SOCI 206 – Introduction to Social Research II
Fall 2021
This class is fully online – No meetings in person

Instructor: Angelica Phillips
Email: Angelica.Phillips@huskers.unl.edu
Office location: OLDH 734

Lab/Office Hours (online in Zoom OR in office OLDH 734):
Tuesday 9:30 am to 10:30 am
Friday 11:00 am to 12:00 pm
Additional lab/office hours can be made by appointment.
Zoom link: https://unl.zoom.us/j/94769521372

Time Zone: As students may be taking this class in different areas of the world it is important to note that all due dates and course activities will be based on Central Time (CT).

Class prerequisite: Sociology major OR Sociology minor OR Sophomore, Junior, or Senior standing

What Is This Course About?
Sociology is the scientific study of society: we explore patterns in social relationships, discover how our behavior is shaped by social structures, and consider the consequences of our social actions. Statistics are one of the tools we can use to study society. This course is designed to add basic statistical methods to your social science toolkit.

By the end of the course, your toolkit will include a set of practical data skills. You will be able to manipulate data sets, produce graphics, and, in general, be able to answer substantive sociological questions using real data. More specifically, you will be able to produce and interpret: descriptive statistics, inferential statistics, and bivariate measures of association. You will learn to accomplish these goals using the statistical software package Stata. This software package is used in the real world, and experience with Stata will be a nice addition to your resume.

Sometimes students worry that they do not have the mathematical background to succeed in this statistics course. Don’t let math scare you! This course is designed with sociologists in mind, and I do not assume that you have any familiarity with math or statistics before taking this course. Putting it plainly: you do NOT need to have a math background to do well in this course.

My hope is that this class will prepare you for your future classes, career, and life in general. If you are a sociology major at UNL, this course will set you up nicely for SOCI 495 (Senior Seminar), where you will produce a full research project on your own. Research skills will also be essential if you work with faculty on a research project through the UCARE or USTARS programs. Basic research/data skills are also a great selling point on the job market. If you plan to attend graduate school, this class will give you a solid foundation to continue your studies. Finally, statistics are everywhere! Learning how to be a critical consumer of statistics is an
invaluable skill that I hope you gain through this course.

What Am I Going to Learn?
By the time you leave this class, you will:

• Learn practical skills to analyze and draw conclusions from quantitative social science data. Emphasis will be placed on understanding, computing, and interpreting basic statistics; interpreting and evaluating survey research findings; and analyzing quantitative data with the statistical software program Stata.

• Acquire 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.

• Learn the uses of quantitative data analytic techniques and their relevance to social issues and social life.

• Analyze and draw conclusions from quantitative data with a particular emphasis on social science theories and questions.

• Become an informed consumer of statistics in everyday life.

• Learn to read, interpret, and understand published quantitative social science research literature.

• Understand how social science researchers use the scientific method and hypothesis testing for testing sociological theories and questions that are appropriate for quantitative analysis.

I reserve the right to modify this syllabus during the semester to meet our learning goals.

Achievement-Centered Education (ACE) Student Learning Outcomes
The University of Nebraska-Lincoln seeks to provide quality education to all of its students. To that end, it has designated certain classes as ACE certified. These classes provide and assess specific learning outcomes. As an ACE class, Sociology 206 - Introduction to Social Research II will facilitate 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.

ACE learning outcomes in this class will be assessed by:

• Homework assignments
• Midterm exam
• Final Stata project

How Will This Class Be Organized?
This class will take place entirely online (i.e., there are no required in-class meetings). You will work through one content module each week of the semester. Each module will focus on a specific statistical procedure. Due dates for each assignment within a module are listed on the course schedule. Also, much of the content in this course is cumulative, so be sure to work on the module content in the order it is presented to you.
Learning Statistical Procedures
Each week, you will watch lecture videos on a particular statistical procedure. You will also read the material in the textbook on that topic. For most topics, you will also watch a Stata tutorial video demonstrating how to conduct that statistical procedure in Stata. There will be optional readings coming from Naked Statistics that will be available to enhance your understanding of the utility of certain statistical procedures.

Optional Lab/Office Hours
Twice a week (Tuesdays from 9:30 am to 10:30 am and Fridays from 11:00 am to 12:00 pm) I will have optional lab/office hours both online and in my physical office. If you would like to join online, you can click the Zoom Lab Hours link on the left-hand side of our class Canvas page. You may alternatively go to my physical office in Oldfather 734. During this time, I will be available to talk about any topic related to the class (e.g., homework assignments, statistical procedures, Stata, exam preparation). If you find that you are unable to attend lab/office hours but would still like some additional help, please email me to make separate arrangements.

Homework Assignments
You will complete seven homework assignments that will allow you to practice the statistical skills you learn watching the lecture videos. These homework assignments will require the use of Stata and provide a hands-on opportunity to use the statistical tools we cover in the recorded lectures. Each homework assignment must be turned in on Canvas (i.e., I do not accept emailed homework assignments).

You may ask me for help with homework assignments via email or during our optional lab/office hours. You may also work with other students on the homework, but each student is responsible for running their own code and typing up their own assignment. If you copy another student’s assignment, then I will consider that plagiarism and you will receive a zero for the assignment. In general, you will be graded on the accuracy and clarity of your answers. I award partial credit for if you attempt every question, even if you do not get each question correct. So please do turn in each homework! As an observation, students who start the homework earlier tend to do better in the class. These homework assignments are worth a total of 70 points towards your final grade.

Midterm Exam
You will have one midterm exams covering material from the video lectures and homework. This exam will be downloaded from Canvas and completed using Stata and a word processor. You will also turn in your exam by uploading it to Canvas. This exam is open note, but you may not work with anyone else. Dates for the midterm exam is listed on the course schedule, and I do not accept exams past their turn-in window. Make-up examinations will only be offered in cases of documented illness or emergency, and you must notify me before missing an exam to be eligible for a make-up.

Final Stata Project
You will have one final project which will utilize Stata to assess your ability to formulate a
research question and answer that research question with statistical analyses.

**How Will My Grade Be Determined?**
Your grade for the course will be based on how well you demonstrate your learning in the following ways:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Total points</th>
<th>Percentage of final grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Homework assignments</td>
<td>7x 10 points each</td>
<td>70 points</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm exam</td>
<td>1x 30 points</td>
<td>30 points</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Stata project</td>
<td>1x 40 points</td>
<td>40 points</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>140 possible points</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I strive for a one-week turnaround time on graded assignments.

Grade points will be converted to letter grades based on the following scale:

- A+ = 136-140
- A = 131-135
- A- = 126-130
- B+ = 121-125
- B = 116-120
- B- = 112-115
- C+ = 107-111
- C = 102-106
- C- = 98-101
- D+ = 93-97
- D = 88-92
- D- = 84-87
- F = 0-83

**Extra Credit: Up to 14 points that go towards your total pool of points**
The course will not be curved. I am, however, offering up to 14 total points of extra credit that will be added to the total points you have in class.

The first source of extra credit is earned by completing the bio-sketch during week 1 of the semester (see course schedule for more information). The bio-sketch asks you to answer a few questions about yourself so that I and your classmates can learn more about you. While the assignment is completely optional, I encourage you to participate as this will help to create a classroom feel in the online environment. You can earn up to 2 points of extra credit towards your total pool of points (*not 2 percentage points*) for completing this extra credit assignment. The bio-sketch will be posted in a discussion forum in Canvas.

The second source of extra credit is earned by completing a midterm course evaluation, which will be due during week 9 of the semester (see course schedule). This midterm course evaluation will ask you questions about how the course is going so far and how (or if) you would like to see anything changed going forward. I will be reading each of these midterm evaluations and may decide to change aspects of the course accordingly, so please consider taking this opportunity to voice your opinion and get 2 extra credit points in the process.

Another source of extra credit is a reflection paper which will be due during week 15 of the semester (see course schedule). This paper will require you to reflect on your understanding of
statistics over the course of the semester and apply themes from *Naked Statistics* to these reflections. This reflection paper will be worth 10 extra credit points which goes towards your total pool of points. Further details about this paper will be provided during the semester.

**Turn-In Window and Late Work Policy**
Each of your assignments will have a turn-in window, meaning that you can choose when to submit your assignment within that frame of time. For instance, a homework assignment may be due during the week of September 6th, so you will have any time between 12:00 AM Monday September 6th and 11:59 PM Sunday September 12th to turn in that homework assignment. After the set window for your assignment closes, missing or late assignments will be graded as a zero. However, please reach out to me before the end of the turn-in window if you need extensions for any assignments because of extenuating circumstances and I will do what I can to accommodate your circumstances.

**What Materials Do I Need for This Course?**

**Course Website**
This course will take place on Canvas, UNL’s Learning Management System. You can access Canvas by navigating to: [https://canvas.unl.edu/](https://canvas.unl.edu/). If you have any problems accessing Canvas, you can contact the Huskertech Help Center at (402)-472-3970.

**Please note: all of your assignments will be turned in via Canvas. I will not accept assignments via email or any other format.**

**Reliable Access to a Computer and the Internet**
This is an online course, so having consistent and reliable access to a computer and the internet is essential. It is your responsibility to make sure that your technology is functioning prior to taking this course. You can rent computers from UNL using this website: [https://its.unl.edu/services/equipment-checkout/](https://its.unl.edu/services/equipment-checkout/).

You can also download the entire Microsoft Office Suite (including Microsoft Word, Excel, etc.) using your UNL login here: [https://its.unl.edu/emailhome/download-microsoft-office](https://its.unl.edu/emailhome/download-microsoft-office).

**Software**
This course will make use of the statistical software package Stata. Stata is available on the sociology server, which you may access from any computer on UNL’s campus or via remote server. I have provided a video tutorial for how to access STATA both on-campus and off-campus using a PC or MAC computer. **You do not need to buy any software for this course**, although you are welcome to buy a copy Stata for your own computer if you like. If you want your own copy on your computer, you can purchase a six-month Student version of Stata/IC, which is $45: [http://www.stata.com/order/new/edu/gradplans/student-pricing/](http://www.stata.com/order/new/edu/gradplans/student-pricing/).

**Calculator**
Students will need a calculator in order to answer some of the homework and exam questions. The calculator on a smartphone or computer will be fine for this class.
**Course Texts**  
*Naked Statistics: Stripping the Dread from the Data*, by Charles Wheelan (2014) IBSN: 9780393071955

I am providing a PDF copy of both texts for you. Therefore, it is not required for you to purchase a physical copy of the books for this course. However, you may choose to purchase a physical copy for yourself if you would prefer to have one. If you choose to do this, I am more than willing to provide recommendations for where you can get these books.

**What Resources Can You Recommend to Help Me Along the Way?**

**Your Instructor (That’s me!)**  
As your instructor, I am the most important resource available to you! We can meet during lab/office hours or by appointment to discuss any aspect of the course or any difficulties you may be experiencing. I understand that taking your first statistics course (or even your second, third, fourth…) can be intimidating, so I will try to do everything in my power to help you succeed in this course and ultimately leave feeling more confident in your statistical knowledge. Ultimately, I want you to learn. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have a question about course material, how to study for an exam, or your progress in this course. I try to respond to email within 24 hours on weekdays.

**Writing Support for This Course**  
The UNL Writing Center can provide you with meaningful support as you write for this class as well as for every course in which you enroll. Trained peer consultants are available to talk with you about all forms of communication, including lab reports, presentations, research papers, cover letters, and application essays. You can visit at any stage of the process, from brainstorming and organizing ideas through polishing a final draft. The UNL Writing Center is located in 102 Andrews Hall, with evening hours in the Adele Hall Learning Commons and other satellite locations. You can schedule 25- and 50-minute appointments any time by visiting unl.mywconline.com. For more information about the Writing Center, including hours and other locations, please visit unl.edu/writing.

**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.

Other Policies You Should Be Aware Of

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.

Attendance Policy
Because this course is fully asynchronous and online, there is no requirement for attendance. However, I highly encourage you to attend lab/office hours when possible.

Diversity and Inclusion
The University of Nebraska-Lincoln does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, national origin, sex (including pregnancy), religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, and/or political affiliation. It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that the students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity: gender identity, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, nationality, religion, and culture. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated. Please let me know ways to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally, or for other students or student groups.

Respect for the Community
The University of Nebraska-Lincoln 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. Jolene Smyth at jsmyth2@unl.edu or the Dean of Students at 402-472-2021 with any concerns regarding this course.

Land Acknowledgement:
A “Land Acknowledgement” is a formal statement that recognizes and respects Indigenous Peoples as traditional stewards of this land and the enduring relationship that exists between Indigenous Peoples and their traditional territories. The Institute for Ethnic Studies has developed the following Land Acknowledgement:
The University of Nebraska is a land-grant institution with campuses and programs on the past, present, and future homelands of the Pawnee, Ponca, Oto-Missouria, Omaha, Dakota, Lakota, Arapaho, Cheyenne, and Kaw Peoples, as well as the relocated Ho-Chunk, Iowa, and Sac and Fox Peoples. Please take a moment to consider the legacies of more than 150 years of displacement, violence, settlement, and survival that bring us together here today. This acknowledgement and the centering of Indigenous Peoples is a start as we move forward together for the next 150 years.