Prepare answers for Applications Exercises 2-3, 2-4, 2-9, and 2-10.

Objective: students will learn the basic steps used by public administrators to order the research process, including the appropriate use of various types of research designs. Students will be able to match the appropriate research design to various types of policy and administrative information needs.

February 21: Introduction to SPSS – Note: data from *Exercising Essential Statistics* will be used, so be sure to bring disk to class.

- basic SPSS commands and features
- how to create and edit a data set
- how to generate simple tables and graphs
- how to save and print results

Objective: students will learn the basics of a popular statistical analysis software package (SPSS) that will enable them to use statistical methods in the classroom and beyond.

February 28: Measurement (Chapter 3)

Online reading: please read and be prepared to discuss: At the Regulatory Front Lines: Inspectors' Enforcement Styles and Regulatory Compliance .

- fundamentals of measurement
- constructing indexes and scales
- Prepare answers for Critical Thinking exercises 3-1, 3-4, 3-6, 3-10,
- Prepare answers for Applications Exercises 3-1, 3-4, and 3-7.

Objective: students will learn the significance of various levels of measurement and importance of the selection of valid measures. They should be able to select appropriate measures that are consistent with the day-to-day needs of public administrators.

Literature Review due

Objective: Students will learn how to calculate and use descriptive statistics, including basic measures of central tendency and dispersion. They will learn how to use SPSS to calculate and present such statistics using a PC

March 6: Quiz I

March 13: Data Collection and Sampling (Chapter 5)

- sampling theory
- sampling designs
- sample size
- Prepare answers for Critical Thinking exercises (TBA)
- Prepare answers for Applications Exercises (TBA) .

Objective: Students will learn the basics of sampling theory and how to determine appropriate sample types and sizes. They will learn how to use SPSS to draw samples from actual data sets.

Descriptive Statistics and Measures of Dispersion (Chapter 6 and 7)

Online reading: please read and be prepared to discuss The New Face of Government: Citizen-Initiated Contacts in the Era of E-Government

- frequency distributions
- developing graphs and charts using SPSS
- measures of central tendency and dispersion
- using SPSS to generate new variables
- Prepare answers for Critical Thinking exercises (TBA).
- Prepare answers for Applications Exercises (TBA).

March 20: Measures of Association and Relationships among Variables (Chapter 8 and 10)

- crosstabulation / contingency tables
- basic measures of association
- use of control variables with measures of association
- causality
- Prepare answers for Critical Thinking exercises (TBA)
- Prepare answers for Applications Exercises (TBA)

Objectives: students will learn how to construct and interpret a contingency table. They will use SPSS to create contingency tables using actual data. They will learn which statistics are appropriate for analyzing tabular data, and the conditions under which causal relationships between variables may be established.

March 27: NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK

April 3: Additional measures of association (Ch. 11)

- use of additional measures of association for specific circumstances
- use of elaboration model to test control variables
- Prepare answers for Critical Thinking exercises (TBA)
- Prepare answers for Applications Exercises (TBA)

Objectives: students will learn how to analyze data with "mixed" levels of measurement, and how to evaluate differences between sample means.

April 10: Using SPSS to create contingency tables and estimate measures of association..

April 17: Interval level statistics (Ch. 14)

- logic and assumptions of simple regression
- regression estimates
- using SPSS to graph regression lines
- correlation
- Prepare an answer to question (TBA)

Objectives: students will learn how and when to use correlation and regression; they will use SPSS to conduction regression analysis of actual data.

April 24: Quiz II

April 31: Multiple Regression (Ch. 15)

Online reading: please read and be prepared to discuss *Plus ça Change:* Public Management, Personnel Stability, and Organizational Performance .

- use of dummy variables
- common problems
- using SPSS to perform multiple regression
- Prepare answers for Critical Thinking exercises (TBA)
- Prepare answers for Applications Exercises (TBA)
- *Objective: students will learn how to conduct regression analysis when more than one independent variable is available. They will learn how to use dummy variables and how to diagnose common problems that may arise when using regression.*

May 1: Creating and implementing surveys / SPSS lab

May 8: Individual research projects /presentations due

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Fine Print: Your commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at SJSU and the University's Academic Integrity Policy requires you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The policy on academic integrity can be found at http://sa.sjsu.edu/student_conduct . If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that all students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the DRC to establish a record of their disability.