

## Soc 311 Social Statistics Syllabus

**Objective:** The purpose of this syllabus is to guide the participant in the requirements, demands, logistics and expectations of this course.

### Getting Help:

To receive technical assistance on issues related to WebCT contact:

Academic Instructional Technology Help Desk

ES 102

Spring and Fall Semester: Monday-Thursday 8:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m. Friday 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

MST (May-August 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. MDT)

(719) 587-7371

[ascwebct@adams.edu](mailto:ascwebct@adams.edu)

### Your Instructor

**Instructor:** Dr. Stephanie Gonzales

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### Welcome

My name is Dr. Stephanie Gonzales and I am currently an associate professor of Sociology at Adams State College in Alamosa, Colorado. I currently teach the Criminology and Statistics courses on campus. I received my BA degree in sociology from Adams State College in 1994, my MA degree from CSU Fullerton in 1998, and my PhD from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville in 2003. While my PhD is in Sociology, I also have a minor in statistics from the Statistics department at the University of Tennessee.

I was born in New Zealand, but was raised in Los Angeles, CA. Because of my experiences, I have a keen interest in working with students from a wide range of locations and backgrounds. I will try to respond as quickly as possible to any questions regarding the course content, the textbook, or assignments and exams. Because I do not have the opportunity to get to know you on campus or in the classroom, feel free to tell me about yourself, your goals and your interests.

## **Course Name and Prefix**

Soc 311-Social Statistics

## **Course Credits**

4

## **Prerequisites**

SOC 201 Minimum Grade: C

AND Junior Status

AND MATH 104

OR MATH 106

OR MATH 120

OR MATH 150

OR MATH 155

OR MATH 156

## **Required Textbook**

*Social Statistics for a Diverse Society with SPSS Student Version* by Chava Frankfort-Nachmias and Anna Leon-Guerrero. 5th Edition. Pine Forge Press: 2008.

To order textbooks or obtain information about book titles you may go to [www.exstudies.adams.edu](http://www.exstudies.adams.edu) and click on the “ASC Bookstore” icon.

Use **Section Number: 1084** to order books from Bookstore site.

**Note:** If you buy the textbook used, you will not receive a licensed version of SPSS or the datasets. In that case, you will need to go to the SPSS website or the publisher and purchase the student version of SPSS. Purchasing the software separately will probably cost more than buying the book new with the software included. Students with Macintosh computers will need to make sure they have a compatible version. SPSS also provides this version.

## **Academic Misconduct**

Students should abide by all student ethical conduct, especially those rules pertaining to cheating and plagiarism. Plagiarism, cheating, or any other form of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this course. Any student engaging in academic dishonesty in this course can expect a failing grade for the course.

## **Catalog Description**

This course presents a general overview of the statistical methods most commonly used in Sociology and the Social Sciences. As a laboratory component, students will become proficient

in SPSS, a computer program designed to aid statistical analysis. These skills will enable the student to: read popular applications of statistics in the media with a critical eye; assess the use of statistics in the professional sociological literature; and use statistical tools to answer the sociological questions of interest.

This course is a requirement for Sociology majors and a prerequisite for Research Methods; however, students from a wide range of disciplines can take this course for credit. Generally, the on-campus version of this course meets four hours a week and requires 4 to 8 hours a week of outside homework time. The WebCT version of the course does allow greater flexibility for completing the work without class time, but will still require about the same amount of total time to learn the material and complete all required assignments. The extended studies course can begin in either the Fall or Spring semester and will take 4 months to complete. You will be required to complete weekly homework assignments with strict due dates, as well as complete 3 exams and one project.

To begin, the first chapter will give you detailed instructions for installing and operating SPSS. The textbook will also come with a CD for opening the data files. If you have difficulty opening the data files from the CD, you can go to the website accompanying the textbook where the data files are posted for your use. If SPSS is installed and opened, clicking on the link will automatically open the datasets in SPSS. Once you have the textbook, I would immediately begin by installing the software and familiarizing yourself with the databases.

## **Student Learning Outcomes**

### **Students will be able to:**

1. Compute and interpret basic statistics.
2. Demonstrate proficiency in SPSS.
3. Determine the correct statistical technique for various data sets.
4. Use correlations and regressions to describe relationships between variables.
5. Explain what a sampling distribution is.
6. Test hypotheses about means, proportions, cross-tabulations and regression coefficients.
7. Read and interpret statistical information in professional and scholarly publications.

## **Instructional Approaches**

WebCT: This course will run through a web based program, called WebCT, located at <http://webct.adams.edu>. You will be given a login name and password and will be able to enter into the course and use this as a framework to submit and complete all requirements for the course. The syllabus is located in WebCT and all assignments are located in the learning Modules. All tests will be a “take home” exam, and will be open book and open note. You will each open and download the exam from WebCT on a particular date in Word format. You will have a little more than 24 hours to complete the exam in Word and resubmit the exam back into WebCT. All grades will be posted in WebCT as well. Additionally, WebCT is a great format to stay in contact and receive help from me as well as develop some contact with other students.

Social Statistics will require a large amount of independent work and commitment. Without the classroom environment, you will be required to motivate yourself to complete the work in a timely manner. To facilitate your work, I will be available to answer any questions that arise as you work through the material. Additionally, many students are in various stages of completing the assignments and working with SPSS. You will find that many of them have encountered similar problems that you may encounter. Installing and learning to operate a new software program often comes with computer glitches unique to each computer. To help foster your learning curve, you may post questions or help in the discussion section. The discussions are not a requirement, simply a useful tool if you need it. If you want to ask me a direct question, you can e-mail me directly. Hopefully, having a community

### **Study Tips/Learning Resources**

All exams will be graded as soon as I receive them. I understand time is important to you, and I will do my best to get results back to you within one week after receipt. In order to be successful in this course, I suggest you pace yourself and create a schedule and timeline that you feel is best suited to your lifestyle and goals. Students who are the most successful in extended studies courses set time aside each week to accomplish specific reading and writing assignments.

Because you will not be supplementing your reading with in-class discussions and lectures, it is vitally important to thoroughly read each assignment several times for clarity and reinforcement. Statistics is a difficult subject and without a professor to demonstrate problems with examples, you will have to work harder to make sense of the material. I will be as available as possible to answer any questions you may have, but if the work becomes too difficult, you may want to consider getting a tutor in your area to help you work through each chapter.

### **Student Feedback on Instruction**

If you have any questions about course expectations or course content, feel free to e-mail me. I will be glad to help in any way that is feasible.

### **Course Policies**

Homework assignments can be completed in collaboration with others or with a tutor. The exams, however, must be completed independently. While the tests are open book and open note, you will need a calculator and will be limited to the time the exam is open until it closes to complete it.

### **Course Requirements and Assignments**

#### **Chapter Problems: 20% of Grade**

You will be expected to complete a series of problems at the completion of each chapter. These exercises at the end of each chapter are divided into two sections. You will be asked to complete some SPSS problems and some chapter exercises. Because some of these problems will require

the use of SPSS that comes packaged with your book, it is imperative that you have access to a computer in which you can install the SPSS Student version.

Each assignment will be graded on a 3 point scale. Successful completion and understanding of the assignments will result in a score of 3 for each assignment. In order to receive a 3, the assignment does not need to be error free, just demonstrate a clear understanding of the material and concepts.

Assignments in which some basic understanding of material was understood, but there was a moderate amount of confusion and errors will result in a score of 2. An excessive number of mistakes demonstrating little or no understanding of the material will result in a score of 1. Not completing an assignment before taking the exam will result in a 0.

To calculate your assignment grade simply divide the points received by the total points possible and multiply by 100.

### **Exams: 60% of grade (each exam worth 20% of final grade)**

Three exams will be administered for this course. Each exam will involve problem solving and some use of SPSS. Each exam will essentially be a take home exam, allowing you 27 hours to complete all of the questions. On the Friday following the final homework assignment for each exam, the test will be posted in the assignment section at 9:00 AM. You will be instructed to open the exam in Word format and complete all of the questions much like you do for your homework assignments. The exam must be resubmitted by Saturday at 12:00 noon. The exam will be similar to your homework assignment questions and will require the use of SPSS and Excel or a calculator. The exam will be resubmitted just like homework assignments are submitted. The dates for the exams are strict and non-negotiable. If you have unable to complete the exams during these times because of a documented emergency, a make-up by proctor will be the only option.

The tests should not be administered until after all prerequisite assignments have been completed and graded. Completing a test before completing prerequisite assignments will result in a 0 for all non-completed prerequisite assignments. You will be allowed to use all completed homework assignments for each exam. You will also be allowed to use your textbook or other written materials.

### **Project: 20% of grade**

At the completion of all assignments and exams, you will be required to submit a statistics project demonstrating your competency working with statistics and SPSS. This project will require you to select 3 to 4 variables from the data sets provided with your textbook (GSS or the ISSP) and conduct an analysis of the data. You will be required to provide appropriate averages and variations of each variable. You will be required to provide an appropriate graphic display of the variables. Finally, you will be required to test for a relationship between the variables using the appropriate statistical technique. The project should be about 2-4 pages with all appropriate tables, graphs, and a written summary of each step in your analysis.

## **Grading and Evaluation**

Chapter Problems: 20% of Grade

Exams: 60% of grade (each exam worth 20% of final grade)

Project: 20% of grade

## **Grading**

A 90 % and above

B 80 – 89 %

C 70 – 79 %

D 60 – 69 %

F 59 % and below