

# SYLLABUS

## Political Science 6202 – Research Methods for Public Administration Fall, 2003

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### REQUIRED TEXTS

Meier, Kenneth J. and Jeffrey Brudney. 2002. APPLIED STATISTICS FOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION. Harcourt. Fifth Edition.

SPSS Student Version 11.0 for Windows. Prentice Hall.

Shannon, David M. and Mark A. Davenport. 2001. USING SPSS TO SOLVE STATISTICAL PROBLEMS. Prentice Hall.

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course offers an introduction to the application of research methods and statistical techniques to problems in public administration. No past experience with statistics or computer science is required. The focus of the course is to familiarize the student with the logic of administrative analysis, the collection and analysis of administrative information, and data processing and computer applications to the study of public administration. Some of the topics to be covered include: research design; data gathering techniques such as survey research; data preparation and data processing; and various statistical techniques.

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will demonstrate they have developed an understanding of:

1. Primary and secondary data sources
2. The role of models and hypotheses in guiding research
3. Ethical issues in research
4. Surveys, sampling, and sampling error
5. Statistical variance and measures of central tendency
6. Levels of measurement
7. Measures of statistical significance
8. Measures of association
9. Regression
10. Data display and presentation

## **EXAMS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

### **I. EXAMS**

There will be a final examination for the course which will consist of objective (true-false, multiple choice) and subjective (short answer, essay) questions. The final exam is scheduled for December 9<sup>th</sup>.

### **II. QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH PAPER**

The quantitative paper should be short and well written, investigating a well-defined question. Only rarely can one find a topic that cannot be treated quantitatively in less than thirty pages. The maximum page limit for the paper will be twenty pages, and fewer pages is quite acceptable. For example of this style, see recent issues of Public Administration Review, American Journal of Political Science, American Political Science Review, or similar journals. The paper is due on December 2nd.

Each student will submit a prospectus on their proposed topic for approval by the instructor and is due no later than September 23rd. Failure to submit one will result in the student's final grade being lowered by one full letter grade. The prospectus should do the following: (1) Outline the question that you wish to examine and justify why you think that it is an interesting issue (For example, "While the literature poses this question, there are no quantitative examinations of the issue."). (2) Indicate where you expect to be able to obtain the data for the paper. (3) If possible, indicate the type of statistics that might be appropriate for the paper.

### **III. HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS**

Throughout the course, a series of homework assignments from the Meier and Brudney text and computer assignments from the Shannon and Davenport text will be assigned by the professor. Students are required to hand in homework assignments the day I go over them in class. You are not graded on whether you have the correct answer--I can find out if you know how to work the problems on the test. If you turn in all the problems, there is no deduction in points.

### **CLASS ATTENDANCE**

Class attendance is mandatory. Classroom lectures and discussions are a major source of material for examinations.

### **DROP POLICY**

Follow university rules and regulations.

**COURSE OUTLINE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS (subject to change)**

## Part1 -- Introduction to Applied Research

## Part 2--The Research Process

- A. Introduction
- B. Hypothesis development
- C. Design and measurement
- D. Sampling
- E. Data gathering techniques

Readings: Meier and Brudney: Chs. 1, 2, 3  
 Shannon and Davenport: Chs. 1, 2, 3, 4

## Part 3--Analysis Procedures

## A. Descriptive Procedures

Readings: Meier and Brudney: Chs. 4, 5, 6  
 Shannon and Davenport: Chs. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10

## B. Probability

Readings: Meier and Brudney: Chs. 8, 9 (p. 152-153)

## C. Inferential Statistics

Readings: Meier and Brudney: Chs. 11, 12, 13, 14  
 Shannon and Davenport: Chs. 11, 15, 18

## D. Nominal and Ordinal Data Analysis

Readings: Meier and Brudney: Chs. 15, 16  
 Shannon and Davenport: Chs. 12,

## E. Regression Analysis

Readings: Meier and Brudney: Chs. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22  
 Shannon and Davenport: Chs. 13, 14, 21, 22, 23

**COURSE EVALUATION**

|                                   |            |
|-----------------------------------|------------|
| Paper                             | 40%        |
| Final Exam                        | 40%        |
| Homework and Computer Assignments | <u>20%</u> |
|                                   | 100%       |