

# Advanced Research Methods

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Fall 2014 Monday evenings 6-10 PM  
Location: Sem II room D2109

## TESC MPA Mission Statement

Our students, faculty and staff create learning communities to explore and implement socially just, democratic public service. We *think* critically and creatively; *communicate* effectively; *work* collaboratively; *embrace* diversity; we *value* fairness and equity; *advocate* powerfully on behalf of the public; and *imagine* new possibilities to accomplish positive change in our workplaces and in our communities.

## Course Description

This is a required course for the MPA's Public Policy Concentration. In order to take this course, students must have completed the MPA first year Core program and either be enrolled in, or completed, the MPA second year Core program. Advanced undergraduate and other potential students will be admitted, with instructor permission, on a space available basis.

Whether you subscribe to the view that there are lies, damned lies, and statistics or not, statistics will almost certainly influence your life. The focus of Advanced Research Methods is on learning useful analysis techniques (both in SPSS and Excel) to support meaningful research and effective decision making. We will learn what questions to ask regarding data, how to perform statistical analyses, how to read and interpret statistical findings, and how to communicate research results.

## Required Text and Software

Text: Mertler, Craig A. and Rachel A. Vannatta. (2013). Advanced and Multivariate Statistical Methods: Practical Application and Interpretation (Fifth Edition). Pyrczak Publishing.

Software: IBM® SPSS® Statistics 22

Statistics Standard GradPack (BE SURE TO RENT THE "STANDARD" PACK, NOT "BASE" OR "PREMIUM"). Rent (6 months). and download on web. Recommended site:  
<http://www.onthehub.com/spss/>.

GradPacks are single-user licenses that provide students with affordable access to statistical analysis, modeling and survey research tools to support their undergraduate or graduate course work. IBM® SPSS® Statistics Standard GradPack - includes: Statistics Base, Advanced Statistics, and Regression

## **Schedule Outline:**

Week 1: Introduction—Read Chapt 1 of Mertler by the start of class

Week 2: Multivariate overview and data screening

Week 3: Factor Analysis and ANOVA

Week 4: MANOVA AND MANCOVA

Week 5: Mult Regression

Week 6: Mult Regression and synthesis

Week 7: Path Analysis

Week 8: Cluster Analysis

Week 9: Discriminate analysis and Logit Regression

Week 10: TBD

## Expectations

The majority of learning takes place in class (homework is to prepare for class and to practice techniques/interpretation). Therefore, everyone is expected to attend, and be actively engaged in, all classes.

This class is about developing depth in a particular set of analytical techniques -- it is not about breadth. Readings will be short but will require more than one reading. Don't expect to be able to "read ahead" - doing so is not the most effective way to learn this material. Assignments are designed to allow you to practice and develop facility with software, interpreting results and reading/analyzing other peoples' research. There are no "big" assignments or "big" readings - expect to work steadily and patiently throughout the term.

Students need access to IBM-SPSS software - we do not have access at the college. You will either need to rent a copy (see above) or find access elsewhere

Assignments must be completed and posted/turned in on time.

**Format:** All papers should be typed using a computer, double spaced (unless otherwise stated), 12 point font, and follow APA format and citation style. [APA Style <http://www.apastyle.org/learn/index.aspx> Purdue Writing & Grammar Guide <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>] All written work will be of high quality, grammatically correct, clear and without spelling errors. If you require it, please request resource writing assistance from faculty and/or contact the MPA Writing Assistant. Check assignment details for each submission. Sometimes your faculty will ask you to work with the Graduate Writing Assistant; if so, you are required to do to the satisfaction of your faculty member.

**Participation & Attendance:** Students are required to attend each class meeting in its entirety. Participation includes focusing on class content, speaking in class, listening to others, taking notes, completing class interactive exercises, avoiding distractions, and listening to and dialoging with the guest speakers. If an absence is unavoidable, seminar faculty should be notified prior to a class and/or seminar absence. **After one absence per quarter (4 hours), make-up work may be assigned at faculty discretion, case-by-case. Makeup work must be completed by the deadline assigned to ensure full receipt of course credit. After three absences (12 hours) you may be denied full credit. After reoccurring weekly absences (missing an hour of class week to week) you may be denied full credit.** Finally, if you do miss a class, you are still expected to do the reading for that class meeting and turn in any assignments that were due that class date.

**Late assignments:** Turning in assignments late is unacceptable. However, if there is an unavoidable need to turn in an assignment late, the student should contact their seminar faculty no later than the original assignment due date to discuss options. Parameters are left to the discretion of the faculty on a situation-by-situation basis. Late assignments must be completed by the revised due date to ensure full receipt of course credit.

**Participation & Attendance:** Students are required to attend each class meeting. Participation includes focusing on class content, being engaged in class and seminar, listening to others, taking notes, completing class interactive exercises, avoiding distractions, and listening to and dialoging with the guest speakers. If an absence is unavoidable, faculty must be notified prior to a class and/or seminar absence. After one absence per quarter, make-up work may be assigned at faculty discretion, case-by-case. Makeup work must be completed by the end of the quarter in question for course credit.

**Use of Electronic Devices:** this course is Canvas-based. We understand, and expect, that you will need to use electronic devices in class. However, the class is also participatory and the learning community is dependent upon people being present to what is happening in class. This means that electronic devices should not be used for anything other than for class-related activities. Resist the siren call of all the ways in which your devices can distract you from what is going on in the classroom. We will

ask people to put away their devices, except for note taking, for guest lectures. Please extend similar courtesies to the faculty when they are lecturing.

**Credit:** Students will receive 4 graduate credits at the completion of this quarter if all course requirements have been satisfactorily completed to meet course objectives. No partial credit will be awarded. Full loss of credit decisions will be made by the faculty. **Plagiarism (i.e., using other peoples' work as your own) will result in total loss of credit for the class and may result in expulsion from the MPA program.** <http://www.evergreen.edu/advising/academichonesty.htm> . Failing to complete one or more assignments, completing one or more assignments late, or multiple absences may constitute denial of total credit. Unexcused absences or lack of academic work may result in no credit at the discretion of the faculty. Students will also be evaluated based upon their progress towards the learning goals that will be assessed from classroom, seminar, and assignment performance. The faculty makes decisions for no credit when necessary, based on absence or failure to meet academic course requirements.

**Evaluation:** Written self-evaluations and a seminar faculty evaluation are required for credit at the end of week 10. Faculty evaluations of students are due by the end of evaluation week. (All evals are to be submitted via [my.evergreen.edu](http://my.evergreen.edu).)

**Multiculturalism & Diversity:** Faculty and students will actively work towards contextually weaving multiculturalism and diversity throughout our learning as related to readings, lectures, seminar and group projects. In a learning community students and faculty share the responsibility for the teaching and learning environment. We are all encouraged to add to the existing format and content by incorporating relevant professional experiences in dialogue and by presenting current events regarding public service. Multiculturalism and diversity is to be understood as: aiming to promote constructive community discourse about issues of culture, power and life-style differences including but not limited to race, ethnicity, color, nationality, sex, gender, gender

**Accommodations:** are provided for any student who desires them through a working relationship with Access Services, the Writing Center and the Quantitative and Symbolic Reasoning Center. To request academic accommodations due to a disability, **please contact the office of Access Services for Students with Disabilities** (867-6348 or 6364). Information about a disability or health condition are regarded as confidential. Please refer to TESC's Students with Disabilities Policy.

**Other Expectations of Students and Faculty:** We commit to promoting a cooperative, supportive atmosphere within the community; give everyone opportunity for self-reflection and expression; use high standards in reading the text and preparing our papers, lectures, and comments in seminar; handle all disputes in a spirit of goodwill; respect our differences; and, discuss any problems involving others in the learning community directly with the individuals involved.

**We abide by the [social contract](#), the [student conduct code](#) and the [non-discrimination policies and procedures at TESC](#). See the college's [Student Conduct webpage](#) for more.**

All students are expected to support and contribute to a well-functioning MPA classroom learning community. Behavior that disrupts the learning community may be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the MPA program.

**Guest Policy:** Guests are welcome to visit our learning community during class time and seminar meetings with discretionary approval from course faculty **in advance** of the requested visit. It is the host student's responsibility to contact the faculty with details about the requested guest visit and await approval. Guests must abide by all social contract conduct code, and nondiscrimination policy guidelines as aforementioned in this syllabus.

**Inclement Weather:** In the event of bad weather or emergencies students should check with for announcements of campus closures. Students can call the main campus line 867-6000 to get the latest

news regarding a campus closure or delay. Faculty may decide to cancel program meeting even if campus is open and we will send an all-program email prior to 3:00 pm. You are responsible for checking email and ensuring viable transportation options are available to you.

**Communicating with Each Other:** Email and Canvas are our primary means of communication. You are responsible for checking your Evergreen email and Canvas regularly.