

Nonpartisan Interpretation of Data and Information
4-Credit MPA elective, Spring 2015
Mondays 6:00pm-10:00pm, Location: Sem II, room D2109
Draft Syllabus

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Course Canvas Website: Will be accessed through your **my.evergreen.edu** site

“You must be the change you wish to see in the world.”-- Mohandas K. Gandhi

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.

Spring 2015 Course Description:

Nonpartisan Interpretation of Data and Information will present methods for the best representation of quantitative information. We will use four-hour blocks of meeting times for this 4-credit class using texts such as *How to Lie with Statistics* by Darrell Huff and *The Visual Display of Quantitative Information* by Edward Tufte. There will be an opportunity to work with data of the student’s choice. The majority of learning will take place in class so all are expected to attend, and be actively engaged. When completed students will have a much clearer idea of how to represent quantitative information in an accurate and representative way.

Spring 2015 Learning Objectives:

Our objective is to provide an interesting and insightful look at interpreting and presenting data accurately. We will accomplish this through discussion, workshops, seminar and examination of counter-intuitive data. Participation will be a necessity as groups evaluating and working common problems will be typical. There will be an opportunity for each student to present data of interest to them in a final project. Part of the process will include the comprehension and use of the software *Tableau*; a statistical software known for its ease of use and presentation capability. All students will be provided a key for free use of the *Tableau* software.

Books Spring 2015 (required):

1. *The Visual Display of Quantitative Information*, Second Edition by Edward Tufte. ISBN: 978-0-9613921-4-7.
2. *How to Lie with Statistics*, [Paperback], by Darrell Huff, ISBN-13: 978-0-393-31072-6.
3. *Naked Statistics*, [Paperback], by Charles Wheelan, ISBN-13: 978-0-393-347777.
4. *Tableau Your Data!: Fast and Easy Visual Analysis with Tableau Software*. [Paperback], First Edition by Dan Murray, ISBN-13: 978-1118612040

4. The Tableau Software will be provided to each student.

Articles and additional reading TBD.

Tentative Spring 2015 Schedule A More detailed schedule will be posted after the first class. During the first class we will discuss additional subjects identified by students to be covered in our four-credit course. Assignments, additional readings and an updated schedule with seminar will be posted on our Moodle website throughout the quarter.

****Note the first assignment is due at our first class session****

Assignment #1: Homework

Due: Week 1 One-page paper discussing what you would like to gain from the class and what specific readings or material you would like to see in the class.

Your individual presentations:

Your presentation will be 15-25 minutes long and is to be of your choosing. It can be the presentation, or explanation of an idea, an interpretation of a data set, or perhaps demonstrating innovative software used to present ideas or numbers. I will be looking for clear and interesting presentations. You have wide latitude of what you can present but I reserve a final right of refusal. Please send me what your proposed presentation will be by Friday 17 April by email. Presentations will occur in weeks 7, 8, and 10.

Weekly Posts:

Weekly you will each post an originating idea or comment on an existing post on our discussion page. This can be of any subject related to our class. This requirement will start in week 2 for each of the next 8 weeks except for your presentation week.

Additional assignments to be determined:

Additional assignment to be determined as needed for the class.

Format: Any papers to be turned in should be typed, double spaced (unless otherwise stated), 12 point font, and follow APA format. 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 the MPA writing tutor and/or the Writing Center.

Late assignments: Turning in assignments late is unacceptable. However, if there is a need to turn in an assignment late, the student should contact their 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 end of the quarter the assignment was originally due to ensure full receipt of course credit.

Participation & Attendance: Students are required to attend each class meeting. Participation includes focusing on class content, speaking 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 should be notified prior to a class absence. Make-up work may be assigned on a case-by-case basis. Makeup work must be completed by the end of the quarter in question to ensure full receipt of course credit.

Credit: Students will receive 4 graduate credits at the completion of the quarter if all course requirements have been satisfactorily completed to meet course objectives. Partial credit may be

awarded. Credit denial decisions will be made by the faculty. Plagiarism (i.e., using other peoples' work as your own), failing to complete one or more assignments, completing one or more assignments late (without having made arrangements *before* the due date), or multiple absences may constitute denial of total credit. Absences or lack of academic work may result in a loss of 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.

Evaluation: Written self-evaluations and a faculty evaluation are required for credit, at the end of each quarter along with faculty evaluations of students. Student evaluations and evaluations of their faculty are due by 5 PM Friday of evaluation week.

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 identity, gender expression, class, sexual orientation, age, religion, (dis)ability, and veteran status.

Learning Styles: We all have different ways of acquiring new knowledge. Therefore, faculty will actively work towards providing information in multiple formats: tactile, auditory, visual, experiential, etc. However, style applications are limited to means appropriate for the classroom environment. (Activities such as surfing the internet, reading unrelated materials, playing with a PDA, IPOD, laptop, or cell phone are not appropriate, duh.) Consult your seminar faculty to discuss learning style options or personal challenges.

Accommodations will be 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). If the student is already working with the office of Access Services the faculty should have received a letter clearly indicating the student has a disability that requires academic accommodations. If any student has a health condition or disability that may require accommodations in order to effectively participate in this class, please do the following: Contact faculty after class and/or Contact Access Services in Library 1407-D, 867-6348. Information about a disability or health condition will be regarded as confidential. Please refer to TESC's Students With Disabilities Policy. <http://www.evergreen.edu/policies/g-studentada.htm>

Expectations of Students and faculty: to promote 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. Discuss any problems involving others in the learning community directly with the individuals involved (so long as the concerned party feels safe doing so).

We will abide by the social contract: WAC 174-121-010 College philosophy.
<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=174-121-010>

We will abide by the student conduct code (including academic integrity and plagiarism): Chapter 174-120 WAC

Student Conduct Code & Grievance/Appeals Process

<http://search.leg.wa.gov/wslwac/WAC%20174%20%20TITLE/WAC%20174%20-120%20%20CHAPTER/WAC%20174%20-120%20%20CHAPTER.htm>

We will abide by the non-discrimination policies and procedures at TESC:

<http://www.evergreen.edu/policies/g-nondiscr.htm>

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 television or radio stations for announcements of campus closures. Students can also call the main campus line 867-6000 to get the latest news regarding a campus closure or delay. Since many students in the program travel from relatively distant locations, faculty may decide to cancel program meeting even if campus is open. If we do this we will send an all-program email prior to 3:00 pm. You are responsible for checking your email.