Course Syllabus

This course builds on an earlier course, PMAP 8121, which introduced students to measurement and statistics in public administration and urban studies. PMAP 8131 is intended to expand student’s understanding and skills in the application of social science research methods and statistical techniques to the kinds of policy, program, and managerial issues that are of concern to public and nonprofit administrators, policy analysts, and others interested in public affairs. Specifically, this course will focus on:

- Problem Formulation
- Research Design
- Sampling Strategies
- Survey Research
- Regression & Correlation Analysis
- Use of SPSS to Analyze Data

Textbooks and Assigned Readings

Three textbooks will be used for this course, including at least one that was also used for PMAP 8121 this past fall semester. The three books, which do not necessarily have to be purchased by students, are:


This may be used as a resource book, but readings will not be assigned from it.

Classrooms

This class will meet in Room 300 Classroom South.

Office Hours

Regular office hours are from 2 to 4 PM on Tuesdays and Thursdays in Room 358 of the Andrew Young SPS Building, but appointments can be made for other times. Dr. Poister’s telephone number is 404-413-0129 and his e-mail address is tpoister@gsu.edu.
Course Objectives for PMAP 8131

The major course objectives for this class include the following:

- Students will be able to identify and demonstrate facility in research designs and data collection strategies that are most appropriate to the planning and evaluation of public policy, program, and management interventions.

- Students will be able to critically evaluate the quality of research designs.

- Students will understand the principles of multiple regression analysis and will be able to interpret regression coefficients on interval and nominal level indicator variables in a multivariate context.

SPSS Assignments

This course will require completion of three problem-solving assignments utilizing SPSS, each due two weeks after it is assigned in class. The first of these exercises will largely review statistical procedures covered in PMAP8121 and relate them to the topic of research design. The second and third exercises will focus on multiple regression models. These exercises will utilize the SPSS software package, with the necessary data sets available on the ULearn page for this course.

Examinations

There will be two examinations in this course. The first will be a closed book exam covering research design, measurement and survey research, and sampling methods. The second exam will be a take-home exam covering applications of multiple regression analysis.

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<th>Grade Weights and Due Dates</th>
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<td>Final course grades will be determined as follows:</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 7</td>
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<td>February 21</td>
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<td>April 3</td>
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<td>April 17</td>
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<td>April 24</td>
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<td>January 31</td>
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Protection of Human Subjects in Research Training

The final 5% of the course grade is based on completion of the CITI training program on protection of human subjects in research, which is required to graduate from the MPA and MPP programs. This fulfills a federal mandate that requires all graduate students at research universities to be trained in the responsible conduct of research. In addition to counting for 5% of your course grade, this training shows up on your academic evaluation towards degree completion (visible via PAWS). You can access the CITI program at http://www.citiprogram.org. Once you have registered for the course you will be asked to select a curriculum, and you should check the box marked “Social and Behavioral: Social and Behavioral Researchers and Key Personnel.” You should plan to spend 3-4 hours to complete the online training module posted on uLearn. Once you have completed this training program, please email your completion report to Lisa Shepard (lisa@gsu.edu).

Course Grades

Course grades will be determined according to the following criteria:

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<th>Numerical</th>
<th>Letter</th>
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<tr>
<td>98-100</td>
<td>A+</td>
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<tr>
<td>93-97</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>90-92</td>
<td>A-</td>
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<td>88-89</td>
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<td>83-87</td>
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<td>80-82</td>
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<td>78-79</td>
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<td>70-69</td>
<td>D+</td>
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<td>63-67</td>
<td>D</td>
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<td>60-59</td>
<td>D-</td>
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<td>&lt; 60</td>
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Numerical grades will not be rounded in converting to letter grades.

Attendance Policy

Given the technical nature of this course, attendance at every class meeting is particularly important. If you must miss a class, it is your responsibility to obtain complete information on that class from another student in the course. Exams must be taken on the evening they are scheduled. If you must miss an exam due to a personal, family, or work related crisis, notify the instructor as soon as possible.

Academic Honesty

Georgia State University assumes as a basic standard of academic honesty that students be honest in all aspects of the participation in course and that they submit for credit only the products of their own efforts. Violations of academic honesty included plagiarism, cheating on exams, unauthorized collaboration on assignments, submission of work for credit for more than one
course, and falsification, misrepresentation, or fabrication of information used in assignments. (Check section 409 of the Faculty Handbook for the policy on academic honesty and definitions and examples of violations. Go to http://www2.gsu.edu/~wwwfhb/fhb.html.)

Any instance of academic honesty in this course at a minimum will result in a grade of F for that particular course requirement in which the violation is committed. **If you are not sure you understand exactly what constitutes plagiarism, cheating, or other forms of academic dishonesty check with the instructor because you are responsible for adhering to this policy.**

**Accommodation for Disabilities**

Students who wish to request accommodation for a disability may do so by registering with the Office of Disability Services. Students may only be accommodated upon issuance by the Office of a signed Accommodation Plan and are responsible for providing a copy of that plan to instructors of all classes in which accommodation is sought.

**Course Evaluation**

Your constructive assessment of this course plays an indispensable role in shaping education at Georgia State University. Upon completing this course, please take time to fill out the online course evaluation.

**Note:** This syllabus provides a general plan for the course; deviations may become necessary as the semester progresses.
Class Schedule

Tuesday, January 10       Introduction to Research Design
O’Sullivan, Rassel, and Berner: Chapter 2, “Designs for Description”
Meier, Brudney, and Bohte, Chapter 3, “Research Design,” pp. 32-45

Tuesday, January 17       Simple Regression & Correlation Analysis

Tuesday, January 24       Principles of Experimental Design
O’Sullivan, Rassel, and Berner: Chapter 3: “Designs for Explanation,” pp. 56-77

Tuesday, January 31       Quasi-Experimental Designs

Tuesday, February 7       Sampling Strategies
O’Sullivan, Rassel, and Berner: Chapter 5: “Sampling”

SPSS Exercise #1 Due: Quality Teams Evaluation

Tuesday, February 14      Measurement & Survey Research Methods
O’Sullivan, Rassel, and Berner: Chapter 4: “Measuring Variables”
Chapter 6: “Contacting and Talking to Subjects.”
Chapter 7: “Data Collection: Questions and Questionnaires.”

Tuesday, February 21      First Exam

Tuesday, February 28      No Class Meeting – Spring Break

Tuesday, March 6          Review: Research Design and Statistics
Tuesday, March 13        Review of Simple Regression Analysis
Meier, Brudney, and Bohte, Chapter 18: “Introduction to Regression Analysis”
   Chapter 19: “The Assumptions of Linear Regression”
Norusis, Chapter 11: “Correlation” and Chapter 12: “Bivariate Linear Regression,” pp. 197-216

Tuesday, March 20        Introduction to Multiple Regression Analysis
Meier, Brudney, and Bohte, Chapter 21: “Multiple Regression”
Norusis, Chapter 13: “Multiple Linear Regression”

Tuesday, March 27        Multiple Regression Applications
Meier, Brudney, and Bohte, Chapter 23: “Regression Output & Data Management”

Tuesday, April 3          Multiple Regression Applications Continued
SPSS Exercise #2 Due: Experimental Math Program Evaluation

Tuesday, April 10         Multiple Regression Applications Continued

Tuesday, April 17         Multiple Regression Applications Continued
Meier, Brudney, and Bohte, Chapter 20: “Time Series Analysis,” pp. 365-379, and
SPSS Exercise #3 Due: Cost Function Analysis

Tuesday, April 24        Final Exam Due in Instructor’s Office by 4:30 PM