

STA 4931, Statistics in Practice Course Syllabus Spring 2025

Instructor: Dr. Steven Ramsier

Office: 102B OSB

Office Hours: 2:30 PM to 3:30 PM on Tuesdays and Thursdays. (Virtual through Zoom, see Canvas)

Office hours are subject to occasional temporary changing -- check Canvas for announcements

Email: ramsier@stat.fsu.edu

Phone: 644-3218 (Main Statistics office phone – currently no direct line to the instructor)

Fax: 644-5271

TAs/Grader: Ria Shaji rs24w@fsu.edu

Class Meeting Time and Location: 3:05 PM to 4:20 PM Mo We in 108 OSB

Final Exam Period Day and Time: Thursday, May 1, 3:00 P.M. – 5:00 P.M. (Only if needed for presentations.)

Recommended Text: Alley, M., *The Craft of Scientific Writing* (2018), Fourth Edition, Springer.
ISBN-13: 978-1-4419-8287-2

Other references will be provided during the course of the semester.

Prerequisite: At least two STA 4000-level courses or instructor permission.

Software: Access to statistical software will be required. Packages such as *SAS*, *JMP*, and/or other tools will be used to complete analyses of data.

Course Description: This is a capstone course intended for statistics majors. The goal will be to enhance students' competencies by applying advanced statistical methodology to the challenges imposed by real data and developing writing skills to effectively communicate project requirements and findings. Students will be exposed to several aspects of statistical practices including elements of statistical consulting, study design, setting project goals and deliverables, applying appropriate methodology, performing accurate analyses, and providing clear and concise explanations of results.

Course Objectives: This course is designated as an *Upper-Division Writing* course.

Upper-Division Writing Objectives. By the end of the course, students will demonstrate the ability to:

UDW1. Use appropriate evidence from multiple sources to illustrate how a chosen topic is relevant to a particular field.

UDW2. Employ different resources (such as words, graphs, charts, and images) to compose in the field.

UDW3. Compose as a process, including drafts, revision, and editing.

UDW4. Convey ideas clearly, coherently, and effectively for a particular purpose, occasion, or audience as appropriate for the field.

Competencies for Upper-Division Writing will be assessed through the assignments and the capstone project for which a standard rubric will be employed to facilitate the evaluation of written results.

General Course Objectives. Students who complete this course will be able to:

5. Define the framework in which a statistical study is conducted.
6. Investigate modern statistical methods that extends beyond their current background.
7. Apply new statistical techniques in an appropriate way to real world problems.
8. Formulate client requirements from a consultation.
9. Create, organize, and carry out an actionable plan to meet the client's requirements.
10. Present the results of a statistical analysis to the client in a manner that fits the client's needs.
11. Critique statistical studies and their results based on a sensible consideration of the techniques employed and their limitations.
12. Perform a thorough statistical analysis in a logical manner starting from project definition, through data collection, data analysis using best practices, model assessment, and delivery of a solution in comprehensible terms to stakeholders.

Grade Composition (1000 Points Total):

Elementary Statistical Analysis (2 parts, 200 words)	100
Advanced Statistical Analysis I (3 parts, 400 words)	200
Advanced Statistical Analysis II (2 parts, 400 words)	100
Consultation Assignment (1 assignment)	100
Proposal Writing for a Professional Project (1 assignment, 400 words)	100
Capstone Project (1 assignment, 1600 words)	300
Participation	100
Total (3000 words)	1000

Grade Assignments (Based on total course points earned):

A 930-1000	B- 800-829	D+ 670-699
A- 900- 929	C+ 770-799	D 630-669
B+ 870-899	C 730-769	D- 600-629
B 830-869	C- 700-729	F 0-599

Assignments and Responsibilities

Elementary Statistical Analysis Assignment: An assignment will be given that involves a real-world problem for which techniques that are familiar to the student should apply. The focus of this assignment is on effective communications encompassed in a statistical study. Students will work individually and will be presented scenarios in which they will need to collect data, analyze it using methods from their own background, and interpret the results. Students will first draft a memo-style report on their findings, receive feedback, edit and revise the report by incorporating suggestions, and submit the report for instructor grading. The report will consist of at least 200 words.

Advanced Statistical Analysis Assignments: These assignments will parallel the elementary statistical analysis above; however, they will focus on more advanced techniques that are not contained in the typical coursework leading up to this class. Students will be presented with the concept of the new technique but will be required to do some additional independent exploration on how it may be applied to the given scenario. Students will first draft reports in memo-style, receive feedback, and revise final reports in the first two of the exercises. The third exercise will only require a final draft. Each report will consist of at least 400 words.

Consultation Assignments: Scenarios will be developed where each student will get to evaluate consultations. Students will observe the process of statistical consulting including greeting the client, understanding the client project, identifying client requirements, setting goals in client terms, formalizing goals, acquiring data, performing the statistical analysis, and discuss the results with the client in non-statistical terms.

Proposal Writing for Professional Project Assignment: In this assignment students will be provided a scenario for which a statistical study is required. Examples include a process improvement project, method or product comparison, a validation study, or research topics from undergraduate honors thesis students. Students will be required to draft a proposal involving a situation description, explain the proposed solution, define the steps involved, give potential benefits, and cite potential roadblocks. Students, having received feedback on previous assignments on their writing skills, will submit just one final draft. The proposal writing process will involve composing at least 400 words.

Capstone Project: Students will work on an applications project during the course of the term. Each project will focus on a different element in the statistical modeling process. Students are encouraged to select a topic for which they are passionate about such that a research question may be formulated, and corresponding data obtained. The data used will be of the student's choosing in consultation with the instructor so that initial guidance may be given to ensure an effective project. A final report will be drafted and revised based on feedback. The final report will be comprised of at least 1600 written words.

In general, the complete project consists of framing a real-world problem in the context of a statistical study, collecting a data set of interest, preparing the data for analysis, employing preliminary analytic methods for presenting the data, investigating and researching potential statistical models for fitting the data, fitting and

refining the appropriate model, assessing the adequacy of the model, and interpreting the results. The completed project will be presented in the form of a written report and oral presentation to the class.

Participation: Students will be graded on participation in class. Beyond just attendance, students will be graded on class engagement. Engagement includes peer evaluation of written work, providing feedback on oral presentations, class discussion, consulting evaluation, and other class activities. It is anticipated that a few more than 100 points will be available to allow for one or two missed opportunities but the maximum number of points that can be earned for this component will be 100.

Policies

Late, unexcused assignments will be penalized as follows: up to 24 hours late – 90% of grade, between 24 and 48 hours late – 75% of grade, thereafter – no credit. Excused late submissions are granted for emergencies such as a death in the family or treatment of an injury or illness at a medical facility.

Documentation is required. It is up to the discretion of the instructor as to how excused absences are handled and circumstances are handled on a case-by-case basis.

Tentative Course Outline and Sample Schedule:

Week of ...	Monday	Wednesday	Assessments
Jan. 6	Introduction	Tech Writing Overview/Org.	
Jan. 13	Lang: Clear & Concise/ Illustrations	Adv. Topic 1: Process Optimization	Elementary Draft Due
Jan. 20	MLK Day – No Class	Process Optimization	Final Elem. Document Due
Jan. 27	Process Optimization -- Planning	Process Opt. -- Modeling	
Feb. 3	Process Opt. -- Validation	Process Opt. -- Follow-up Exp.	Advanced 1 Planning Draft Due
Feb. 10	Process Opt. -- Model Enhancement	Process Opt. – 2 nd Follow-up	Final Adv. 1 Planning Doc. Due
Feb. 17	Adv. Topic 2: Quantile Regression	Quantile Regression	Final Adv. 1 Results Doc. Due
Feb. 24	Quantile Regression	Quantile Regression Application	
Mar. 3	Intro. to Stat. Consulting	The Consulting Process/Client	Advanced 2 Draft Due
Mar. 10	<i>Spring Break</i>		
Mar. 17	Consulting Review/Proposal Writing	Consulting Sessions	Eval. (Attendance Req. 3/19)
Mar. 24	Proposal Constraints	Proposal Assignment	Final Advanced 2 Due
Mar. 31	Capstone Project Setup	Proj. Framework/Limitations	Proposal Document Due
Apr. 7	Capstone Project Consultation	Capstone Project Consultation	
Apr. 14	Capstone Project Consultation	Capstone Project Consultation	
Apr. 21	Capstone Class Presentations	Capstone Class Presentations	Capstone Report Due

Certificate in SAS Programming and Data Analysis:

This course satisfies one of the four courses required for the SAS Programming and Data certificate jointly sponsored by FSU and the SAS Institute. **Students** interested in the program **must apply to the program before** the end of the semester in which **the second course in the program is taken**. In addition, a portfolio is required to be submitted in the last semester of program and a representative assignment and/or project from this course must be included. For more details see <http://stat.fsu.edu/sas-certificate>.

Liberal Studies for the 21st Century:

The *Liberal Studies for the 21st Century* Program at Florida State University builds an educational foundation that will enable FSU graduates to thrive intellectually and materially and to engage critically and effectively in their communities. In this way your Liberal Studies courses provide a comprehensive intellectual foundation and transformative educational experience. This course has been approved as meeting the *Liberal Studies* requirements for **Upper-Division Writing** and thus is designed to help you become a flexible and proficient writer for professional purposes.

Upper-Division Writing Designation:

In order to fulfill FSU's Upper-Division Writing requirement, the student must earn a "C-" or higher in the course and earn at least a "C-" average on the required writing assignments. If the student does not earn a "C-" average or better on the required writing assignments, the student will not earn an overall grade of "C-" or better in the course, no matter how well the student performs in the remaining portion of the course.

Academic Success:

Your academic success is a top priority for Florida State University. University resources to help you succeed include tutoring centers, computer labs, counseling and health services, and services for designated groups, such as veterans and students with disabilities. The following information is not exhaustive, so please check with your advisor or the Department of Student Support and Transitions to learn more.

University Attendance Policy:

Excused absences include documented illness, deaths in the family and other documented crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities. These absences will be accommodated in a way that does not arbitrarily penalize students who have a valid excuse. Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness.

Academic Honor System:

The Florida State University Academic Honor Policy outlines the University's expectations for the integrity of students' academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Academic Honor Policy and for living up to their pledge to "...be honest and truthful and...[to] strive for personal and institutional integrity at Florida <http://fda.fsu.edu/academic-resources/academic-integrity-and-grievances/academic-honor-policy>".

Americans with Disabilities Act:

Florida State University (FSU) values diversity and inclusion; we are committed to a climate of mutual respect and full participation. Our goal is to create learning environments that are usable, equitable, inclusive, and welcoming. FSU is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities in a manner that is consistent with academic standards of the course while empowering the student to meet integral requirements of the course.

To receive academic accommodations, a student:

- (1) must register with and provide documentation to the Office of Accessibility Services (OAS);
- (2) must provide a letter from OAS to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type; and,
- (3) should communicate with the instructor, as needed, to discuss recommended accommodations. A request for a meeting may be initiated by the student or the instructor.

Please note that instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodations to a student until appropriate verification from the Office of Accessibility Services has been provided.

This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request.

For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact the

Office of Accessibility Services
874 Traditions Way
108 Student Services Building
Florida State University
Tallahassee, FL 32306-4167
(850) 644-9566 (voice)
(850) 644-8504 (TDD)
oas@fsu.edu
<https://dsst.fsu.edu/oas>

Confidential Campus Resources:

Various centers and programs are available to assist students with navigating stressors that might impact academic success. These include the following:

Victim Advocate Program
University Center A, Rm. 4100
(850) 644-7161
Available 24/7/365
Office Hours: M-F 8-5
<https://dsst.fsu.edu/vap>

Counseling and Psychological Services
Askew Student Life Center, 2nd floor
942 Learning Way
(850) 644-8255
<https://counseling.fsu.edu/>

University Health Services
Health and Wellness Center
(850) 644-6230
<https://uhs.fsu.edu/>

Syllabus Change Policy:

Except for changes that substantially affect the implementation of the evaluation (grading) statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.
da State University." (Florida State University Academic Honor Policy, found at