

JS 202: Seminar in Justice Research Methods

Course Syllabus, Fall 2006
T: 5:30-8:15

Professor: Mark E. Correia, Ph.D.
Office: MacQuarrie Hall 513
Hours: TH: 10:00-2:00 or by appointment
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Course Description

In today's technological world, the use of computers to develop a better understanding of human behavior and other social science phenomena has become commonplace. As such, understanding how to use computers is paramount for individuals who wish to work within any aspect of criminal justice. Our understanding of criminal behavior, "hot spots" of crime, and correctional management, is greatly enhanced through the use of computers. Given this, a major of focus of this seminar is SPSS—primarily, how to properly use this powerful statistical package to help solve complex social problems.

Further, an understanding of those statistics most commonly is also necessary. That is, in order to fully understand criminal behavior or other types of phenomena in our society, one must have an understanding of elementary statistics. Given this, through this course, the student will gain an understanding of the purpose, appropriate use, and interpretation of statistics.

Lastly, we will examine research methodology most used in justice studies and criminal justice; with particular focus on solving problems through the use of the scientific method.

Learning Objectives

Student will develop:

1. A comprehensive understanding of research methodology used in criminal justice.
2. Those skills needed to engage in scientifically based research.
3. The ability to effectively use SPSS in applied research.
4. The capacity to critically analyze and evaluate research, allowing them to become better consumers of research.

Required Materials

Kendrick, J.(2005). *Social Statistics: An Introduction Using SPSS for Windows*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Salkind, Neil (2005). *Statistics for People Who Think They Hate Statistics*. Thousand, Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. 2nd Edition.

Further course material can be found on WebCT, which includes the PowerPoint presentations, assignments, data sets and other course materials.

Students will be required to access WebCT for this course. If you do not currently have a WebCT account, please go to <http://sjsu.webct.com/webct/public/home.pl> and follow the instructions to create an account. The WebCT login for this course is <http://sjsu.webct.com/public/js202f06mc>. The contents and schedule of this course are subject to change—any changes will be posted on WebCT.

Recommended Materials

Healey, J. (2005). *Statistics: A Tool for Social Research*. Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth. 7th Edition.

Course Requirements

Participation: While attendance is not required (you can't participate if you are not here), it is assumed that students are prepared and willing to answer course-related questions when called upon and, when appropriate, to take part in class discussion. It is strongly suggested that you attend every class, as learning methods and statistics is a cumulative process.

Readings and PowerPoint Presentations: Students should complete the readings prior to the date by which they appear on the syllabus. Many of the lectures are accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation that can be found on WebCT. I strongly encourage students to download these and bring them to class. Please note, the PowerPoint's are not a substitution for attending class, they should be used to aid your work in class.

Assignments (25% of final grade): Application equals learning. Therefore, there will be 10 assignments distributed throughout the course. The date of distribution and due date is specified on the syllabus. Students are strongly encouraged to email their assignments on the due date.

Students are expected to turn in all work associated with the assignment (i.e., SPSS outputs, mathematical computations, etc.).

Midterm Exam (25% of final grade): There will be an in class midterm exam on Oct. 26th.

Final Project (50% of final grade): This project will be distributed on November 30th and is designed to measure the student's competence in all areas discussed throughout the course. This project is due no later than December 14th.

Email: I will accept assignments via email according to the following protocol. **Deviations from this protocol will not be accepted and your email will be returned to you:**

1. **Subject Line:** This line will contain the student's name, course and the assignment number. For example, Mark Correia, JS 202 Policing Paper.
2. **Format:** All papers sent electronically **must be saved in .doc or .rtf**. I will not accept papers saved in .wps, .wpd or pasted into an email. If you use Wordperfect or Microsoft Works, you will need to save your document as .doc or .rtf.
3. **Email Address:** mcorreia@casa.sjsu.edu.

4. *Confirmation:* I will send out a confirmation receipt for those emails with assignments that I have received within 24hrs. If you do not receive a confirmation, your assignment was not received.
5. *Responsibility:* It is the student's responsibility to make sure that the assignment is properly attached to the email. If the assignment is not attached and received by the due date, the assignment will be considered late.

Course Outline

This course consists primarily of lecture and computer lab work on Thursdays. Due to the number of students and different views that he/she brings, it is the instructor's belief that all of our views are enriched by way of discussion. Please be considerate of others and their opinions as everyone will have an opportunity to express their opinion.

I have listed my email address and office hours for your convenience. At all times, I will be available via email. If you cannot make my office hours, nor have access to email, please set up an appointment. While I may be in my office at other times, I may not be available to meet.

WEEK #1

August 24: Course introduction and syllabus review
Introduction to WebCT and other Course Materials

WEEK #2

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

August 31: Statistics for the Social Sciences: Introduction
Organizing Data and Measures
Required Reading: *Salkind, Chapt. 1*
Healy, Chapt. 1

Break

Introduction to SPSS
Required Reading: *Kendrick, Chapt. 1 (17-29)*

SPSS: Data Coding, Data Entry and Frequency Analysis
Required Reading: *Kendrick, Chapt. 3 & 4*

Statistics Assignment #1 Distributed

WEEK #3

Sept. 7: Theory Guided Research and Units of Analysis

Measures of Central Tendency
Required Reading: *Healey, Chapt. 2 and 3*
Salkind, Chapt. 2 and 3

Reliability Analysis
Required Reading: Salkind, Chapt. 16

Break

SPSS: Selecting Cases

SPSS: Recoding and Computing Measures
Required Reading: Kendrick, 119-129

SPSS: Reliability Analysis

SPSS: Measures of Central Tendency
Required Reading: Kendrick, Chapt. 5

Statistics Assignment #1 Due; Statistics Assignment #2 Distributed

INFERENTIAL STATISTICS

WEEK #4

Sept 14: Conceptualization and Measurement

Measures of Variability
Required Reading: Salkind, Chapt. 3
Kendrick, Chapt. 2
Healey, Chapt. 4

Methods Assignment #1 Distributed

Probability and the Normal Curve
Required Reading: Healey, Chapt. 5
Salkind, Chapt. 7

Hypothesis Testing
Required Reading: Healy, Chapt. 8 and 9
Salkind, Chapt. 6

Break

SPSS: Hypothesis Testing
Required Reading: Kendrick, Chapt. 7

SPSS: Measures of Variability
Required Reading: Kendrick, Chapt. 6

Statistics Assignment #2 Due; Statistics Assignment #3 Distributed

WEEK #5

Sept. 21: No Class

MEASURES OF ASSOCIATION

WEEK #6

Sept. 28: Research Design

The Significance of *Significance*
***Required Reading:* Salkind, Chapt. 8**

Crosstabulations and Chi-Square
***Required Reading:* Salkind, Chapt. 15
Healey, Chapt. 12 and 13**

Methods Assignment #1 Due; Methods Assignment #2 Distributed

Break

SPSS: Contingency Tables
Kendrick: Chapt. 9-11

Statistics Assignment #3 Due; Statistics Assignment #4 Distributed

WEEK #7

Oct 5: Sampling Techniques

Correlations: Describing Relationships
***Required Reading:* Salkind, Chapt. 5, 13
Healey, Chapt. 15 and pp. 427-436**

Methods Assignment #2 Due

Break

SPSS: Correlations
Kendrick: Chapt. 13

Statistics Assignment #4 Due; Statistics Assignment #5 Distributed

MULTIVARIATE TECHNIQUES

WEEK #8

Oct. 12: Data Collection Techniques

Testing Between the Means

Required Reading: Salkind, Chaps. 9 and 10

Methods Assignment #3 Distributed

Break

Testing Between the Means and SPSS

Required Reading: Kendrick 455-457

Statistics Assignment #5 Due; Statistics Assignment #6 Distributed

WEEK #9

Oct. 19: Data Presentation

Testing Between the Means (cont.)

Required Reading: Salkind, Chaps. 9 and 10

Methods Assignment #3 Due

Break

Practice Midterm Exam

Testing Between the Means and SPSS (cont.)

Required Reading: Kendrick 455-457

WEEK #10

Oct. 26: MIDTERM EXAM

Statistics Assignment #6 Due

WEEK #11

Nov 2: No Class: American Society of Criminology Conference

WEEK #12

Nov. 9: Linear Regression
Required Reading: *Salkind, Chapt. 14*
Healey, Chaps. 16, 17

Break

SPSS: Linear Regression
Kendrick: Chapt. 12

Statistics Assignment #7 Distributed

WEEK #13

Nov. 16: Linear Regression (cont.)
Required Reading: *Salkind, Chapt. 14*
Healey, Chaps. 16, 17

Break

SPSS: Linear Regression
Kendrick: Chapt. 12

WEEK #14

Nov. 23: No Class: Thanksgiving Break

WEEK #15

Nov. 30: Final Project Distributed
Statistics Assignment #7 Due

Week #16

Dec. 7: Work on Final Project

Week #17

Syllabus Addendum

Requirements: In order to receive a grade for this course, all the course requirements must be completed. Failure to complete them may result in a failing grade for the course.

Academic Dishonesty: The “I got caught cheating” policy for this class is swift, severe, and certain: that is, if you cheat, chances are very good that you will be caught, then publicly shamed, and punished with a failing grade for the course. In addition, plagiarism is absolutely unacceptable. If you are unsure what constitutes plagiarism, please contact the professor—while many students are ignorant of this offense, ignorance is not an excuse. I have several speeding tickets that prove this point!

Academic Integrity: Academic integrity is essential to the mission of San José State University. As such, students are expected to perform their own work (except when collaboration is expressly permitted by the course instructor) without the use of any outside resources. Students are not permitted to use old tests, quizzes when preparing for exams, nor may they consult with students who have already taken the exam. When practiced, academic integrity ensures that all students are fairly graded. Violations to the Academic Integrity Policy undermine the educational process and will not be tolerated. It also demonstrates a lack of respect for oneself, fellow students and the course instructor and can ruin the university’s reputation and the value of the degrees it offers. We all share the obligation to maintain an environment which practices academic integrity. Violators of the Academic Integrity Policy will be subject to failing this course and being reported to the Office of Student Conduct & Ethical Development for disciplinary action which could result in suspension or expulsion from San José State University. The policy on academic integrity can be found at: http://sa.sjsu.edu/student_conduct

To better understand plagiarism and to aid you in making sure that you are not plagiarizing, please see me and/or visit: <http://tutorials.sjlibrary.org/plagiarism/index.htm>

Course Add/Drop Statement: Instructors are permitted to drop students who fail to attend the first scheduled class meeting and who fail to inform the instructor prior to the second class meeting of the reason for any absence and their intention to continue in the class. Some instructors will drop students who do not meet the stated course prerequisites. However, instructors are not required to drop a student from their course. ***It is the student’s responsibility to make sure classes are dropped.***

You, the student, are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drops, academic renewal, withdrawal, etc. found at: http://sa.sjsu.edu/student_conduct

ADA: “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 students with disabilities register with DRC to establish a record of their disability.”

Grades: Paper and course grades may be disputed at the instructor’s convenience (or during office hours). It is important to note, however, that upon review, the instructor reserves the right to increase as well as decrease the grade in question. Late papers will not be accepted nor any extra credit provided.

Electronic Devices: Please turn off all cell phones, pagers, PDA’s or any other electronic device that “makes noise”. While I commend those of you who have mastered text messaging, the use of these devices during class is disruptive and will not be tolerated. If you need to text message, please leave the room—if I see you text messaging, I will ask you to leave the room. I encourage the use of the computer in the classroom for note taking purposes, however, surfing the web, Instant Messaging, checking/sending email, etc., will not be tolerated. If you are caught using your computer for other purposes than taking notes, I will ask you to leave the room.

Classroom Etiquette: Class motto: “Treat others as you think they would like to be treated”. Yes, this is a spin on the ever popular, but not so empathetic phrase. This is a time to open your minds to new ideas, to explore new concepts, so please take advantage of this opportunity. Further, please be respectful of others and show them common courtesy. I firmly believe that the learning process is enriched by discussion, but damaged by arguments. Respect and professionalism are the guiding principles of this class.

Written Work: I understand that many of our students have very busy life’s, filled with work and family obligations. I understand that “school work” is difficult to fit in to an already full schedule. With this said, I do expect quality work from everyone. Write every paper as though it is your best paper ever and be proud of your paper and work that you complete for this course.

As a side note: I am well aware of the websites that offer papers to students and have software that allows me to compare papers I receive to the thousands of databases of papers that exist. Trust me, it is not worth your effort, chances are, I will find out. All papers will turned in to this class will be submitted to turnitin.com by the student. Please see the course website for additional information.

+/- Grading: This course will be using the +/- system on final grades based on the following percentages:

95-100:	A
90-94:	A-
87-89:	B+
84-86:	B
80-83:	B-
77-79	C+
74-76:	C
70-73:	C-