Sociology 3112-070
Introduction to Social Statistics
Spring 2013
University of Utah

Instructor: Tom Quinn, M.S. and M.A.
"Office": BEHS 318
Office Hours: Before and after class and by appointment
Teaching Assistant(s): TBA

Percent of Total Population without Health Insurance Coverage, 2000

So what's this class all about, anyway?

How is it that pollsters are able to predict how the entire country is going to vote in a presidential election after talking to only 1000 people? How can social scientists draw conclusions about a large population after studying only a small sample? This course explores the answers to those questions and more as we take a look at both descriptive and inferential statistics within the context of the social sciences. The ultimate goal of this class is to improve your critical thinking skills and make all of you more discerning consumers of information.

Course requirements and grading

Class attendance is an essential component of success in this course. Because we'll be going over so much material in such a short amount of time, missing even one class could be detrimental to your grade. Your final grade will be based on the following: exams (50 percent), homework (15 percent), group quizzes (20 percent) and labs (15 percent). **I do not, under any circumstances, accept late work.** My grade breakdown is as follows:

A   94%-100%

A-   90%-93.9%

B+   87%-89.9%

B   84%-86.9%

B-   80%-83.9%

C+   77%-79.9%
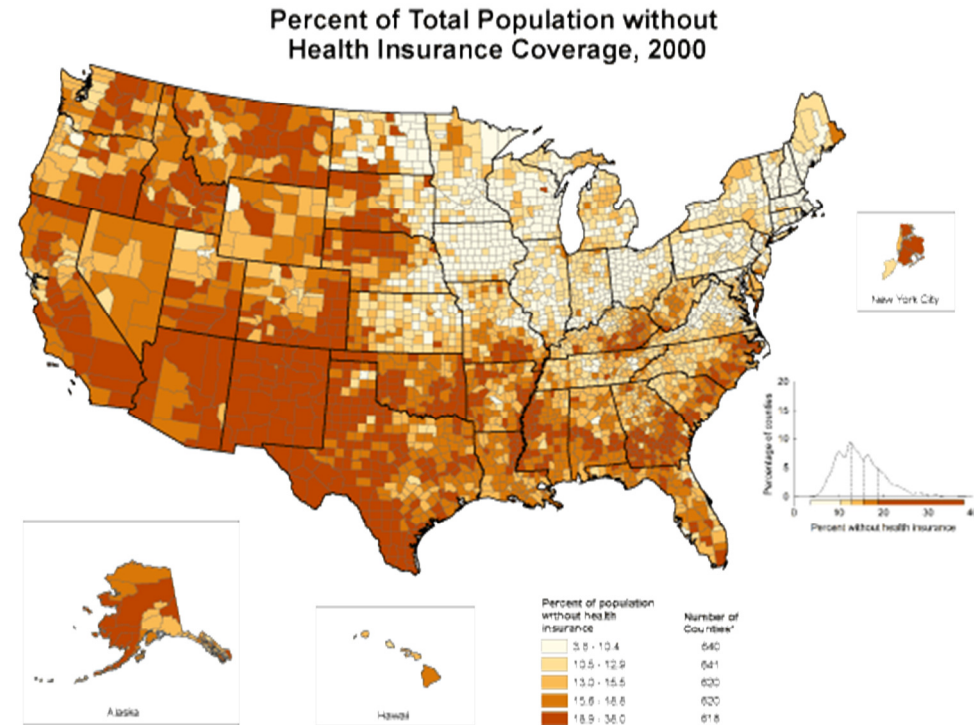
C	74%-76.9%
C-	70%-73.9%
D+	67%-69.9%
D	64%-66.9%
D-	60%-63.9%
E	0%-59

Exams

There will be three exams over the course of the semester. Each exam will consist of a combination of short answer questions and calculations and will cover concepts addressed in class and in assigned readings. Each exam will be worth approximately 17 percent of your final grade.

Homework

There will be a total of six homework assignments, the purpose of which is to prepare you for the abovementioned exams. These assignments are graded on a credit/no credit basis, and each assignment will be worth approximately 2.5 percent of your final grade.

Group Quizzes

We will conclude each class with a quiz that is to be completed in groups of 3-5 students. While graded, these quizzes are primarily designed to serve as an opportunity for you to assess your understanding of the material covered in class that day. Each quiz will be worth approximately 2-3 percent of your final grade.

Labs

In your first class you will be required to sign up for ONE hour of lab time per week: T or H 8am- 8:50am or W 8:35am - 9:25am. Labs meet in BEH S 101. A more specific lab syllabus will be distributed on the first day of class.

Can I, like, get any extra credit?

Yes. You may earn extra credit by bringing in newspaper and/or journal articles that incorporate any of the topics we go over in class. I reserve the right to assess how much extra credit is awarded for each article. Additional extra credit will be given for instances where you can point out mistakes made by the author(s).   Expect to receive about five to 10 points per article, and be aware that I will only allow extra credit to "bump your grade" by one letter grade. That means you can go from a C- to a C or a B to a B+, but you can't go from a D to an A based solely on extra credit.

Course materials

You will need a calculator with a square root function. It doesn't need to be anything fancy, but please remember to bring it to class.

I will provide online notes as well as links to videos, websites, etc. that will be useful in furthering your understanding of the material discussed in class. I also highly recommend that you purchase *Social Statistics for a Diverse Society* by Chava Frankfort-Nachmias and Anna Leon-Guerrero. You can get a copy of the 2005 edition (which is my personal favorite) on Amazon or half.com for about a dollar. Please don't go out and spend $100 on the new version. The older ones are almost identical.

My advice to you

Many students find the material in this course challenging. Having said that, I am confident that every student is capable of succeeding in this course provided he or she is willing to put in the necessary effort. If you start falling behind or feeling overwhelmed, please talk to me. I am more than happy to meet with you outside of class to answer any questions that you might have. Be aware, however, that "cramming" is not an effective strategy for success in this course. If you wait until the night before an exam to talk to me, you will probably be disappointed in your grade (I'm not saying it can't be done; I'm merely saying that those who have done it successfully are few and far between).

What happens if I cheat?

Following the Student Code means zero-tolerance for academic misconduct in this course. "Academic misconduct," according to the University of Utah Student Code, *"includes, but is not limited to, cheating, misrepresenting one's work, inappropriately collaborating, plagiarism, and fabrication or falsification of information…It also includes facilitating academic misconduct by intentionally helping or attempting to help another to commit an act of academic misconduct."* All instances of academic misconduct will be referred to the Department Chair or the Dean of the College. For detailed definitions and possible academic sanctions please see: http://www.admin.utah.edu/ppmanual/8/8-10.html.

What do I do if have a learning disability or need other accommodations?

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 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.

TENTATIVE Class Schedule

Week 1: Introduction to Statistics, Key Terminology

Week 2: Frequency distributions and Graphic Presentation

Week 3: Measures of Central Tendency

Week 4: Measures of Variability

Week 5: **EXAM #1; HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS 1 AND 2 DUE**

Week 6: No class (Spring Break)

Week 7: The Normal Distribution

Week 8: Sampling and the Sampling Distribution

Week 9: Estimation, Introduction to Hypothesis Testing

Week 10: More Hypothesis Testing

Week 11: **EXAM #2; HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS 3 AND 4 DUE**

Week 12: Relationships Between Two Variables, Cross-tabulation

Week 13: Measures of Association for Nominal and Ordinal Variables

Week 14: Bivariate Regression

Week 15: ANOVA

Week 16: **EXAM #3; HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS 5 AND 6 DUE**

Please be advised that this syllabus is only a rough outline of the course. I reserve the right to make changes in accordance with the needs of the class. Per University policy, the class will be notified prior to the implementation of any such changes.