

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

Course Number:	SW 388R	Instructor's name:	Catherine Cubbin, PhD ccubbin@austin.utexas.edu
Unique Number:	61040	Office:	SWB 3.208G
Semester:	Spring, 2023	Office Phone:	512-232-0625
Meeting Time/Place:	Tuesdays, 8:30-11:30 SSW 1.212	Office Hours:	Tuesdays 11:30am-12:30pm Or by appointment

HIERARCHICAL LINEAR MODELING

I. Course Description

This applied, hands-on course for doctoral students provides an introduction to the basic concepts and applications of hierarchical linear models. The course will cover applications in social sciences research (e.g., neighborhood effects research, school effects research), growth curve modeling (e.g., repeated measures on individuals), as well as introduce models for dichotomous outcomes. Topics will include multilevel data structures, model building and testing, fixed and random effects, and interpretation of results. Students are expected to have taken regression analysis. Depending on the software selected for the course, students may be required to complete training in the form of a workshop or tutorials before the first day of class.

II. Course Objectives

At the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. Specify a social science research question requiring hierarchical linear modeling
2. Understand when and why hierarchical linear models should be used
3. Apply hierarchical linear models to nested data
4. Correctly interpret analysis results from hierarchical linear models
5. Effectively communicate analysis results in writing

III. Teaching Methods

The primary means of instruction will be interactive lectures, guest lectures, hands-on in-class and take-home exercises, computer exercises working with SAS, and class discussions from the assigned readings. Students will be expected to have done the assigned reading and activities before class and to actively participate in class.

IV. Required Texts and Materials

Hox, J. J. (2010). *Multilevel analysis: Techniques and applications* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.
Luke, D. A. (2004). *Multilevel Modeling*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. ISBN: 9780761928799

Provided on Canvas:

Beretvas SN. Cross-Classified Random Effects Models, Chapter of *Multilevel Analysis of Educational Data*.

- Carroll-Scott A, Gilstad-Hayden K, Rosenthal L, Eldahan A, McCaslin C, Peters SM, Ickovics JR. Associations of neighborhood and school socioeconomic and social contexts with body mass index among urban preadolescent students. *American Journal of Public Health* 2015; 105: 496-502.
- Cubbin C, Pickle LW and Fingerhut L. Social context and geographic patterns of homicide among U.S. Black and White males. *American Journal of Public Health* 2000; 90: 579-587.
- Cubbin C and Winkleby MA. Protective and harmful effects of neighborhood-level deprivation on individual-level health knowledge, behavior changes, and risk of coronary heart disease. *American Journal of Epidemiology* 2005; 162: 559-568.
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- Diez-Roux AV. Multilevel analysis in public health research. *Annu Rev Public Health* 2000; 21: 171-192.
- Division of Statistics + Scientific Computation, 2015. Multilevel Modeling Tutorial Using SAS, Stata, HLM, R, SPSS, and Mplus.
- Duncan C, Jones K, Moon G. Context, composition and heterogeneity: Using multilevel modeling in health research. *Soc Sci Med* 1998; 46: 97-117.
- Dunn EC, Milliren CE, Evans C, Subramanian SV, Richmond TK. (2015). Disentangling the relative influence of schools and neighborhoods on adolescents' risk for depressive symptoms. *American Journal of Public Health* 2015; 105: 732-740.
- Ene, M, Leighton, EA, Blue, GL, Bell, BA. Multilevel models for categorical data using SAS® PROC GLIMMIX: The basics. SAS Paper 3430-2015.
- Goodman E, Huang B, Wade TJ, & Kahn RS. (2003). A multilevel analysis of the relation of socioeconomic status to adolescent depressive symptoms: does school context matter? *The Journal of Pediatrics*, 143(4), 451-456.
- Han W and Huang C. The forgotten treasure: bilingualism and Asian children's emotional and behavioral health. *American Journal of Public Health* 2000; 100: 831-838.
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- Kim Y, Vohra-Gupta S, Margerison CE, Cubbin C. Neighborhood Racial/Ethnic Composition Trajectories and Black-White Differences in Preterm Birth among Women in Texas, *Journal of Urban Health* 2020. DOI: 10.1007/s11524-019-00411-y.
- Kubik MY, Lytle LA, Hannan PJ, Perry CL, & Story M. (2003). The association of the school food environment with dietary behaviors of young adolescents. *American Journal of Public Health*, 93(7), 1168-1173.
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V. Course Requirements

1. Exams (60 points): There will be three in-class exams (a mix of closed and open book), 20 points each. Some exams involve data analysis using pre-specified datasets.
2. Journal club (5 points): Students will be expected to present a critical overview of several journal articles based on HLM analysis and lead the discussion on the selected articles. Journal articles will be selected by the instructor.
3. "Journal-ready" interpretation of results (20 points): The final assignment will be based on an HLM analysis of a provided dataset and research question. Students will be required to conduct the analyses and submit an annotated SAS program, write a detailed data analysis plan, present the results in table format, and interpret the results. APA style is recommended.

Further guidelines on the exams, journal club, and final assignment will be given in class.

4. Class attendance/participation/homework assignments (15 points): You are expected to learn from interacting with other students in the class. Thus, students are expected to attend all classes and to arrive on time. Students who miss multiple classes without medical documentation during the semester and/or show up late will lose points. Leaving class early will be counted as an absence unless the student provides a reasonable cause for doing so in advance (i.e., before the day of class) and receives the instructor's permission. Students are expected to do assigned readings before the class time and actively participate in class discussions. Homework assignments are to be uploaded to Canvas by 8am on the day they are due.

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

LATE ASSIGNMENT POLICIES: Except in the case of emergencies, and then only with the permission of the instructor, late assignments will not be accepted without penalty. Students are expected to turn in all required assignments on the specified due date at the beginning of class. If the due date is a problem, then the student must contact the instructor and negotiate another due date at least 48 hours PRIOR to the date specified in the course syllabus.

VIII. 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.

DISABILITY ACCOMODATION STATEMENT. If you are a student with a disability, or think you may have a disability, and need accommodations please contact Disability and Access (D&A). You may refer to D&A's website for contact and more information: <http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/>. If you are already registered with D&A, please deliver your Accommodation Letter to me as early as possible in the semester so we can discuss your approved accommodations and how they apply in my class.

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 ACADEMIC INTEGRITY. Students who violate University rules on academic 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 academic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, please visit the Student Conduct and Academic Integrity website at: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct>.

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.

UNIVERSITY ELECTRONIC MAIL STUDENT NOTIFICATION. Electronic mail (email), like postal mail, is a mechanism for official University communication to students. The University will exercise the right to send email communications to all students, and the University will expect that email communications will be received and read in a timely manner. 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 HOLY DAYS. A student who misses classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day should inform the instructor as far in advance of the absence as possible so that arrangements can be made to complete an assignment within a reasonable period after the absence. A reasonable accommodation does not include substantial modification to academic standards, or adjustments of requirements essential to any program of instruction. Students and instructors who have questions or concerns about academic accommodations for religious observance or religious beliefs may contact the [Office for Inclusion and Equity](#). The University does not maintain a list of religious holy days.

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 campus carry may be found here: <https://campuscarry.utexas.edu>.

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 and COVID-19 ADVICE LINE (BCCAL). 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 and COVID-19 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>. The Behavior Concerns and COVID-19 Advice Line has been expanded to support The University of Texas at Austin community during the COVID-19 pandemic. By calling 512-232-5050 - Option 2 for COVID-19, students, faculty and staff can be assisted in English and Spanish with COVID-19 support.

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

Date	Content and Assignments	Readings	Homework assignment
Week 1 1/10	Overview of the course Overview of HLM <i>Review SAS pre-work</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Luke, pgs. 1-9 • Duncan et al, 1998 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAS Basics exercise • SAS: data cleaning and checking assumptions
Week 2 1/17	Theoretical & statistical considerations for multilevel models <i>Review homework</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hox, Chapter 1 • Luke, pgs. 9-15 • Woltman et al, 2012 (<i>ignore HLM tutorial at end</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAS: regression
Week 3 1/24	Building a full HLM model <i>Review homework</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hox, Chapters 2-3 • Diez-Roux, 2000 • Division of Statistics + Data Sciences, 2015 (<i>only the SAS-related material</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HLM equations
Week 4 1/31	Two Level HLM Models: School Effect Centering Checking residuals Distribute Test #1 Objectives <i>Review homework</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hox, Chapter 4 • Luke, pgs. 15-53 • Hofmann, 1998 	<i>Study for Exam</i>
Week 5 2/7	Review for Exam #1 Exam #1 Distribute Journal Club guidelines		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centering
Week 6 2/14	Two Level HLM Models: School Effect <u>Journal Club #1</u> <i>Review exam</i> <i>Review homework</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Singer, School effect example only, pgs. 323-339 • Goodman, 2003 (JC) • Kubik, 2003 (JC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replicate Singer, school effects • Equations & interpreting coefficients
Week 7 2/21	Two level HLM Models: Neighborhood Effect SAS skills: merging data, etc. Sampling <u>Journal Club #2</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cummins, 2007 • Subramanian, 2004 • Kim, 2020 (JC) • Cubbin, 2005 (JC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Shdatppnew</i> dataset exercise on two level models (modeling and assessing fit)

Date	Content and Assignments	Readings	Homework assignment
	<i>Review homework</i>		
Week 8 2/28	Two Level HLM Models: Growth Models <u>Journal Club #3</u> <i>Review homework</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Luke, pgs. 62-72 • Hox, Chapter 5 • Singer, Growth model example only, pgs. 340-351 • Han, 2010 (JC) • Marsiglia, 2011 (JC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replicate Singer, growth models • Long and wide data transformation
Week 9 3/7	Two Level HLM Models: Growth Models <u>Journal Club #4</u> Distribute Test #2 Objectives <i>Review homework</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Umberson, 2009 (JC) • Kim and Lo, 2016 (JC) 	<i>Study for Exam</i>
March 13-17 Spring Break			
Week 10 3/21	Review for Exam #2 Exam #2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth models modeling exercise
Week 11 3/28	Two Level Models: Binary, Categorical, & Count Outcomes <u>Journal Club #5</u> <i>Review homework</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hox, Chapters 6-7 • Luke, pgs. 53-58 • Cubbin, 2000 • Ene, 2015 • Hong, 2015 (JC) • Riskind, 2014 (JC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two level binary model using <i>Shdppdatnew</i> dataset
Week 12 4/4	Cross-classified Models Distribute Final Assignment <u>Journal Club #6</u> <i>Review homework</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hox, Chapter 9 • Beretvas chapter • Carroll-Scott, 2015 (JC) • Dunn, 2015 (JC) • Muntaner, 2004 (JC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-classified models • Exercises on two level linear models, logistic models, growth curve models, and cross-classified models
Week 13 4/11	Review homework Distribute Test #3 Objectives <i>Guest lecture</i>	Reading(s) related to guest lecture will be posted on Canvas if needed	<i>Study for exam</i>
Week 14 4/18	Review for Exam #3 Exam #3 Course de-brief		<i>Work on Final Assignment</i>

Date	Content and Assignments	Readings	Homework assignment
Time-permitting	Other multilevel applications: Three-level Models, Survival models, meta-analysis <u>Journal Club #7</u> <i>Review homework</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Luke, pgs. 59-62 • Hox, Chapter 8 • Xiao, 2011 (JC) • Weisz, 2013 (JC) • Lee, 2015 (JC) 	

Final assignment is due on April 28th at noon.

X. Bibliography

Hox. J. J. (2010). *Multilevel analysis: Techniques and applications* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.
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