

IDH 3931, Section # 31A9
Statistics Don't Lie, But People Can
Full Fall Course

Instructor:	Dr. Tim Jacobbe	Office Hours:	Tuesdays, 11:30 am – 12:30 pm
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COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVE

This course will highlight examples of misuses of statistics as well as help students make sense of statistical studies in their own fields. Activities will be done to highlight the importance of understanding key concepts of statistics that are often presented by and to people who may not understand what they are saying. An example of this is the concept of p-values and how those are used to make arguments for or against something.

REQUIRED COURSE TEXT

No textbooks are required. All of the needed resources will be provided through Canvas. Additional readings will be selected by students in the course.

Assignments and Grading

Homework/Readings, Participation, and Talking Points (20%)

- Readings: Each week students should come to class having read whatever has been assigned.
- Homework: There may be a short homework assignments on occasion.
- Participation: This course is dependent upon your participation.
- Talking Points: Each Friday (by noon) students are expected to post one paragraph on canvas of a topic in the reading you found especially interesting that you would like to see further discussed/debated during class time. If you read ahead, you are welcome to post your topics for each reading as early as you would like.

Lead a Class Discussion (20%)

- Each group will be responsible for leading a class discussion at one point during the semester. As a group, you will read through all of the talking points for the week and choose one or more topics you would like to prepare to lead a 10-15 minute discussion/debate/activity with the class. Creativity is encouraged to actively engage the class. If your group feels you need more time to lead the discussion please communicate that in advance.

Selecting an Article of Interest (10%)

- Each student will find an article of interest that displays many of themes that emerge from the course (The Benefits and Risks of Using Statistics, Introduction to Media Reports, Surveys and Polls, Experimentation, Risk, Media Reports, Statistical Reasoning). Students are encouraged to find an article in their particular major or focused on a particular topic that is of importance to them.

Report Critique (25%)

You will critique an article of interest that includes a reported statistics in mass media (newspaper, television, magazine, website, etc.). Evaluate the article by discussing how well the report addresses critical components of a statistical study (as discussed in class). Research the original source of the report and discuss any misrepresentations reported in the media. Further details about this assignment will be discussed in class and a rubric will be provided.

Culminating Assignment (25%)

- There will be a culminating activity in the course where you will be expected to develop a poster/slide show/graphic to highlight what you learned in the course. This assignment will be discussed over the course of the semester but you would be welcome to develop an overview of all you learned in the course while making connections to several examples that have been used in the course. Another idea would be to expand upon the article you selected and highlight how it connects to your field and/or a topic we explored in the class.

Attendance (X%)

- There is a strong emphasis in this course on class discussions that will be informed by the readings. There are also several activities and class discussions that will be led by your classmates. Regular attendance is essential. Should you need to miss class for any reason, please let the instructor know **prior to the session** (via email). You are responsible for making-up all work missed during your absence. You can make up an excused absence by *completing the regular work and a make-up assignment* (see below in syllabus for further details) and handing it in **no later than 1 week after your absence**. Please make sure you have a fellow student take notes for you should you miss a class. Your grade will be lowered by 5% for each absence for which you did not turn in a make-up assignment on time and this may exceed the 10% allotted for this category if there are more than 2 unexcused absences.
- It is expected that you will NOT use laptops or cell phones (texting) during class. The use of these devices will have a negative impact on your grade for the course.

Make-Up Assignment for an EXCUSED absence: You can make up each excused absence by

1. Completing all in-class work and homework assigned on the day you missed. In addition write a brief summary of the activities we did the day you missed class. You are responsible for making-up all work missed during your absence and Please make sure you have a fellow student take notes for you should you miss a class. Use your classmate's notes to write your summary.
2. You will critique an article of interest that includes reported statistics in mass media (newspaper, television, magazine, website, etc.). Evaluate the article by discussing how well the report addresses critical components of a statistical study (as discussed in class).
3. Please submit in person or by email no later than one week after the absence you are making up. Late make-up assignments will **NOT** be accepted.

FINAL GRADE DETERMINATION

The purpose of this course, as is all education, is to learn – not just to “work for a grade.” While all students should be capable of earning an A in the course, merely completing the work does not constitute A work. Instead, the final determination of a course grade relies primarily on the **quality** of work presented for the various assignments. Please note that to receive full credit, all work must be submitted on time.

GRADING SCALE

Grade	Percent
A	93 – 100
A-	90 – 92
B+	87 – 89
B	83 – 86
B-	80 – 82
C+	77 – 79
C	73 – 76
C-	70 – 72
D+	67 – 69
D	63 – 66
D-	60 – 62
E	0 – 59

More information on grades and grading policies is [here](#).

Please Note: The instructor reserves the right to change any part of this syllabus during anytime in the semester. Students will be adequately notified whenever changes occur.

IDH 3931 – Statistics Don't Lie, But People Can
 Class Meetings/Due Dates/Tentative Topics
 Spring 2019

Class	Date	Topic	Assignment Due
1	1/8	Introduction/Nature of Statistics	Bring Syllabus
2	1/15	The Benefits and Risks of Using Statistics No In Person Class – Posts Still Due	Reading on Canvas
3	1/22	Media Reports	Reading on Canvas
4	1/29	Misunderstandings in Reporting	Reading on Canvas
5	2/5	Importance of a Good Sample	Reading on Canvas
6	2/12	Surveys and Polls	Reading on Canvas
7	2/19	Experiments	Reading on Canvas
8	2/26	Observational Studies	Reading on Canvas
9	3/12	Student Selected Articles/Contexts	Student Selected Reading
10	3/19	Student Selected Articles/Contexts	Student Selected Reading
11	3/26	Student Selected Articles/Contexts	Student Selected Reading
12	4/2	Student Selected Articles/Contexts	Student Selected Reading
13	4/9	Student Selected Articles/Contexts	Student Selected Reading
14	4/16	Student Presentations	
15	4/23	Student Presentations	

Please note: The instructor may modify this schedule depending upon how the course is proceeding in order to make the learning experience as positive as can be possible.

Course Policies

Attendance: Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with the university policies at

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>

As stated there are "acceptable reasons for absences from class include illness, serious family emergencies, special curricular requirements, military obligation, severe weather conditions, religious holidays, and participation in official University activities. Absences from class for court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena) must be excused. Other reasons also may be approved."

In the event of an excused absence, the instructor will consider the individual circumstances and work with the student to determine a timeline for makeup work, assignments, and exams. In the case of a valid conflict such as those listed in the university attendance policy, the instructor will work with the student to determine a process and timeline for makeup work, assignments, and exams. Otherwise, for all unexcused late assignments, one-half letter grade will be deducted for each additional day unless other arrangements are made with the instructor.

Students Requiring Accommodations: Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter; which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Class Demeanor: Students are expected to arrive to class on time and behave in a manner that is respectful to the instructor and to fellow students. Please avoid the use of cell phones unless you are posting about class-related material. Opinions held by other students should be respected in discussion, and conversations that do not contribute to the discussion should be held at minimum, if at all.

Materials and Supplies Fees: There are no additional fees for this course.

University Honesty Policy: UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code (<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

University Counseling Services: Phone number and contact site for university counseling services and mental health services: (352) 392-1575, <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>

Incomplete Grades

An incomplete grade is described in the Undergraduate Catalog. It is the instructors’ discretion as to what extenuating circumstances warrant adequate excuse for not completing required course work.

Course Evaluations

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>