Description: In this course, graduate students learn how to use statistical techniques commonly employed in the analysis of quantitative communication research data, and to practice the use of such techniques. The course does not involve the collection of data; instead, we focus in this course on the analysis of data. After completing this course, students will be able to analyze a wide array of numerical and statistical data in order to test hypotheses and answer research questions about communication content, processes and effects. Students will learn how to master Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software to accomplish these goals, including learning how to interpret SPSS output, how to create tables and figures ready to be published in academic journals and elsewhere, and how to hone their data analysis skills generally. Students will not be expected already to be familiar with or adept at using SPSS or analyzing data but they should already have taken a basic introductory research methods course. Unlike a statistics course, which focuses on the mathematics underlying statistical procedures, we focus here more on the practical side of data analysis, specifically, how to use SPSS to conduct statistical analyses. This course may be especially beneficial if you take it before (or concurrent with) an introductory statistics course. Students from other departments besides Journalism are welcome to take this course.


Instructor: Dominic (Nick) Lasorsa, Ph.D. Email: lasorsa@austin.utexas.edu Phone: 512-471-1966
Office: BMC 3.320

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:15 to 10:45 a.m., and by appointment.

Requirements: Over the course of the semester, you will take four in-class quizzes which will test you on the material to that point but which will focus mostly on material since the last quiz. The quiz with the lowest grade will not be counted. (If you miss a quiz, the grades on the three quizzes you did take will count.) On May 1, you will make a short class presentation in which you demonstrate your ability to use one or more of the data analysis techniques we have explored in order to test a hypothesis or answer a research question that interests you personally. The class presentation will include a one-page handout which summarizes your presentation and which you will distribute to the class at the time of your presentation. Also on May 1, you will receive a cumulative take-home examination which will be due at the start of class on May 8. Finally, you will be expected to be engaged in the course, including participation in class discussions.

Grading:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Total value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Four in-class quizzes</td>
<td>25 percent each (only 3 highest-grade quizzes will count)</td>
<td>75 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class presentation</td>
<td>5 percent</td>
<td>5 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examination</td>
<td>15 percent</td>
<td>15 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>5 percent</td>
<td>5 percent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Course Schedule:

Week 1 (Jan. 23)  Describing & visualizing data. Chapter 4.


Week 3 (Feb. 6)  Comparing two matched pairs. Chapter 9.


Week 5 (Feb. 20)  Estimating the value of a variable from 1 quantitative variable. Chapter 12.

Week 6 (Feb. 27)  Estimating the value of a variable from multiple variables. Chapter 13.


Week 0 (Mar. 13)  Spring Break

Week 8 (Mar. 20)  Establishing a measurement’s reliability. Chapter 6.

Week 9 (Mar. 27)  Individual project work


Week 11 (Apr. 10)  Assessing group differences on a variable, controlling for other variables that distinguish the groups. Chapter 15.


Week 13 (Apr. 24)  Special topics.

Week 14 (May 1)  Final presentations.

Week 15 (May 8)  Examination. Course evaluation.

Religious Holy Days Observance Policy

The Texas Education Code specifies that an institution of higher education shall excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence. 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 time after the absence.

http://www.utexas.edu/student/registrar/catalogs/gi03-04/ch4/ch4g.html#attendance

Students with Disabilities

Please notify your instructor of any modification/adaptation you may require to accommodate a disability-related need. You will be requested to provide documentation to the Dean of Student's Office in order that the
most appropriate accommodations can be determined. Specialized services are available on campus through Services for Students with Disabilities. Students may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259. http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/

**Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty**

Do not plagiarize, make up quotes or make up facts. The University defines academic dishonesty as cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, falsifying academic records, and any act designed to avoid participating honestly in the learning process. Scholastic dishonesty also includes, but is not limited to, providing false or misleading information to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment, and submission of essentially the same written assignment for two courses without the prior permission of the instructor.

By accepting this syllabus, you have agreed to these guidelines and must adhere to them. Scholastic dishonesty damages both the student's learning experience and readiness for the future demands of a work-career. 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. http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acint_student.php.

**The University 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.”