SOCI 206: Introduction to Social Research II
M/W/F 1:30-2:20pm, Fall 2021
Teachers College 247, City Campus

Instructor: Grace Kelly
Email: grace.kelly@doane.edu
Office: 726 Oldfather Hall
Office Hours: 2:30 to 3:30 pm Monday and Wednesdays, or by appointment
Office hours are available in person or Zoom (by email request)

Course Description:
SOCI 206-Introduction to Social Research II is designed to introduce students to the basic statistical methods that social researchers use to describe and evaluate the social world. The course will cover descriptive statistics, inferential statistics, and bivariate measures of association. Students will also gain experience using OLS regression models. The emphasis of the course is on generating, interpreting, and understanding the results of statistical tests. Students will also gain experience with the Stata statistical software package. This course provides a foundation for students to grow both as future researchers and active consumers of statistics in everyday life.

What do I need for the course?
- You do not need to purchase the book, unless you would like a hardcopy!
  - Hardcopy: Available through the bookstore
  - PDF: On Canvas, Files > Book and Readings
- Bring a calculator to class. You can use your phone or computer, but you must be able to use a square root function.
- Access to the Stata software (more about Stata below)

What will I learn in this class?
- Practical skills to analyze and draw conclusions from quantitative social science data. We will focus on understanding, computing, and interpreting basic statistics; interpreting and evaluating survey research findings; and analyzing quantitative data with the statistical software program Stata.
- Knowledge of how to answer social science questions and problems with quantitative and statistical data and make inference to a population of interest using descriptive statistics, bivariate associations, and multivariate techniques.
- How to analyze and draw conclusions from quantitative data to provide evidence to answer questions and investigate sociological theories.
- Types of quantitative data analytic techniques & their relevance to social issues.
- How to read, interpret, and understand published quantitative social science research literature.
- How social science researchers use the scientific method and hypothesis testing for testing sociological theories and questions that are appropriate for quantitative analysis.
• How to be an informed consumer of statistics in everyday life.
• Statistical literacy, including descriptive statistics, inferential statistics, bivariate measures of association, and multivariate techniques, and developing their practical skills using a statistical software program (Stata).

This is an “ACE” course and will focus on ACE Learning Outcome #3: Use mathematical, computational, statistical, or formal reasoning (including reasoning based on principles of logic) to solve problems, draw inferences, and determine reasonableness. This course introduces students to the basic statistical analysis of social data, including descriptive statistics, inferential statistics, bivariate measures of association, and multivariate techniques. These ACE learning requirements will be assessed by homework assignments, exams and our final stata project.

How is the class structured?
The class consists primarily of lectures, lab days and homework (which we will begin in each lab). There are several ways you should prep for our class:

1. Turn on your Canvas Announcements notifications. This is how I will communicate anything outside of class (like schedule changes or assignment reminders).
2. Read/watch material uploaded to Canvas (for example, STATA video tutorials, book chapters)
3. Complete all assigned or past work

There are two concept based exams for this class. We will also be learning the software Stata. We will use STATA to complete homework assignments, as well as an individual project at the end of the course. The skills and concepts throughout the semester will culminate in this project. Topics and assignments build on each other, so attendance, participation, and completing assignments are all important aspects of the course!

How will my grade be determined?
Assignments and Grading:
• Attendance and Participation (60 points over the course of the semester)
• Homework (60 points)
  ○ There are 6 homework assignments, valued at 10 points each.
• Exams (80 points)
  ○ Exam 1 (40 points)
  ○ Exam 2 (40 points)
• Final Stata Project (60 points)
  ○ The project includes 4 assignments and a final summary. Each assignment is valued at 10 points, with the final summary at 20 points.

Attendance and In Class Participation:
Attendance and participation are highly encouraged and highly valued and will contribute to your grade. Each lecture class will include activities to engage with topics we discuss. To receive participation points you must be actively involved in these activities! Arrive to class on time and be prepared. Please turn off cell phones during class. You are welcome to use laptops during class, however laptop use must be relevant to the class. That is, no surfing/texting/etc during class time. Despite the importance of participation, please do not come to class if you are feeling ill or experiencing COVID symptoms. I want our classroom
to be as safe as possible! If you are going to be absent from class due to illness, send me an email and I will provide you with an alternative assignment to receive your points for the day.

**Homework Assignments:**
There are 6 homework assignments over the course of the semester. Each assignment will cover concepts and material we have learned in lecture or lab. We may begin these assignments within the lab, but you are required to finish them on your own. You will need Stata access to complete the homework assignments. There are a few options for accessing Stata, on your personal computer or on campus.

- **Option 1:** The sociology department computer lab (738 Oldfather Hall) has the Stata software available on 16 computers via departmental servers. The lab is open 8:30am to 4:45pm Monday-Friday (and often has friendly people who can help answer your Stata questions).
- **Option 2:** Remote desktop connection to the sociology computer lab: “Soc-Analyzer.unl.edu”
- **Option 3:** The student version of Stata, which you can download for your personal computer at: [http://www.stata.com/order/new/edu/gradplans/student-pricing-nodl/](http://www.stata.com/order/new/edu/gradplans/student-pricing-nodl/). The cost for a six-month student license is $48.

**Important:** Your first assignment is to demonstrate that you have successfully accessed Stata. This is an important piece of the course - so if you need additional help, you must let me know as soon as possible!

You are encouraged to work with other students on assignments, but each student must turn in their own work. If evidence of cheating and/or copying is clear and will result in a zero for that assignment and referral to UNL judicial affairs.

Homework will be assigned approximately one week before the due date, on Canvas. Late assignments are penalized 10% per day they are late. Your assignments should be Word documents, where you have pasted your Stata output. At the end of each assignment, copy and paste your do-file. Make sure you have addressed all aspects of the assignment before submitting for full credit. **Assignments are to be submitted via Canvas.**

**Tips:** Save your work and code often and label as much as possible! You never know what may be useful to you for the Stata project, other homework or later on in your academic career. Let me know if you’re having trouble, I am here to help! Office hours are a great time to receive help, as we can work with you directly in the lab. If you have any other questions, please feel free to email me or reach out to your fellow students.

**Exams:**
There are two exams in the course. These exams will be based on the concepts we learn during lecture, and will not use Stata. **These exams will be taken in class.** You must be in class on these days to take the exams. If you are unable to be in class for an exam, you must provide documentation for your absence and schedule an alternative time to take the exam.
**Final Stata Project:**
For your final Stata project, you will complete a “mini” version of a final paper (similar to what you might complete in a senior seminar or submit to an academic journal). However, it will not include all of the pieces of a formal paper (such as an introduction, theory section or literature review).

The final project will focus on **analysis** and test the skills you learn during labs and in homework. At the beginning of the semester, you will pick several variables and develop a research question. By the end of the course, you’ll have learned univariate, bivariate and multivariate analysis to answer your research question. For the final project, you will complete **three final analysis assignments** (descriptives, analysis justification and analysis) and compile a **final project summary** (these three assignments and interpretation of results). The project summary may require you to restructure and explain some work of the project assignments, but will not require you to write a new paper. The goals of the Stata project are:

- To become familiar with the process of setting up and exploring data, as well as conducting statistical tests to discover relationships between variables
- Figure out what these statistical processes mean- by describing your methods and interpreting your findings
- Prepare you to complete your own independent social science research in the future and better interpret research of others

Each student will do their own individual analysis, and work independently discovering the relationships between their variables. You may work collaboratively during homework assignments, but this project is your own and its pieces will be graded similarly to an exam.

**Important:**
Have you taken a similar statistics course before? If so, much of this class may be review. If you would like to talk about an alternative syllabus and course schedule, please contact me before the end of the first week!

**Grading Procedures:**

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<tr>
<td>98-100</td>
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<td>97-93</td>
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<td>90-92</td>
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<td>87-89</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<tr>
<td>83-86</td>
<td>B</td>
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<tr>
<td>80-83</td>
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<td>77-79</td>
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<td>73-76</td>
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Final grades are rounded up to the nearest whole number. **Example:** An 82.1% and 82.9% are both equal to an 83% or B for the course.

**Pass/No Pass:**
Students may choose to take the course as pass/no pass. If taking this option, the student must earn a C or better grade to earn the “pass.” No incompletes will be given for the course without approval.
**Extra Credit:**
There may be opportunities for extra credit both in-class and through small assignments/polls on Canvas (through announcements). Students with a documented reason for missing class on potential extra credit days will be allowed to gain those points via an alternative method. This extra credit will not exceed 5 points (approximately 2 percentage points on the final grade).

**Course Policies**

**COVID-19 Policies**
Given current CDC guidance and the current transmission level of COVID-19 in our community, I respectfully request that you join me in wearing a face covering during our classes.

As it has done throughout the pandemic, the UNL continues to follow the most recent guidance from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department.

Per the CDC's Guidance for Fully Vaccinated People, UNL students, faculty and staff who are fully vaccinated are not required to wear face coverings, but are strongly encouraged to do so indoors. Current CDC guidance advises that fully vaccinated individuals should wear face coverings indoors in areas of substantial or high transmission (which is the current status in Lancaster County). As cases of the Delta variant increase in Nebraska, we will continue to closely coordinate with LLCHD and will adapt if needed and necessary should directed health measures change.

Individuals who are not fully vaccinated are expected to wear a facial covering at all times when indoors on university property, except when an alternative is necessary as indicated by a medical professional during patient care.

**Academic Flexibility for COVID-19**
Students who have medical documentation of a health risk that cannot be mitigated through vaccination should submit a [COVID-19 Academic Flexibility Request](#). Those with a disability and/or chronic health condition that makes them high risk for the virus should seek support via Services for Students with Disabilities. International students should contact the International Student and Scholar Office to discuss their options.

**Commitment to Students with Disabilities**
The University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can discuss options privately. To establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD). If you are eligible for services and register with their office, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so they can be implemented in a timely manner. SSD contact information: 117 Louise Pound Hall; 402-472-3787.

**Counseling and Psychological Services**
UNL offers a variety of options to students to aid them in dealing with stress and adversity. Counseling and Psychological & Services (CAPS) is a multidisciplinary team of psychologists and
counselors that works collaboratively with Nebraska students to help them explore their feelings and thoughts and learn helpful ways to improve their mental, psychological and emotional well-being when issues arise. CAPS can be reached by calling 402-472-7450. **Big Red Resilience & Well-Being** (BRRWB) provides one-on-one well-being coaching to any student who wants to enhance their well-being. Trained well-being coaches help students create and be grateful for positive experiences, practice resilience and self-compassion, and find support as they need it. BRRWB can be reached by calling 402-472-8770.

**Academic Honesty**
Academic honesty is essential to the existence and integrity of an academic institution. The responsibility for maintaining that integrity is shared by all members of the academic community. The University’s Student Code of Conduct addresses academic dishonesty. Students who commit acts of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary action and are granted due process and the right to appeal any decision. If you cheat or plagiarize, you will receive a “0” for the assignment. The incident will be reported to the department chair, Dr. Julia McQuillan. Depending on severity, it may also be reported to UNL Judicial Affairs. Further information on cheating and plagiarism can be found in the University Student handbook. If you have any questions or concerns about this policy and how it relates to your work, please contact me.

**Respect for the Community**
UNL honors and respects the dignity and differences among all students, staff, faculty, and members of the community at large. As such, discriminating, threatening, and harmful behavior is not tolerated in this course. Contact the Sociology department chair, Dr. Julia McQuillan at 402-472-3621 or the Dean of Students at 402-472-2021 with any concerns regarding this course.