Advanced Research Methods (ARM)

MPA

Fall, 2015

Tuesdays, 6-10pm

Seminar II, D1107

FACULTY

Cheryl Simrell King (kingcs@evergreen.edu); Lab 1, #1002.

Jenny Serpa, Teaching Assistant (serpaj@evergreen.edu)

REQUIREMENTS

Advanced Research Methods (ARM) is a required course for the MPA's Public Policy Concentration, and is open as an elective for other MPA students. In order to take this course, students must have completed the MPA first year Core program and either be enrolled in, or completed, the MPA second year Core program.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course examines advanced and multivariate statistical methods from a practical viewpoint. The aim is to introduce students to a variety of statistical techniques and research designs that allow users to get at the complexities that lie underneath every simple research/policy question. Students can expect to learn enough about complex design and techniques to know what technique to request for research, to understand the use of designs and techniques in research, and to make meaning of complex research output. In addition, students will develop facility with statistical software.

BASIC EXPECTATIONS

The majority of learning takes place in class (homework is to prepare for class and to practice techniques/interpretation). Therefore, everyone is

expected to attend, and be actively engaged in, all classes. Specifics:

- You will get to know the statistical software, SPSS, well enough to use it on your own; we will all use the same dataset for assignments.
- There is no "big project." Only weekly homework assignments. We will work through our one main textbook one chapter (at the most, two chapters) at a time.
- We start with a good solid review of stats so everyone starts from the same place.
- As we work one technique at a time, your weekly homework consists of:
  1. Reviewing the chapter on the technique of the week (and I lectured on in class). Chapters are fairly short, but they are intense and dense. And it really doesn't work to read ahead.
  2. Doing a SPSS homework assignment on the technique of the week
  3. Writing a short response on the article of the week (that uses the technique of the week) – the point is not only to get to know how to do the analyses, but to also understand others' analyses.
  4. Reading the chapter and article for the next week.
- Class is predictable: lecture on the technique; SPSS workshop on the technique (and most weeks you'll have most of your homework assignment done in class); seminar on the article (but you don't write your response paper until after class, so you have the benefit of talking about it before you write about it). In other words, you read one week in advance but do the work on the technique after the benefit of class. You submit two assignments every week: your SPSS assignment and your article response short paper on the technique studied the week before.

Students need access to IBM-SPSS software – it is loaded on all Windows based computers in the college's Academic Computer Center. Alternatively (and this is recommended), you can rent a copy of the software and load it on your personal device (see below).

We are holding class in a regular classroom (not the computer lab). When I've taught this in the past, most people chose to rent the software and load it on their personal device. Folks then used their own devices (laptop – don't know if the software works on a tablet) for in-class workshops.

Assignments must be completed and posted/turned in on time.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND SOFTWARE

Texts:

- Mertler, Craig A. and Rachel A. Vannatta. (2013). *Advanced and Multivariate Statistical Methods: Practical Application and Interpretation* (5th Edition). Pyrczak Publishing. ISBN 978-1936523-09-2. (~$140)
- Pyrczak, Fred (1998). *Statistics with a Sense of Humor: A Humorous Workbook and Guide to Study Skills*. (2nd Edition). Pyrczak Publishing. ISBN-13: 978-1884585104. (~$25). This text is highly recommended, as we will use it to review basic math operations and statistics. If you feel pretty confident about your grasp of basic stats, you may skip buying this book.

Software:

IBM® SPSS® Statistics Standard GradPack 23

(Links to an external site.)

- BE SURE TO RENT THE "STANDARD" PACK, NOT "BASE" OR "PREMIUM"
- 6 MONTH RENTAL ~$60

About SPSS: The Statistics Standard GradPack 23 includes:Statistics Base, Advanced Statistics, and Regression. SPSS Statistics is loaded with powerful analytic techniques and time saving capabilities to help you quickly and easily find new insights in your data.

COURSE DETAILS

Format of Assignment Submissions: All papers will be submitted as requested and must meet assignment parameters and cite works using the American Psychological Association (APA) citation style

All written work will be of high quality, grammatically correct, clear and without spelling errors. If you require it, please contact the Graduate Writing Assistant. Sometimes your faculty will ask you to work with the Graduate Writing Assistant; if so, you are required to do so to the satisfaction of your

faculty member.

Late assignments: *Are not accepted without prior (to deadline) approval by your seminar faculty member. Multiple late assignments put you at risk for no credit.*

Participation & Attendance: Students are required to attend each class meeting. Participation includes focusing on class content, being engaged in class and seminar, listening to others, taking notes, completing class interactive exercises, avoiding distractions, and listening to and dialoging with the guest speakers. If an absence is unavoidable, *faculty must be notified prior to a class and/or seminar absence. After one absence per quarter, make-up work may be assigned at faculty discretion, case-by-case.* Make-up work must be completed by the end of the quarter in question for course credit. Multiple absences put you at risk for no credit.

Credit: Students will receive 4 graduate credits at the completion of the quarter if all course requirements have been satisfactorily completed to meet course objectives. No partial credit will be awarded.

Academic dishonesty and plagiarism (i.e., using other peoples' work as your own, see MPA Handbook for more), failing to complete one or more assignments, completing more than one assignment late, or multiple absences may constitute denial of credit and/or dismissal from the MPA program. Students will be evaluated based upon their progress toward the learning goals, assessed from classroom, seminar, and assignment performance. Students at risk of losing credit will receive written notification prior to the end of the term.

Evaluation: Written self-evaluations and your evaluations of faculty are required for credit at the end of each quarter, along with faculty evaluations of students. *Self-evaluations are due at the end of Week 10. Evaluations are considered "submitted" only when posted through the College evaluation portal (accessed through your my.evergreen.edu site, not through Canvas).*

Accommodations: are provided for any student who desires them through Access Services, the Graduate Writing Assistant, and the Quantitative and Symbolic Reasoning Center. To request academic accommodations due to a disability, please contact the office of Access Services for Students with Disabilities (867-6348 or 6364). Information about a disability or health condition is regarded as confidential. Please refer to TESC's Students With Disabilities Policy here.

Other Expectations of Students and Faculty: We commit to promoting a cooperative, supportive atmosphere within the community; give everyone opportunity for self-reflection and expression; use high standards in reading the text and preparing our papers, lectures, and comments in seminar; handle all disputes in a spirit of goodwill; respect our differences; and, discuss any problems involving others in the learning community directly with the individuals involved.

We abide by the [social contract](#), the [student conduct code](#) and the [non-discrimination policies and procedures at TESC](#). See the college's [Student Conduct webpage](#) for more.

All students are expected to support and contribute to a well-functioning MPA classroom learning community. Behavior that disrupts the learning community may be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the MPA program.

Guest Policy: Guests are welcome as long as they are not disruptive; please notify faculty if you are bringing a guest and be prepared to introduce your guest.

Inclement Weather: In the event of bad weather or emergencies students should check with television, web pages, and radio stations for announcements of campus closures. Students can also call the main campus line 867-6000 to get the latest news regarding a campus closure or delay. Since many students in the program travel from relatively distant locations, faculty may decide to cancel program meeting even if campus is open. If we do this we will send an all-program email by 3:00 pm. If you've not already done so, sign up to receive alerts about campus closing or other emergencies [here](#).

Communicating with Each Other: Email and Canvas are our primary means of communication. You are responsible for checking your Evergreen email and Canvas regularly.