



Antonin Scalia Law School at George Mason University

Syllabus

Statistics for Lawyers/Law-301 Spring 2024

Credit Hours	3 Semester Hours
Instructor	Andrew Mercado
Office Hours (by phone or online)	By appointment, with at least 24 hours advanced email request
Phone	Request from Professor
Email	Use Blackboard Learn Course Email tool or email me at amercad5@gmu.edu . Emails will typically be answered within 2 business days.
Course Delivery Format	This is an online-only course delivered via the Blackboard learning management system.
Course Clock	This course will use Eastern Time Zone for all scheduled due dates.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The goal of this course is to make you a good consumer of statistical and econometric analyses. Empirical analyses are routinely used in many areas of the law including antitrust, employment discrimination, DNA evidence, and product liability. We will teach basic descriptive statistics, probability theory, hypothesis testing, and statistical inference. In addition, we will cover econometric techniques utilizing time series, cross-sectional, and panel data—primarily in the context of applied applications. Throughout the course, we will tie the analysis to legal examples.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, you will be able to:

- Grasp the basics involved in understanding data and describing its central tendencies and dispersion
- Comprehend how probability theory, hypothesis testing, and statistical inference are used in the context of legal analysis
- Employ critical tools used in regression analysis, including the use of time series, cross-sectional, and panel data, particularly as it relates to legal analysis

REQUIRED TEXTS AND OTHER MATERIALS

Your textbooks for this course:

Statistics in Plain English, 4th Edition, Timothy C. Urdan

ISBN-13: 978-1-138-83834-9

ISBN -10: 1-138-83834-9

Reference Manual on Scientific Evidence, 3rd Edition, Federal Judicial Center

ISBN-13: 978-0-309-21421-6

ISBN-10: 0-309-21421-1

- This is attached in your class as a PDF. You do not have to purchase this manual.

Statistics and Economics: Methods and Applications, Orley Ashenfelter, Phillip B. Levin, David J. Zimmerman

ISBN-13: 978-0-471-10787-3

ISBN-10: 0-471-10787-8

- This is attached in your class as a PDF. You do not have to purchase this book. However, if you would like a physical copy, used copies are available online.

There are additional course readings, such as PDF articles and websites, which are linked in each module.

COURSE STRUCTURE

This course will consist of readings, lecture videos, assignments, quizzes (via Quizlet), and a final exam. Please review the Course Schedule for due dates. This course is organized into 7 learning modules, which are accessible via the Course Menu.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

Please see the following link, which describes the technology requirements to successfully participate in this course: www.law.gmu.edu/tech/comp_info_incoming_students

- High-speed Internet connection
- Adobe Reader
- Flash Player
- QuickTime, RealPlayer, or Windows Media Player
- Microsoft Office, 2010 or later

ACCESS, NAVIGATION, AND SUPPORT

Student Technical Support

- **Phone:** 1-800-472-8899
- **Email:** support@lawstudentonline.com

COMMUNICATION

The best way to contact me is through email: amercad5@gmu.edu . You should use this email address to send concerns and questions.

Netiquette

Netiquette consists of the rules and guidelines for acceptable behavior in electronic communication. Remember, while working in an online course you are in an academic setting and should conduct yourself accordingly.

All students are expected to follow netiquette guidelines as outlined below:

- Express yourself with proper spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
- Keep your communications as clear, straightforward, and concise as possible.
- Always review your communications before posting.
- Be constructive, courteous, and respectful of diverse opinions.
- Respect the privacy of others. Do not share personal information (*e.g.*, email addresses, phone numbers, *et cetera*) without permission.
- It is fine to disagree with, or critique ideas, but personal / ad hominem attacks are not acceptable.
- Follow copyright laws and cite work appropriately.
- **Limitations on use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) in Academic Work:**

AR 4-3: (a) Definition: Generative artificial intelligence (GAI) is a type of artificial intelligence that uses algorithms to generate new content, such as text or images, based on the data it has been trained on. For purposes of this regulation, GAI is not intended to encompass legal research databases and word processing applications that, while incorporating AI-based elements or enhancements, do not generate novel text. (b) Papers and coursework: The use of GAI in drafting or writing coursework, including papers and reaction papers, is prohibited unless expressly identified in writing by the instructor as an appropriate resource for the work in the instructor's course. (c) Examinations: The use of GAI in preparing to write or writing exam answers is prohibited unless expressly identified in writing by the instructor as an appropriate resource for the exam in the instructor's course. (d) Instructors permitting the use of GAI outputs shall specify in writing the course parameters of allowable use and disclosure expectations. Instructors may require students to disclose the GAI outputs relied upon, and further show exactly how and where those outputs were used in the academic work. (e) If not expressly identified as permissible in writing by the instructor, any use of GAI will be considered academic dishonesty involving cheating in violation of Section 1.01.1 and/or 1.01.5 of the Honor Code, and violators may be subject to the disciplinary sanctions set forth in Section 3.01 of the Honor Code. Law School instructors and administrators reserve the right to use AI detection software to find instances of GAI in student submissions.

Response Time

You should expect a response to an email question typically within 48 hours. If you do not receive a reply to your email within a reasonable period of time, please send it again. Sometimes email is captured in SPAM filters, is addressed incorrectly, or just simply does not get sent.

Instructor Expectations

- Students are expected to keep up with the required readings, to watch the required recordings, to complete the weekly assignments, and to complete the weekly quiz on Quizlet.
- Readings are designed to reinforce lectures and provide examples of concepts discussed in the lectures.
- Students should log on to Blackboard at least every other day to check for announcements.
- Students are expected to independently complete all activities, assignments, and exams.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

This course is delivered asynchronously to accommodate students' other life obligations. Students must access each lecture for an appropriate amount of time and complete all the assignments and quizzes on time.

EXAMINATION POLICY

Generally, see www.law.gmu.edu/records/exams_policies.

There is a Final Exam. It is worth 72% of your grade and will be cumulative. The Final Exam will be multiple choice. The exam will be open-book. You may use the textbook and any notes you have created in the course. **You may not use notes others have created.** Exams submitted outside the permitted time frame without a pre-approved extension **will not be accepted** and will receive a score of 0.

READINGS

The readings cover what will be needed to understand the lecture and the topic generally.

VIDEO LECTURES

Lectures have been recorded for each module. These are interactive, with knowledge checks questions throughout. These knowledge check questions are not graded and there is nothing to turn in.

COURSE SCHEDULE

The Course Schedule, located on the Course Menu, provides due dates for all activities in this course.

ASSIGNMENTS

There are 7 total assignments, one for each module. These assignments have multiple parts/questions. You must address them all.

QUIZZES

There are 7 total quizzes, one for each module. You will take these quizzes on Quizlet.com.

GRADING POLICY

This course follows the grading policies outlined in the Academic Standards Policy:

www.law.gmu.edu/academics/regulations

This course consists of a series of activities and assessments to assist you in achieving the objectives of the course and instructional units. Each week you will work on assignments and quizzes. You will also take a Final Examination.

Category	Points	Percentage
Assignments (7 * 35 points each)	245	24.5%
Quizlets (7 * 5 points each)	35	3.5%
Final Examination	720	72%
Total	1000	100%

UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

All university policies and procedures can be found at:

www.law.gmu.edu/academics/regulations

At this link you will find the following:

- Academic Standards and Policies
- Administrative Procedures and Student Services
- Examination Policies and Procedures
- Learning Outcomes

Honor Code:

www.law.gmu.edu/academics/honor_code

Course Withdrawal Form:

www.law.gmu.edu/assets/files/records/course_withdrawal_form.pdf

RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS

www.law.gmu.edu/students