COURSE CONTENT

Regardless of one’s chosen career, college level professionals are constantly presented with statistical information. Whenever those who are not knowledgeable in statistics come across any statistically based information, they have to either unquestionably accept what others have concluded from it or find someone to interpret it for them. Either way, one runs the risk of being deceived or even outright lied to because of such a critical information gap. Such ignorance can be potentially costly to both the individual and their career. Sociology 3112 will seek to help students in the social sciences become acquainted with and understand basic statistics in the most straightforward and least threatening ways possible.

COURSE GOAL

Each student will be able to understand and manipulate basic statistical information on an undergraduate level.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Most upper-level, undergraduate courses in the social sciences require students to demonstrate mastery of material through successful completion of examinations, assignments, labs, and class attendance and participation. For SOC 3112, 30% of the course grade will be generated from the completion of Chapter Exercises in the core text. Another 30% of the grade will come from weekly quizzes on the chapter material assigned. 30% more of the grade will be earned through completing assignments in STATLAB Online. The remaining 10% of the course grade will reflect class attendance/participation (notations are made of the level of responses during discussions). The purpose of this type of system is to assure maximum results through an ongoing effort by students to stay abreast of course materials, particularly the assigned readings. Success will be
greatly impacted by familiarity with information before each class period, with students coming prepared to participate in class discussions.

REQUIRED TEXTS  (Please buy the BUNDLE!)

Francis, Gregory & Ian Neath. 2012. STATLAB Online. SAGE.

SPECIAL ACCOMODATIONS

The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services (CDS), 162 Olpin Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All written information in this course can be made available in alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services. Please discuss any concerns with the professor as soon as possible (www.hr.utah.edu/o eo/aca/guide/faculty/).

GRADING CRITERIA

A—An excellent work in all or nearly all aspects of the assignment. The student exemplifies originality of ideas, superior depth of thought, and extensive grasp of topics as well as technical superiority.
B—A competent work with a lapse here or there. Ideas are clear and properly expressed; the writing is technically solid. The assignment is effective in meeting all criteria but does not rise to sustained distinction.
C—An adequate work, but not good. Student ideas tend to be oversimplified, reductionistic, and lack sufficient explanation or exploration. Problems may also exist with grammar, logic, or ability to express thoughts in a manner reflective of a junior level class.
D—A minimal effort by the student—the work is marred by problems with almost all aspects of the assignment—not considered a competent performance.
E—A failing mark, generally reserved for assignments which are not submitted or miss the target on virtually every area of the project.
+/- —Plus or minus may be given in addition to each of the grade levels when deemed appropriate by the professor.
CHAPTER EXERCISES

At the conclusion of each of the 14 chapters in the text, the authors include a set of exercises designed to aid in understanding and applying the information. Students will complete the even-numbered questions ONLY for each exercise and submit those the week the chapter is assigned. In this way, students come to class prepared to participate fully in the discussion of the material. At the end of the term, the lowest 4 grades will be dropped, and 10 grades will be averaged for a final score reflecting 30% of the course grade. Please type all responses on an 8 ½” by 11” sheet of white paper with name at the top. Please do NOT type questions.

WEEKLY QUIZZES

At the end of each weekly class, students will take a brief quiz designed to test their knowledge of the most important aspects of the material under discussion that night. At the end of the term, the lowest 3 grades will be dropped, and 10 grades will be averaged for a final score, reflecting 30% of the course grade. All testing material will be provided by the professor. Please bring an automatic lead pencil to take the test, and a red pen to grade after the test is completed.

STATLAB ONLINE

A portion of social statistics typically includes hands-on involvement with data and information in the form of labs. Rather than require night students to stay after classes each week, STATLAB Online is provided so that students may work at their own opportunity and pace throughout the week. STATLAB is an online laboratory for introductory statistics, where students participate in behavioral experiments, and gather and analyze their own data using the statistical techniques taught in the course. By working with their own data, STATLAB provides a new way for students to appreciate the relevance of statistical analyses for understanding human behavior. 12 statistical topics are available (about one per week). At the end of the term, the lowest 2 grades will be dropped, and 10 grades will be averaged for a final score reflecting 30% of the course grade. PLEASE REMEMBER ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE SUBMITTED THROUGHOUT SEMESTER—DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE END OF TERM TO COMPLETE THE LAB WORK OR SEVERE PENALTIES WILL BE AFFIXED.

CLASS PARTICIPATION

Active participation is expected in SOC 3112, and 10% of the course grade is generated from this effort. The course will be conducted in a Socratic format with emphasis on student contributions to encourage analysis, critical thinking, preparation, and long-term learning. Students should be prepared to discuss the subject scheduled each day on the calendar. Cards will be marked for responses, based on the quality of comments offered: + (plus), √ (check), or 0 (zero)—roughly representing the grades of A, B and E. Excused absences such as illness or work may receive up to ½ points, while those not excused will be marked as zero, without possibility of make-up (unless specific arrangements are agreed upon with the professor in advance).

CLASS CALENDAR

10 Jan  Introduction to statistics; presentation of syllabus; introduction of STATLAB Online
17 Jan  The what and why of statistics
        Frankfort—Chpt 1

24 Jan  Organization of information: frequency distributions;
        Graphic presentation
        Frankfort—Chpts 2 & 3

31 Jan  Measures of central tendency
        Frankfort—Chpt 4

7 Feb   Measures of variability
        Frankfort—Chpt 5

14 Feb  The normal distribution------------------------LABS 1 THRU 4 MUST BE SUBMITTED BY NOW
        Frankfort—Chpt 6

21 Feb  Sampling and sampling distributions
        Frankfort—Chpt 7

28 Feb  Estimation
        Frankfort—Chpt 8

7 Mar   Testing hypotheses
        Frankfort—Chpt 9

11--15 Mar  SPRING BREAK!   NO CLASS!

21 Mar  Relationship between two variables—cross tabulation
        Frankfort—Chpt 10------------------ LABS 5 THRU 8 MUST BE SUBMITTED BY NOW

28 Mar  The chi-square test
        Frankfort—Chpt 11

4 Apr   Measures of association for nominal and ordinal variables
        Frankfort—Chpt 12

11 Apr  Regression & correlation
        Frankfort—Chpt 13

18 Apr  Analysis of variance------------------------LABS 9 THRU 12 MUST BE SUBMITTED BY NOW
        Frankfort—Chpt 14