

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

**Course Number:** SW 318

**Unique Number:** 61020

**Semester:** Spring 2021

**Meeting Time:** T TH 3:30-5:00 pm

**Meeting Place:** Online

**Instructor:** Kirk von Sternberg, Ph.D.

**E-mail:** [vonsternberg@mail.utexas.edu](mailto:vonsternberg@mail.utexas.edu)

**Office:** JHH 2.128

**Office Hours:** T TH 2:30 -3:30 pm

(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 R statistical software to calculate statistics and present results.

Students are required to complete SW318 prior to entering the practice sequence. 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 can be value-neutral, but can be used to support discriminatory and prejudicial value positions contrary to the values of social work, especially against marginalized populations (e.g., BIPOC, members of the LGBTQIA+ community, women, people with disabilities, etc.);
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**

Welcome to social work statistics! I hope that this course will give you practical tools to use statistics to promote social justice as a student and practitioner. Learning statistics can be tough. Learning statistics remotely during a pandemic is perhaps tougher. Please let me know how I can help with special accommodations or class adjustments due to emergencies as they arise. And feel free to reach out with questions! Even though I might not be in a physical office, my door is open during office hours and for scheduled meetings to meet with you regarding assignments and class material.

There will be two methods of instruction: 1) pre-recorded lectures with interactive quizzes and 2) interactive live sessions to answer questions about the pre-recorded lectures and to demonstrate analysis in R. Students are encouraged to ask their statistical or software questions in the live sessions. For successful completion of the course, students are expected to complete readings and homework assigned for each week. Class attendance and participation are also required throughout the semester.

### **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**

SPSS standard grad pack version 26 or higher. Six month licenses are available.

#### **Computer Requirements**

During the semester, students will need a laptop computer to complete homework assignments, exams, and pre-recorded lecture exercises. If you do not have a laptop, you may borrow one from the 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 and make arrangements before class begins. Your UT EID and password are required in the process of checking out a laptop.

#### **Canvas**

Canvas will be used extensively in this course and most materials will be uploaded on Canvas. Use Canvas to find:

- Links to Zoom for the live classes
- Homework assignments
- Datasets to be used in homework assignments and in-class exercises
- Course materials such as the syllabus and readings;

- Exams
- Powerpoint presentations;
- All course announcements;
- Contact information;
- Grades

## V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The final grade will be computed from grade on homework (35%), exams (50%), an assignment of your choice with the options described below (5%), and students' attendance, preparation, and participation in class (10%). More detailed instructions and expectations are described below.

### Grading and Course Requirements

The final grade for the course will be based on:

1. Reading Quizzes	24 points
2. Homework assignments	40 points
3. Mid-term Test	30 points
4. Class Participation	<u>6 points</u>
	100 points

### Assignments

#### 1. Class attendance, Preparation, and Participation (6% of total grade)

Class attendance points will be given for both the pre-recorded lectures and the live class sessions in the following ways:

- Students are expected to attend all class sessions on time, to complete assigned readings and homework, and to actively participate in class by asking questions and having discussions regarding readings, homework, lectures, and other in-class activities. During the class, please keep your camera on to get full attendance points. If need to turn your camera off please let me know through Zoom Chat.
- In terms of attendance, joining late and/or leaving early by more than 10 minutes will be counted as an absence. Only three permitted absences are allowed in the event of unexpected emergencies, medical appointments, university-sanctioned events, or religious holidays. When missing a class for any reason, you are required to email the instructor before the class begins. Starting from the fourth absence, 2% of the total grade per class will be deducted from your final grade.
- In the event a class must be canceled, students will be provided an assignment to help them practice the material for that day. The completion of such assignments will count as attendance for that class.

#### 2. Homework Assignments (40% of total grade)

The homework assignments will help you practice applying the statistical concepts that are taught in class, using SPSS. Nine homework assignments will be assigned to help you review concepts and to provide you with opportunities to practice solving statistical problems. We will drop the lowest grade assignment so you will be graded on eight assignments at 5 points each for a total of **40 points**.

#### 3. Reading Quizzes (24% of total grade)

Short reading quizzes will be given via Canvas for most assigned chapter readings to help inform the professor about the reading and comprehension of the student. The quizzes will also help the professor determine the appropriate pace for the course. Reading quizzes will be made available on Thursdays immediately after class and can be submitted any time before 5:30pm on the following Tuesdays (i.e. the day prior to class in which that chapter will be covered). These quizzes will contain 10 questions that address the core concepts of the assigned chapter reading, and while it is allowed and encouraged to use the textbook during the quiz, students must *read* the chapter *prior* to beginning the quiz. Each quiz will have a 15-minute time limit, so even with the book open, students will not do well on the quiz if they have not already read the chapter. There will be 7 quizzes of which each will be worth 4 points. We will drop the lowest grade quiz so you will be graded on 6 quizzes at 4 points each for a total of **24 points**.

#### 4. **Mid-term Test: (30% of total grade)**

There will be one written test in this course consisting of multiple choice, true/false, and short answer questions. This mid-term test will be an in class closed book test over all of the material covered up to that point. **(30 points)**

#### **Extra Credit Mid-Term Exam Questions.**

Students have the opportunity to write their own multiple-choice exam questions based on the class material and submit them to the instructor by 11:59 pm on the day after the exam review. If the instructor selects one of the questions, it will be added to the exam allowing the student to answer their own question in the exam. Priority will be given to questions that promote social justice in social work research.

## **VI. UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

**COVID-19 RELATED INFORMATION.** The University's policies and practices related to the pandemic may be accessed at: <https://protect.utexas.edu/>

**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.

**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/>.

**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: <https://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct/academicintegrity.php>.

**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.

**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 <https://it.utexas.edu/policies/university-electronic-mail-student-notification-policy>.

**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.

**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 <https://safety.utexas.edu/behavior-concerns-advice-line>.

**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.

**GRADING SCALE**

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. COURSE SCHEDULE**

Please note that the instructor may make modifications to the syllabus during the semester. Any revised versions of the syllabus will be uploaded on Canvas.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Content</b>	<b>Readings and Assignments</b>	<b>Assignments Due</b>
Class 1 1/19	Syllabus  Why statistics are important	Get text and SPSS	
Class 2 1/26	The Research Question		

Class 3 1/28	Basics of SPSS	<b>Reading</b> Ch. 1 <b>Assignment</b> Quiz 1	
Class 4 2/02	<i>Ch. 1- Q&amp;A</i> <i>Quiz 1 Review</i> Hypotheses Level of Measurement		Quiz 1 Due
Class 5 2/04	Descriptive and Inferential Stats Cultural Influence	<b>Reading</b> Ch. 2 <b>Assignment</b> Homework 1	
Class 6 2/09	<i>Ch. 2- Q&amp;A</i> Frequency Distributions Proportions and Percentages		
Class 7 2/11	Graphs	<b>Reading</b> Ch. 3  <b>Assignment</b> Quiz 2 Homework 2	Homework 1 Due
Class 8 2/16	<i>Ch. 3- Q&amp;A</i> <i>Quiz 2 Review</i> Central Tendency Symmetrical Distribution Normal Distribution		Quiz 2 Due
Class 9 2/18	Skewed Distribution Kurtosis Representing Income	<b>Reading</b> Ch. 4  <b>Assignment</b> Quiz 3	Homework 2 Due
Class 10 2/23	<i>Ch. 4- Q&amp;A</i> <i>Quiz 3 Review</i> Measures of variability	<b>Reading</b> <i>White Logic, White</i> <i>Methods: Racism and</i> <i>Methodology</i> by Zuberi & Bonilla-Silva <b>OR</b> <i>Weapons of Math</i> <i>Destruction</i> by Cathy O'Neal  <b>Assignment</b> Homework 3	Quiz 3 Due



Class 11 2/25	History of Oppression, Racism, and Social Justice in Research	<b>Reading</b> Ch. 5  <b>Assignment</b> Quiz 4	
Class 12 3/02	<i>Ch. 5- Q&amp;A</i> <i>Quiz 4 Review</i>  Areas under the curve Z-Score		Quiz 4 Due Homework 3 Due
Class 13 3/04	Calculating proportions and percentages	<b>Reading</b> Ch. 6  <b>Assignment</b> Quiz 5 Homework 4	
Class 14 3/09	<i>Ch. 6- Q&amp;A</i> <i>Quiz 5 Review</i>  Sampling		Quiz 5 Due
Class 15 3/11	Sampling Distribution	<b>Reading</b> Ch. 7  <b>Assignment</b> Quiz 6	Homework 4 Due
3/16 to 3/18	<b>Spring Break</b>		
Class 16 3/23	<i>Ch. 7- Q&amp;A</i> <i>Quiz 6 Review</i>  Confidence Intervals	<b>Assignment</b> Review chapters and bring questions	Quiz 6 Due
Class 17 3/25	Mid-term review  <i>Optional: Extra Credit test questions due tomorrow @ 11:59 pm</i>		
Class 18 3/30	Mid-term exam		
Class 19 4/01	<i>Mid-term exam review</i>	<b>Reading</b> Ch. 8  <b>Assignment</b> Homework 5	
Class 20 4/06	<i>Ch. 8- Q&amp;A</i>  Testing Hypothesis		

Class 21 4/08	Testing mean differences	<b>Reading</b> Ch. 9  <b>Assignment</b> Quiz 7 Homework 6	Homework 5 Due
Class 22 4/13	<i>Ch. 9- Q&amp;A</i> <i>Quiz 8 Review</i>  Bivariate Table		Quiz 7 Due
Class 23 4/15	Chi Square testing	<b>Reading</b> Ch. 11  <b>Assignment</b> Homework 7	Homework 6 Due
Class 24 4/20	<i>Ch. 11- Q&amp;A</i>  ANOVA		
Class 25 4/22	GLM Repeated Measures Profile Analysis	<b>Reading</b> Ch. 12  <b>Assignment</b> Homework 8	Homework 7 Due
Class 26 4/27	<i>Ch. 12- Q&amp;A</i>		
Class 27 4/29	Regression	Homework 9	Homework 8 Due
Class 28 5/04	Correlation		
Class 29 5/06	Wrap-up		Homework 9 Due

## VIII. Bibliography

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

O'neil, C. (2016). *Weapons of math destruction: How big data increases inequality and threatens democracy*. Broadway Books.

Zuberi, T., & Bonilla-Silva, E. (Eds.). (2008). *White logic, white methods: Racism and methodology*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.