



SYLLABUS
Advanced Methods of Social Research
Sociology 420, Section 900
Summer II, 2019

Instructor Information

Name Gabe H. Miller
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Office 325C, Academic Building
Enter through 325 or 327

Office Hours

MON 11:35-12:00 – ACAD 325C
TUES 11:35-12:00 – ACAD 325C
WED 11:35-12:00 – ACAD 325C
THUR 1:00-3:00 – *The Village*

And by Appointment

Please note:

Thursday Office Hours are held at
The Village Café & Art979 Gallery in
Downtown Bryan
210 W 26th St, Bryan, TX 77803
Look for me towards the back

Open Classroom

MON 1:00-2:30 – ACAD 308
WED 1:00-2:30 – ACAD 308

Open Classroom hours are available for you to work on assignments, ask questions about Stata, receive any other technical help you might need, and meet with me about any other issues or questions.

Course Information

Classroom ACAD 308
Class Days MTWRF
Class Time 10:00-11:35am

Prerequisites Sociology majors should have taken and completed Methods of Social Research (SOC1 220) prior to taking SOC1 420.

Course Credit Hours 3

Required Course Materials

Healey, Joseph F. 2015. *Statistics: A Tool for Social Research (10th Edition)*. Stamford: Cengage Learning.
ISBN: 978-1285458854

Other readings are available on the course website (listed in schedule as "WEB").

We will use **Excel and the statistical software Stata** for applications with real databases. Stata will be made available in class. I invite you to bring your own laptop to class if you have one available that can run this software. The Department of Sociology has a few loaner laptops that can be used during class time on a first-come first-serve basis.

Writing Intensive

This course is a writing intensive course and will count toward your university-mandated writing course degree requirement.

Course Description:

Welcome to **Sociology 420**, Sociology's upper division undergraduate course on advanced methods of social research. In this course, we will cover major topics related to (1) descriptive statistics; (2) inferential statistics; (3) bivariate measures of association; and (4) multivariate techniques.

Learning Outcomes:

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

- Understand the basic principles of social science research and identify advanced concepts related to social science research
- Investigate social issues using research methods, empirical data, and statistical software
- Interpret results of social science data analysis and identify poorly used or reported statistics as well as limitations of social science research
- Apply common quantitative techniques using statistical software
- Generate, present, and interpret, statistical tables, charts, and graphs based on analysis of empirical data
- Write about and discuss social scientific results and public policy implications of data analysis

Course Requirements and Grading:

A breakdown of course requirements and how each will contribute to your grade is included below. Students will be asked to demonstrate their knowledge in a variety of ways. There will be two exams, several in-class quizzes/assignments, take-home/lab assignments, and a research paper. Reading will be required every week.

In-Class Quizzes/Assignments:

In-class quizzes and assignments will draw from the assigned readings. Thus, you should actively engage with the readings such that you can summarize an author's thesis statement and critically evaluate it or summarize the main points on readings regarding methodological information. We will periodically have in-class quizzes/assignments, designed to ensure that you are keeping up with the reading. Your in-class quiz/assignment grade will use the top 10 grades on quizzes/assignments. There will be 15 quizzes/assignments offered on various dates in the semester, determined at the discretion of the instructor. In-class quizzes/assignments will be worth 10 points each, totaling 100 points (10% of your final grade). In-class quizzes/assignments cannot be made up unless you provide documentation of a University excused absence.

Homework/Lab Assignments:

These assignments will explore empirical exercises using real data with Excel and/or Stata. Students will present data of statistical analysis and interpret results in technically rigorous reports. Assignments may include calculations, multiple choice questions, and short answer questions as well. Details about each assignment will be provided on eCampus. There will be 10 homework/lab assignments worth 15 points each, totaling 150 points (15% of your final grade).

(continued below)

Research Paper:

Throughout the semester, students will work on and conduct an original research project related to a sociological topic of their choosing. They must review, cite, and discuss prior literature relevant to their topic, derive testable hypotheses, collect and analyze data to test their hypotheses, and discuss the implications of their results. The paper should follow a basic research paper format with citations following ASA (American Sociological Association) guidelines. The paper should be 10-12 double spaced pages at *minimum*. A comprehensive description of the assignment with expectations and grading rubric will be available in the first week of classes. The description will provide more information on criteria and evaluation as well as due dates. Students may elect to complete the assignment on their own or may form groups of no more than three students. The Research Paper is worth 300 points (30% of your grade).

Scheduled Exams:

You will take two exams consisting of calculations, multiple choice questions, short answer questions and essays. The Mid-Term Exam will be taken online and is worth 200 points (20% of your grade). The Final Exam will take place in class and will be worth 250 points (25% of your grade). A review sheet will be made available in class prior to each exam, and students will be allowed to bring a handwritten 3" x 5" note card to the final exam for reference.

Important: Cell-phone is strictly prohibited during exams. Please turn off all electronic devices and keep them out of sight. If I see a cellphone or other electronic device during an exam, I reserve the right to pick up the exam and give the student a zero on the exam.

Make-up Exams and Lateness: If it is at all avoidable, please do not miss or be late to an exam! While I encourage students to contact me as soon as possible after missing an exam, students are required to contact me no later than one week after a missed exam, except in cases of extreme illness/injury or death in the family. Make-up exams are not allowed without a documented excuse of the reason for the absence. If you know in advance you will miss an exam, please let me know.

If you are late to an exam, you may take the exam as long as no one has finished the exam and left the classroom. If a student has already left the classroom, you will be required to take a make-up exam. I cannot provide extra time to complete the exam. If you arrive with 15 minutes left in class, you will have 15 minutes to complete the exam, as long as no other student has already completed the exam. If you are exceedingly late and have a documented reason for the lateness, you can take the exam as a make-up.

Make-up exams will follow the same format outlined above, but will consist of different questions than the exam given in-class.

All assignments will be read for and graded on writing style and content; please write accordingly and refrain from use of uncommon abbreviations and net slang.

Calculation of Course Grades (See course calendar for dates.)

	Points	Percentage of Final Grade
In-Class Quizzes/Assignments	100	10%
Homework/Lab Assignments	150	15%
Mid-Term Exam	200	20%
Final Exam	250	25%
Research Paper	300	30%
TOTAL	1000	100%

Number of Points Earned	Percentage of Points Earned	Course Grade
900-1000	90% or More	A
800-899	80% - 89%	B
700-799	70% - 79%	C
600-699	60% - 69%	D
599 or Less	59% or Less	F

Access to Grades:

All grades will be posted on eCampus. Hard copies of completed assignments and exams will be available for pick-up during office hours and at the start of each class. I cannot discuss grades over e-mail, as it is a violation of the *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)* to reveal any information about grades in e-mail, even with student permission or at student request. Please verify your eCampus grades often. Discuss grade posting errors/omissions with me immediately.

Extra Credit and Grading on Improvement:

Extra Credit opportunities will not be available. I do not grade “on improvement” I will not respond to any e-mail requesting extra credit or grading on improvement.

Attendance and Borderline Grades

Although I do not grade on attendance, in-class quizzes/assignments will occur frequently throughout the course. I do not post lecture material online – it is your responsibility to gather any notes you have missed. Please provide me with documentation for missed assignments as soon as you are able. Do not wait until the end of the semester. I will not respond to any e-mail requesting rounding or curving borderline grades.

Student Rule 07

The University views class attendance as an individual student responsibility. Students are expected to attend class and to complete all assignments. For information about excused and unexcused absences, see Student Rule 07 at <http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule07>.

Incompletes:

I only give a grade of “incomplete” if there is a clear and compelling reason to do so. This includes those rare circumstances in which a significant crisis (serious illness or injury, or a death in the immediate family) occurs near the end of the semester, preventing the student from completing the course, and for which the student can provide detailed documentation. Incompletes will not be given under any other circumstance. If you feel that you are struggling in the course, please see me after class or during office hours so we can discuss your performance.

Classroom Policies:**Policy on Civility, Respect, and Tolerance:**

Please arrive prepared and on time to class. Arriving late distracts other students and can alter the flow of a class discussion. Please be respectful of the time of other students and the instructor. If you must leave class early, please do so quietly and considerately.

It is almost certain that some of the topics or discussions in class will challenge deeply-held beliefs and viewpoints. Sometimes this challenge and growth can be uncomfortable. I encourage all students to share their viewpoints, since the inclusion of viewpoints of persons from different backgrounds helps develop our understanding of an issue. Another’s viewpoint may conflict with your own. However, I will not allow incivility, disrespect, or intolerance in the classroom. Personal attacks will not be tolerated. You are expected to treat each student and your instructor with respect, and they are expected to treat you with the same respect. If you want to challenge my ideas or views, another student, a reading, or an author, know that all arguments and challenges should be presented respectfully and with factual, verifiable evidence to support your view. Students will receive a warning on the first offense; however, I reserve the right to remove a student from class if I feel as though the student is being disrespectful.

Non-Discrimination Policy

Texas A&M is committed to the fundamental principles of academic freedom, equality of opportunity and human dignity. To fulfill its multiple missions as an institution of higher learning, Texas A&M encourages a climate that values and nurtures collegiality, diversity, pluralism and the uniqueness of the individual within our state, nation and world. All decisions and actions involving students and employees should be based on applicable law and individual merit.

Texas A&M University, in accordance with applicable federal and state law, prohibits discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, or veteran status. Harassment of a student in class, i.e., a pattern of behavior directed against a particular student with the intent of humiliating or intimidating that student will not be tolerated. The mere expression of one’s ideas is not harassment and is fully protected by academic freedom, but personal harassment of individual students is not permitted.

Preferred Name & Preferred Gender Pronouns

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternative name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

Instructor Error:

Please keep an extra copy of each assignment submitted, as well as any graded exam or assignment until after course grades have been posted.

Academic Integrity Statement and Policy:

An Aggie does not lie, cheat, or steal or tolerate those who do.

Upon accepting admission to Texas A&M University, a student immediately assumes a commitment to uphold the Honor Code (above), to accept responsibility for learning, and to follow the philosophy and rules of the Honor System. Students will be required to state their commitment on examinations, research papers, and other academic work. Ignorance of the rules does not exclude any member of the TAMU community from the requirements or the processes of the Honor System.

Plagiarism:

As commonly defined, plagiarism consists of passing off as one's own the ideas, words, writings, etc., which belong to another. In accordance with this definition, you are committing plagiarism if you copy the work of another person and turn it in as your own, even if you have the permission of that person. If you have any questions regarding plagiarism, please consult the latest edition of the *Texas A&M University Student Rules*, under the section "Scholastic Dishonesty."

Policy on Technology Use

Laptops are allowed in class for academic use only. Cell-phones must be on silent and you must refrain from using your cell-phone in class.

Americans with Disabilities Act:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact Disability Services, currently located in the Disability Services building at the Student Services at White Creek complex on west campus or call 979-845-1637. For additional information, visit <http://disability.tamu.edu>.

Title IX and Statement on Limits to Confidentiality

Texas A&M University and the College of Liberal Arts are committed to fostering a learning environment that is safe and productive for all. University policies and federal and state laws provide guidance for achieving such an environment. Although class materials are generally considered confidential pursuant to student record policies and laws, University employees — including instructors — cannot maintain confidentiality when it conflicts with their responsibility to report certain issues that jeopardize the health and safety of our community. As the instructor, I must report (per Texas A&M System Regulation 08.01.01) the following information to other University offices if you share it with me, even if you do not want the disclosed information to be shared:

- Allegations of sexual assault, sexual discrimination, or sexual harassment when they involve TAMU students, faculty, or staff, or third parties visiting campus.

These reports may trigger contact from a campus official who will want to talk with you about the incident that you have shared. In many cases, it will be your decision whether or not you wish to speak with that individual. If you would like to talk about these events in a more confidential setting, you are encouraged to make an appointment with the Student Counseling Service (<https://scs.tamu.edu/>).

Students and faculty can report non-emergency behavior that causes them to be concerned at <http://tellsomebody.tamu.edu>.

Tentative Course Calendar

Note: Readings should be completed before class time on the dates indicated below.

PART I: Intro to Methods of Social Science Research

T 07/02 Intro to Course | Intro to Research Methods

Required Readings Healey: Chapter 1

Web: Syllabus; Assignments; Best – Damned Lies and Statistics; Daniels & Minot – Ch. 1, Ch. 15

W 07/03 Intro to Research Methods (Continued) + LAB 1

Required Readings: Healey: Chapter 1

Web: Best – Damned Lies and Statistics; Daniels & Minot – Ch. 4, Ch. 5, Ch. 1, Ch. 15

R 07/04 No Class – University Holiday

F 07/05 White Logic, White Methods; Objectivity, Science, and Methods

Required Readings Web: Best – Damned Lies and Statistics

Homework/Lab Assignment 1 Due Sunday 7/7 – 11:59pm

PART II: Basics and Descriptive Statistics

M 07/08 Basic Descriptive Statistics & Sample Weights

Required Readings Healey: Chapter 2

T 07/09 LAB 2

Required Readings Web: Daniels & Minot – Ch. 2, Ch. 6

Paper Topic Selection (& Group Membership Details) Due; Plagiarism Quiz Due

W 07/10 Measures of Central Tendency + LAB 3

Required Readings Healey: Chapter 3

Homework/Lab Assignment 2 Due – 11:59pm

R 07/11 Measures of Dispersion + LAB 4

Required Readings Healey: Chapter 4

F 07/12 The Normal Curve & LAB 5

Required Readings Healey: Chapter 5

Web: Daniels & Minot – Ch. 7

Homework/Lab Assignment 3 Due – 11:59pm

Homework/Lab Assignment 4 Due Sunday 7/14 – 11:59pm

Tentative Course Calendar (Continued)

Note: Readings should be completed before class time on the dates indicated below

PART III: Inferential Statistics & Hypothesis Testing**M 07/15 Intro to Inferential Statistics + LAB Append**

Required Readings Healey: Chapter 6

T 07/16 Estimation Procedures

Required Readings Healey: Chapter 7

W 07/17 LAB 6 & 7

Homework/Lab Assignment 5 Due – 11:59pm

R 07/18 Hypothesis Testing I: The One-Sample Case + LAB 8

Required Readings Healey: Chapter 8

Web: Daniels & Minot – Ch. 8

F 07/19 Hypothesis Testing II: The Two-Sample Case + LAB 9

Required Readings Healey: Chapter 9

Web: Daniels & Minot – Ch. 9

Research Paper Rough Draft Check Due

Mid-Term Exam Review Sheet Distributed In Class

Homework/Lab Assignment 6 Due – 11:59pm

Mid-Term Exam (ONLINE) Due Sunday, 07/23 by 11:59pm

M 07/22 Hypothesis Testing III: Analysis of Variance + LAB 10

Required Readings Healey: Chapter 10

Web: Daniels & Minot – Ch. 10

T 07/23 Hypothesis Testing IV: Chi Square + LAB 11

Required Readings Healey: Chapter 11

Web: Daniels & Minot – Ch. 11

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Tentative Course Calendar (Continued)

Note: Readings should be completed before class time on the dates indicated below

PART IV: Bivariate Association

**W 07/24 Bivariate Association for Nominal- and Ordinal-Level Variables
+ LAB 12**

Required Readings Healey: Chapter 12

**R 07/25 Association between Variables Measured at the Interval-Ratio Level
+ LAB 13**

Required Readings Healey: Chapter 13

Homework/Lab Assignment 7 Due – 11:59pm

F 07/26 CATCH UP DAY (if needed)

Peer Reviews DUE

PART V: Partial Correlation, Multiple Regression, and Correlation

M 07/29 Partial Correlation, Multiple Regression, and Correlation

Required Readings Healey: Chapter 15

Final Paper Early Review DUE (Optional)

Homework/Lab Assignment 8 Due – 11:59pm

T 07/30 Partial Correlation, Multiple Regression, and Correlation

Required Readings Healey: Chapter 15

W 07/31 LAB 14

Final Paper Early Review Feedback Returned to Students

Homework/Lab Assignment 9 Due – 11:59pm

R 08/01 Linear Regression Analysis + LAB 15

Required Readings Web: Daniels & Minot – Ch. 12, Ch. 13

F 08/02 Regression Analysis with Categorical Dependent Variables + LAB 16

Required Readings Web: Daniels & Minot – Ch. 14

Final Exam Review Sheet Distributed In Class

FINAL PAPER DUE (Group Peer & Self Evaluation Due)

Homework/Lab Assignment 10 Due Sunday 8/4 – 11:59pm

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Tentative Course Calendar (Continued)

Note: Readings should be completed before class time on the dates indicated below

REVIEW & FINAL EXAM

M 08/05 In Class Review Session

Bring Final Exam Review (with questions)

T 08/06 NO CLASS

NO CLASS

W 08/07 FINAL EXAM

FINAL EXAM (IN CLASS) – Bring your handwritten 3x5 notecard, pen/pencil

FINAL EXAM TIME – 10:30-12:30 - *Please note change in time
