

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN**  
**STEVE HICKS SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

**Course Number:** SW 318

**Unique Number:** 58870

**Semester:** Spring 2020

**Meeting Time:** T TH 3:30 p.m.-5:00 p.m.

**Meeting Place:** SSW 1.212

**Instructor:** Chun Liu, MSSA

**Office:** SSW 3.112

**E-mail:** chunliu@utexas.edu

**Office Hours:** T 2:30 p.m.-3:30 p.m.  
(Other times by appointment)

**SOCIAL WORK STATISTICS**

**I. STANDARDIZED COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course is one of the two courses in research for undergraduate social work majors. Completion of the liberal arts math requirement is a prerequisite for this course. This course provides a basic introduction to the conceptual and quantitative tools used to describe and interpret data in the conduct of social work practice and research. Students will learn how to select, calculate, and interpret appropriate statistics applicable to common data analysis situations related to direct practice, administration and planning, and policy. The course provides students with the opportunity to acquire personal computer skills in a statistical software to calculate statistics and present results. Students are required to complete SW318 prior to entering the major. Students majoring in social work must earn a grade of C or better in this course.

**Quantitative Reasoning:** This course carries the Quantitative Reasoning flag. Quantitative Reasoning courses are designed to equip you with skills that are necessary for understanding the types of quantitative arguments you will regularly encounter in your adult and professional life. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from your use of quantitative skills to analyze real-world problems.

**II. STANDARDIZED COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Upon completion of this course, the students should be able to:

1. Understand and explain the logic of the research process and its relationship to social work knowledge and practice;
2. Explain, calculate, and interpret descriptive statistics including: basic terminology, scales, notations, frequency distributions, measures of central tendency, measures of dispersion, and the normal distribution;
3. Read and analyze basic charts, graphs, and contingency tables;
4. Explain the logic of hypothesis testing in inferential statistics;
5. Explain, calculate, and interpret inferential statistics including t-tests, ANOVA, correlation, regression, and chi-square;
6. Identify and apply the correct statistical technique to the research question;

7. Understand that statistics are value neutral, but can be used to support discriminatory and prejudicial value positions contrary to the values of social work, especially against special populations (e.g., women, people of color, people with disabilities, gays and lesbians);
8. Use computer technology to compute descriptive and inferential statistics; and
9. State several examples of how statistics are used as a tool in the “real world” by social service agencies to analyze client outcomes.

### III. TEACHING METHODS

The primary means of instruction will be informal lectures (i.e., students are encouraged to ask questions and make comments during lectures), class discussions, and in-class exercises using computers and other materials. Students will be expected to have completed the assigned reading before class, to actively participate in class, and to collaborate with one another. IBM SPSS Statistics is the primary statistics software package to be used in class and in assignments.

### IV. REQUIRED TEXT AND MATERIALS

#### Required Text

Frankfort-Nachmias, C., & Leon-Guerrero, A. (2018). *Social statistics for a diverse society* (8<sup>th</sup> Ed). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

#### Software

You will need access to SPSS version 23 or higher in this class. You can purchase a copy of SPSS Grad Pack for students from the UT Campus Computer Store. In addition, you can get access to SPSS from the Computer Lab in the Learning Resource Center, as well as the PhD Student Lounge (SSW 3.112).

If you need to work through the SPSS tutorials, you can access them on UT’s website at: <https://stat.utexas.edu/training/software-tutorials>

#### Computer Requirements

Students will need a laptop computer to complete homework assignments, exams, and in-class exercises. If you do not have a laptop, you may borrow one from the Steve Hicks School of Social Work’s Learning Resource Center (LRC). Computers are available from the LRC desk on a “first come / first served” basis, so plan ahead. **In order to use the SSW computers you need your UT EID and password.**

If borrowing a computer, you will need to make these arrangements before class begins.

#### Canvas

Most course materials will be posted on Canvas. Use Canvas to find:

- Homework assignments and exams to be completed online;
- Practice problems sets;

- Datasets to be used in assignments and exams;
- Course materials such as the syllabus;
- Slide presentations used in lectures;
- All course announcements;
- Access to email addresses to ask questions about assignments.

While the University has invested significant resources in support of Canvas, there are still periodic outages and slow-downs. **If you wait until the last minute to complete assignments on Canvas, you may encounter difficulties.**

## V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

**Course requirements and grade assignment:** The final grade will be computed from grades on homework (40%), four exams (50%), and students' attendance, preparation, and participation in class (10%). Excessive absences will result in grade reductions per the policy described below. Optional extra credit assignments may be offered during the semester.

### **Class attendance, preparation, and participation (10% of grade)**

It is important that social work practitioners take responsibility for their own continued learning and for acting in a professional manner. Thus, students are expected to maintain good attendance, to complete assigned readings before the class meeting for which they are assigned, to compile questions regarding the material for class discussion, and to actively participate throughout class meetings. There will also be in-class group activities and participation in these will also count towards this portion of the grade.

Students are expected to attend all classes and to arrive punctually. Coming late and/or leaving early by more than 10 minutes will be considered a "missed" class. While it is expected students will attend all classes if at all possible, students may have up to three permitted "misses" in the event of unexpected emergencies, medical appointments, university-sanctioned events, or religious holidays. To have a permitted miss, you must email the instructor before that class period. Missing more than three classes will result in a 2% per missed class deduction from the student's final grade. So, students are advised to save permitted misses for emergencies. To encourage class attendance, those students who miss no classes will earn an extra 2% to be applied to their final grade. As in all professional settings, please inform the instructor if you will be late or not attend class.

In the event a class must be cancelled, students will be provided an assignment to help them practice the material for that day. Conscientious completion of such assignments will count as attendance for that class. Assignments that are not completed or are scored less than 50% will be considered an unexcused absence.

### **Homework assignments (40% of grade)**

There are several scheduled homework assignments, most of which will be completed on Canvas. The purposes of the homework assignments are to allow you to review conceptual content and to provide you with opportunities to practicing solving statistical problems using the computer and SPSS. When you have finished Canvas assignments and submitted it for grading, you will receive immediate feedback. All homework assignments must be completed prior to the exam for that material. At the end of that period, access to the homework will expire. Failure to submit homework during the assigned period will result in a “zero” as your score for the assignment.

For the assignments on Canvas, each student's homework assignment will be drawn randomly from a test bank of questions. Therefore, each time an assignment is begun, the question set will contain comparable, but not identical, questions. The homework assignment may be redone as many times as you wish since you will be given a different selection of questions each time you redo the assignment. If you redo homework, your grade will be based on your highest score achieved. For any assignments where questions are not randomly drawn, the instructor will provide multiple versions of the assignment and will record only the highest grade earned.

NOTE: Canvas does not save your answers until you have “Submitted” the assignment. If your computer malfunctions or you become disconnected, you will have to redo the assignment. Furthermore, if you click out of the assignment without saving or submitting your answers, Canvas may freeze up and prevent you from accessing the questions for that homework assignment. Please have all necessary files and data sets open before you begin taking the homework assignment, and be sure to save your answers before clicking out of the assignment to try to prevent this from occurring.

Students are expected to complete their homework assignments individually. Although I have no way to be certain that students satisfy this expectation, many exam questions will be similar to what you will practice in homework. Therefore, doing your own work will likely improve your exam scores. If you have a difficult time answering homework questions or using Canvas, your performance on exams will likely be poor. Therefore, you are strongly encouraged to meet with the instructor to address any problems you are encountering.

### **Tests (50% of grade)**

There will be four tests, each time-limited to 75 minutes. Tests will cover all material assigned for and discussed in class. Questions on the tests will include conceptual questions from the text and lectures as well as statistical problems to solve using a computer and SPSS. Although each test will focus mainly on the content in the classes since the last test, class content is inevitably cumulative. Given this, students are encouraged to prepare for tests by focusing on the content since the last test and also reviewing the material from the entire semester. Grades on exams will be released only after all students have completed the exam. Review assignments and Q & A sessions will be provided before each test.

Tests are not open-book. All materials needed to complete the exam will be available from Canvas. Unless explicitly stated by the instructor at the time of the test, no other materials, software, online content may be used in completing the exam. The use of email or other types of

communication is also not permitted. Computer activity during the tests will be monitored and any violation of these policies will be treated as scholastic dishonesty and result in a grade of zero for that exam.

Exams are to be taken at the scheduled time. Only in the case of emergencies and then only with instructor approval will make-up exams be offered. Please notify the instructor of the situation as soon as it is reasonably possible. The date and time for the makeup exam will be scheduled at a time that is mutually convenient for the student and the instructor.

## VI. GRADES

94.0 and Above	A
90.0 to 93.999	A-
87.0 to 89.999	B+
84.0 to 86.999	B
80.0 to 83.999	B-
77.0 to 79.999	C+
74.0 to 76.999	C
70.0 to 73.999	C-
67.0 to 69.999	D+
64.0 to 66.999	D
60.0 to 63.999	D-
Below 60.0	F

## VII. CLASS POLICIES

**Canvas:** The instructor uses Canvas as the primary means of managing course materials. All course materials will be posted on the course's site. The site may also be used to communicate and collaborate online, to post grades, to give online quizzes or surveys. Students are responsible for checking this site regularly for class announcements and for new postings. Support in using Canvas can be obtained from the ITS Help Desk by calling 475-9400 between 8AM-6PM on Monday through Friday.

**Late Assignment Policies:** Except in the case of extreme emergencies, and then only with prior permission from the professor, late assignments will not be accepted without penalty. **Students will lose 3 points for each day that an assignment is late.** If the due date is a problem, then the student must contact the professor and negotiate another due date at least **48 hours PRIOR** to the date specified in the course syllabus.

**Incompletes:** Students are expected to complete all course work by the last day of class and to complete all assignments by the dates due. Only in emergency situations will an incomplete grade be given for a course and only when, prior to the emergency, the student has been in attendance and has done satisfactory work. If an incomplete grade should be assigned, there will be a written agreement with the instructor about when and how the work will be completed.

**Computer and Other Electronic Device Use Policy:** Students are expected to use laptops and handheld computers in class for class related purposes only. To engage in other types of computer use and/or electronics use (e.g., accepting or making phone calls, texting, surfing the net, etc.) is unprofessional and disruptive to the course. Thus, students who violate this policy may be asked to leave the classroom.

**Course and Instructor Evaluations:** At the end of the semester, the standard Course Instructor Survey (CIS) provided by the University of Texas at Austin will be used to evaluate the course. The CIS offers provides a systematic, campus--- wide method of evaluating courses and instructors. I hope that every student will complete the CIS.

## **VIII. UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS HONOR CODE.** The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

**PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT AND CIVILITY IN THE CLASSROOM.** The professor expects students to act as professionals in class. This means students should arrive on time for class, be prepared to participate in the class discussion, and show respect for one another's opinions. A course brings together a group of diverse individuals with various backgrounds. Students are influenced and shaped by such factors as race, ethnicity, gender, sex, physical abilities, religious and political beliefs, national origins, and sexual orientations, among others. We expect to learn from each other in an atmosphere of positive engagement and mutual respect. This atmosphere includes working intentionally to recognize and dismantle racism, sexism, heterosexism, and ableism in the classroom. Social Work also deals with complex and controversial issues. These issues may be challenging and uncomfortable, and it would be impossible to offer a substantive classroom experience that did not include potentially difficult conversations relating to challenging issues. In this environment, we will be exposed to diverse ideas and opinions, and sometimes we will not agree with the ideas expressed by others. Nevertheless, the professor requires that students engage one another with civility, respect, and professionalism.

**UNANTICIPATED DISTRESS.** Students may experience unexpected and/or distressing reactions to course readings, videos, conversations, and assignments. If so, students are encouraged to inform the professor. The professor can be responsive and supportive regarding students' participation in course assignments and activities, but students are responsible for communicating clearly what kind of support is desired. If counseling is needed, students may

contact a service provider of their choosing, including the UT Counseling Center at 512-471-3515 or online at <https://cmhc.utexas.edu/>.

**POLICY ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION.** Public social networks are not private. Even when open only to approved or invited members, users cannot be certain that privacy will exist among the general membership of sites. If social work students choose to participate in such forums, please assume that anything posted can be seen, read, and critiqued. What is said, posted, linked to, commented on, uploaded, subscribed to, etc., can be accessed and archived, posing potential harm to professional reputations and prospective careers.

Social work students who use social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) and other forms of electronic communication (e.g. blogs) must be mindful of how their communication may be perceived by clients, colleagues, faculty, and others. Social work students are expected to make every effort to minimize material which could be considered inappropriate for a professional social worker in training. Because of this, social work students are advised to manage security settings at their most private levels and avoid posting information/photos or using any language that could jeopardize their professional image.

Students are asked to consider the amount of personal information posted on these sites and are obliged to block any client access to involvement in the students' social networks. Client material should not be referred to in any form of electronic media, including *any* information that might lead to the identification of a client or compromise client confidentiality in *any* way. Additionally, students must critically evaluate any material that is posted regarding community agencies and professional relationships, as certain material could violate the standards set by the School of Social Work, the Texas Code of Conduct for Social Workers, and/or the NASW Code of Ethics.

Social work students should consider that they will be representing professional social work practice as well as The University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work program while in the classroom, the university community, and the broader area communities.

**POLICY ON SCHOLASTIC DISHONESTY.** Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, the student may refer to the Web Site of the Student Judicial Services, Office of the Dean of Students: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/>.

**USE OF COURSE MATERIALS.** The materials used in this course, including, but not limited to exams, quizzes, and homework assignments, are copyright protected works. Any unauthorized duplication of the course materials is a violation of federal law and may result in disciplinary action being taken against the student. Additionally, the sharing of course materials without the specific, express approval of the professor may be a violation of the University's Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty, which could result in further disciplinary action. This sharing includes, among other things, uploading class materials to websites for the purpose of distributing those materials to other current or future students.

**DOCUMENTED DISABILITY STATEMENT.** Any student who requires special accommodations must obtain a letter that documents the disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement (471- 6259 voice or 471-4641 TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing). A student should present the letter to the professor at the beginning of the semester so that needed accommodations can be discussed and followed. The student should remind the professor of any testing accommodations no later than five business days before an exam. For more information, visit: <http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/>.

**RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS.** By UT Austin policy, students must notify the professor of a pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If the student must miss a class, examination, work assignment, or project in order to observe a religious holy day, the professor will give the student an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

**TITLE IX REPORTING.** In accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the University of Texas at Austin is committed to maintaining a learning environment that is free from discriminatory conduct on the basis of sex <https://titleix.utexas.edu/>. Faculty, field instructors, staff, and/or teaching assistants in their supervisory roles are mandated reporters of incidents of sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual violence, stalking, dating violence, or any other forms of sexual misconduct. Students who report such incidents will be informed of University resources. Incidents will be reported to the University's Title IX Coordinator. Further information, including student resources related to Title IX, may also be found at <https://titleix.utexas.edu/>.

**CAMPUS CARRY POLICY.** The University's policy on concealed firearms may be found here: <https://campuscarry.utexas.edu>. You also may find this information by accessing the Quick Links menu on the School's website.

**CLASSROOM CONFIDENTIALITY.** Information shared in class about agencies, clients, and personal matters is considered confidential per the NASW Code of Ethics on educational supervision and is protected by regulations of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) as well. As such, sharing this information with individuals outside of the educational context is not permitted. Violations of confidentiality could result in actions taken according to the policies and procedure for review of academic performance located in sections 3.0, 3.1, and 3.2 of the Standards for Social Work Education.

**USE OF E-MAIL FOR OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE TO STUDENTS.** Email is recognized as an official mode of university correspondence; therefore, students are responsible for reading their email for university and course-related information and announcements. Students are responsible for keeping the university informed about a change of e-mail address. Students should check their e-mail regularly and frequently—daily, but at minimum twice a week—to stay current with university-related communications, some of which may be time-sensitive. Students can find UT Austin's policies and instructions for updating their e-mail address at <http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.php>.



**SAFETY.** As part of professional social work education, students may have assignments that involve working in agency settings and/or the community. As such, these assignments may present some risks. Sound choices and caution may lower risks inherent to the profession. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and adhere to policies and practices related to agency and/or community safety. Students should notify the professor regarding any safety concerns.

**BEHAVIOR CONCERNS ADVICE LINE (BCAL).** If students have concerns about their behavioral health, or if they are concerned about the behavioral health of someone else, students may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone their concerns. This service is provided through a partnership between the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal>.

**EMERGENCY EVACUATION POLICY.** Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors in the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform the professor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the professor's instructions.
- Do not re-enter a building unless you are given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

## IX. COURSE SCHEDULE

The anticipated schedule of activities for this course is as follows. Reading due dates are the class for which the reading is listed. Homework assignments will be provided on the day listed. The instructor reserves the option to modify the schedule if deemed necessary. References to chapters are from the course textbook or from readings posted on Canvas.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic / Description</b>	<b>Text/Readings</b>	<b>Homework Assignments</b>
Class 1 T, 1/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review Syllabus</li> <li>• Discuss “why statistics?”</li> <li>• Math review</li> <li>• Discuss SPSS software and installation</li> </ul>	Readings from Canvas	
Class 2 Th, 1/23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lecture on Chapter 1</li> </ul>	Chapter 1, “The What and the Why of Statistics”	Homework 1
Class 3 T, 1/28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lecture on Chapter 2</li> </ul>	Chapter 2, “The Organization and Graphic Presentation of	

		Data”	
Class 4 Th, 1/30	• Continue Lecture on Chapter 2	Chapter 2, “The Organization and Graphic Presentation of Data”	Homework 2
Class 5 T, 2/4	• Lecture on Chapter 3	Chapter 3, “Measures of Central Tendency”	Homework 3
Class 6 Th, 2/6	• Lecture on Chapter 4	Chapter 4, “Measures of Variability”	Homework 4
Class 7 T, 2/11	• Review for Exam 1 • Q & A		
Class 8 Th, 2/13	EXAM 1		
Class 9 T, 2/18	• Review Exam 1 • Lecture on Chapter 5	Chapter 5, “The Normal Distribution”	
Class 10 Th, 2/20	• Continue Lecture on Chapter 5	Chapter 5, “The Normal Distribution”	Homework 5
Class 11 T, 2/25	• Lecture on Chapter 6	Chapter 6, “Sampling and Sampling Distributions”	Homework 6
Class 12 Th, 2/27	• Lecture on Chapter 7	Chapter 7, “Estimation”	
Class 13 T, 3/3	• Continue Lecture on Chapter 7	Chapter 7, “Estimation”	Homework 7
Class 14 Th, 3/5	• Review for Exam 2 • Q & A		
Class 15 T, 3/10	EXAM 2		
Class 16 Th, 3/12	• Review Exam 2 • Lecture on Chapter 8	Chapter 8, “Testing Hypotheses”	
March 16-21: Spring Break!			
Class 17 T, 3/24	• Continue Lecture on Chapter 8	Chapter 8, “Testing Hypotheses”	Homework 8
Class 18 Th, 3/26	• Lecture on Chapter 9	Chapter 9, “Bivariate Tables”	Homework 9
Class 19 T, 3/31	• Lecture on Chapter 10	Chapter 10, “The Chi-Square Test and Measures of Association”	
Class 20 Th, 4/2	• Continue Lecture on Chapter 10	Chapter 10, “The Chi-Square Test and Measures of Association”	Homework 10
Class 21 T, 4/7	• Review for Exam 3 • Q & A		
Class 22 Th, 4/9	EXAM 3		

Class 23 T, 4/14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review Exam 3</li> <li>• Lecture on Chapter 11</li> </ul>	Chapter 11, “Analysis of Variance”	
Class 24 Th, 4/16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue Lecture on Chapter 11</li> </ul>	Chapter 11, “Analysis of Variance”	Homework 11
Class 25 T, 4/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lecture on Chapter 12</li> </ul>	Chapter 12, “Regression and Correlation”	
Class 26 Th, 4/23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue Lecture on Chapter 12</li> </ul>	Chapter 12, “Regression and Correlation”	
Class 27 T, 4/28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue Lecture on Chapter 12</li> </ul>	Chapter 12, “Regression and Correlation”	Homework 12
Class 28 Th, 4/30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review for Exam 4</li> <li>• Q &amp; A</li> </ul>		
Class 29 T, 5/5	EXAM 4		
Class 30 Th, 5/7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review Exam 4</li> <li>• Wrap-up</li> <li>• Evaluation</li> </ul>		

## X. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Frankfort-Nachmias, C., & Leon-Guerrero, A. (2018). *Social statistics for a diverse society (8<sup>th</sup> Ed)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.