

PSC 780- Public Administration Analytics

Fall 2026

Class Information

Day and Time: Thursday 6:00PM - 8:45PM

Classroom: TB 220 [online [campus map](https://maps.unr.edu) at maps.unr.edu]

Course Information

Instructor Information

Instructor: Ryan Baxter-King

Office: Thompson 210 [online [campus map](https://maps.unr.edu) at maps.unr.edu]

Phone: (775) 682-5524

Primary Contact Method – WebCampus:

- Please contact me using the WebCampus (i.e. Canvas) messaging feature rather than sending me an email. I am committed to responding to your WebCampus message within 1 business day, with the exception of extenuating circumstances.

Secondary Contact Method – Email: rbaxterking@unr.edu

Office Hours: Tuesday 3:00 – 5:00pm

Course Description

Concepts and methods of public administration research: includes developing research questions and designs, analyzing quantitative data, and evaluating published studies.

Course Pre/Co-requisites

None

Core Objectives

None

Student Learning Outcomes

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

1. describe how data is used for quantitative analysis in public administration.
2. develop explanations about how two variables are related.
3. explain different methods public administrators use to collect data.
4. analyze the statistical characteristics of a single variable.
5. evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of different research designs.

Welcome to PSC 780!

Sometime soon, a data analyst — or a consultant, or a dashboard — is going to hand you a number and ask you to make a decision with it. This course is about what you do next: what questions to ask, what to check, and how to tell what an analysis can and cannot support. You will learn to read, question, and use many forms of analysis, from performance dashboards and program evaluations inside organizations to published social science research. You will also learn the fundamentals of producing analyses yourself, from raw data.

Whether you are reviewing someone else's work or building your own, the same questions apply:

- Why is this analysis being conducted?
- What research design is being used? What are its strengths? Its weaknesses?
- What statistical methods are being employed? How does that method work mathematically?
- What decisions did the analyst make along the way?
- And ultimately — what can (and can't) we learn from it?

This course prepares you to engage with every stage of that process.

A special thank you to Jeremy Gelman for sharing his syllabus and course materials from previously teaching PSC 780.

A Note Regarding Math: This course will involve statistical analysis (read: math). Nothing in this class will go beyond concepts you learned in algebra. That said, I recognize you may have learned many of these concepts years ago and the finer points may be a bit fuzzy. If that is the case, please meet with me. This class builds on itself, meaning if you do not understand a concept one week, it will be difficult to learn the subsequent lesson. I can recommend some quick math refreshers that will allow you to successfully engage with the course materials.

Required Texts/Course Materials

Eller, Warren, Brian Gerber, and Scott Robinson. 2018. *Public Administration Research Methods: Tools for Evaluation and Evidence-Based Practice*. 2nd Edition. Routledge.

All additional readings can be found under the *Files* tab on WebCampus.

Microsoft Excel

Weekly problem sets will require you to use Microsoft Excel. If your computer does not include Excel, it is preloaded on all the university's publicly available computers. If you are unfamiliar with Excel or need help navigating the program as the semester progresses, I will provide resources that have tutorials on Excel.

Class Procedures/Structures

This class meets in-person in the Thompson Building. Please contact the instructor with any questions or concerns.

Course Requirements

Class Participation (15%)

This course will include a mixture of lecture and discussion. For it to succeed, all course members will need to engage thoughtfully: taking notes during lecture, participating in small group discussions, listening attentively to one another, and avoiding distractions (phones, texting, chats, etc.).

To facilitate in-class conversations, please arrive having read each of the assigned texts, taken notes, and prepared some questions and comments. During class you should be open, respectful, inquisitive, and engaged. I highly recommend that you (A) print them and annotate them physically or (B) download the PDF of the readings to a tablet and annotate them with an electronic pen. In my experience, reading without annotation or even annotating on a laptop is much less effective.

I also want each of you to speak up during our full-class discussions and to ask questions during lectures. Speaking in front of larger groups is easier for some people than others. If you find yourself speaking often, consider switching to an active listening role for a portion of the discussion. If you find yourself speaking less, please watch for an opportunity to engage in the discussion. If you find yourself unable to do this, please talk to me after class or during office hours about strategies for speaking up more often – or if there are ways in which I can help you participate in the discussion.

Weekly Assignments

Pre-Class Reading Questions – Perusall + WebCampus (5%)

- Each week, depending on the readings, I will ask you to complete a short set of reading questions or a similar short assignment. These reading questions will be due by Wednesday at 11:59pm (i.e. the evening before the class meets). These questions will be released before class meets the prior week.

Problem Sets (30%)

- After class each week, you will be assigned a problem set to complete for the following week. Problem sets are generally due on Wednesdays at 11:59pm PT (the evening before class meets); check the course calendar for specific dates. Some problem sets will include exercises in Microsoft Excel; in these cases, submit your Excel file(s) along with your problem set on WebCampus. I will automatically drop your 1 lowest problem set grade.

Survey Project

This semester, students will collaborate to develop a survey instrument that we will field as a class. The data collected during this project will be used throughout the rest of the semester, including a final memo and presentation.

Research Plan and Survey Instrument (10%)

- A proposed research plan and survey items. Additional information will be released with the survey project instructions.
- Due by Wednesday, October 7 at 11:59pm

Final Memo (5%)

- A short memo presenting your findings from the survey data. Additional information will be released with the survey project instructions.
- Final Memo Due by Wed 12/2 at 11:59pm

Final Presentation (5%)

- A final presentation delivered to the class, regarding your findings from the survey data, on the final day of class. Additional information will be released with the survey project instructions.
- Final Presentations on Thu 12/3 in class

Assessments

Quiz (10%)

- *The quiz will take place in class on October 15th, in Week 8 of the course. It will focus on Weeks 1–7, the part of the course that focuses on research questions, measurement, and research design. This is an opportunity for me to assess how much of the material was absorbed from this foundational part of the course. Additionally, this is an opportunity for you to review and deepen your understanding of the material before we turn to covering the remaining material.*

Final Exam (20%)

- The final exam will take place on Thursday, December 10 from 5:30–7:30pm in TB 220, during UNR's final exam period. (See UNR's generic final exam schedule for a Thursday course with a 6:00pm class time.)
- I encourage you to come to office hours in the weeks leading up to the end of the course. Mastering the material in this course will serve you any time your work involves data — evaluating a report, commissioning an analysis, or conducting your own. I'm happy to revisit any lectures, problem sets, or readings where you have lingering questions, or could use a refresher on the material.

Grading Criteria, Scale, and Standards

A: 93% - 100%
A-: 90% - 92.9%
B+: 87% - 89.9%
B: 84% - 86.9%
B-: 80% - 83.9%
C+: 77% - 79.9%

C: 74% - 76.9%
C-: 70% - 73.9%
D+: 67% - 69.9%
D: 64% - 66.9%
D-: 60% - 63.9%
F: <60%

Late Work or Make-up Exams Policies

Missed Classes: Since I expect students to attend every class session, students should contact me as soon as possible – and at the latest by 12pm on the day of class – if you cannot attend on a particular day. (In very rare cases, I understand that something may occur between 12pm and the start of class on that day: email me as soon as you know you need to miss class.)

Every student may miss 1 class day without explanation, with the exception of a day with an exam. In this instance, you do not need to explain why you are missing class. You are still responsible for submitting the problem set, unless you have contacted me in advance and I have granted an extension.

Outside of this one “built in” absence, you may also be absent from class in cases of extended illness, family emergency, bereavement, or other compelling reason(s). In these situations, the student should notify me as soon as possible in advance of and within one week of the start of the absence. In such cases, I will try to develop a plan to substitute for lectures and/or exams. In these cases, I may request formal, written documentation of the reason for the absence. I will still require you to complete the weekly reading and problem sets for the class, although – depending on the case – I may extend the deadline.

To make sure you do not fall behind due to illness, you are encouraged to (a) contact a classmate to copy their notes and (b) attend office hours to discuss the material. If you miss a class while you do not know anyone in the course, please contact the instructor and we can see about putting you in touch with someone willing to share their notes.

Late Problem Sets: Late problem sets will not be accepted. Since the 1 lowest problem set grade will be dropped, and not turning in an assignment results in a grade of 0%, if you miss one you should plan on completing the remaining assignments.

Missed Quiz or Exam: If you miss an exam due to illness, a family emergency, other similar personal extenuating circumstance, or a university-sponsored event, please contact me as soon as possible to schedule a time to make up your exam outside of class. (See above.)

More generally: stuff happens. To that end, I am committed to helping you succeed in this course as extenuating circumstances arise. All I ask is you communicate with me in a timely manner, and we will work together to solve the problem.

Grade Appeals

This course follows UNR policy on final course grade appeals. Please note you have only 10 working days from the start of the next semester to appeal any final course grade. <https://www.unr.edu/administrative-manual/3000-3999-students/3510-grade-appeal-policy-and-procedures>

Collaboration Policy

This class, as with many methods classes, has a core tension when it comes to problem sets. On the one hand, students benefit greatly from working through problems with each other. On the other hand, the line between “asking each other for help” and “copying answers” can sometimes be fuzzy.

This collaboration policy lays out guidelines for how to engage with each other on problem sets. (In the spirit of this policy, these guidelines were adapted from similar policies in Haverford College's Department of Mathematics and Statistics.)

The Central Strategy: When you start working through a problem with someone...

1. *Put away both of your copies of the problem set (e.g. in a folder or binder) and take out a blank sheet of paper*
2. *Work on the problem together on a blank sheet of paper*
3. *When both of you feel you understand the problem – at least enough to push forward on your own – throw the paper with the joint work in the recycling bin*
4. *Return to your problem set and continue working through the problem*
5. *Repeat as necessary, even if on the same problem*

The idea here is that you should be able to work through any problem on the problem set from start to finish. As part of this, you want to *avoid* copying a problem directly from someone else's problem set. Doing so means the problem set will be less helpful in learning the material and you will be less prepared for future problem sets, the mid-semester quiz, the exams, and to conduct your own research in the future.

At the end of each problem set, include the names of individuals with whom you collaborated. There is no deduction for collaborating with more people along the lines of this policy; this disclosure is just to help maintain visibility.

Policy on the Use of Large Language Models and Other AI Tools

Large language models and other artificial intelligence tools are increasingly integrated into many parts of education, work, and personal life. In this course, you may use AI tools like ChatGPT or Claude within narrowly circumscribed bounds. Essentially, you will apply the Collaboration Policy (see above) to your interactions with the tool. These tools can be helpful in many areas but also threaten to undermine the educational process.

The primary goal of this AI policy is to help you learn and retain the course material. Please read the policy carefully and actively work to apply it. If you have questions or concerns, please visit office hours to discuss.

As always, you are responsible for any mistakes that are produced by any models you use. (And these models make mistakes frequently!)

Weekly Reading

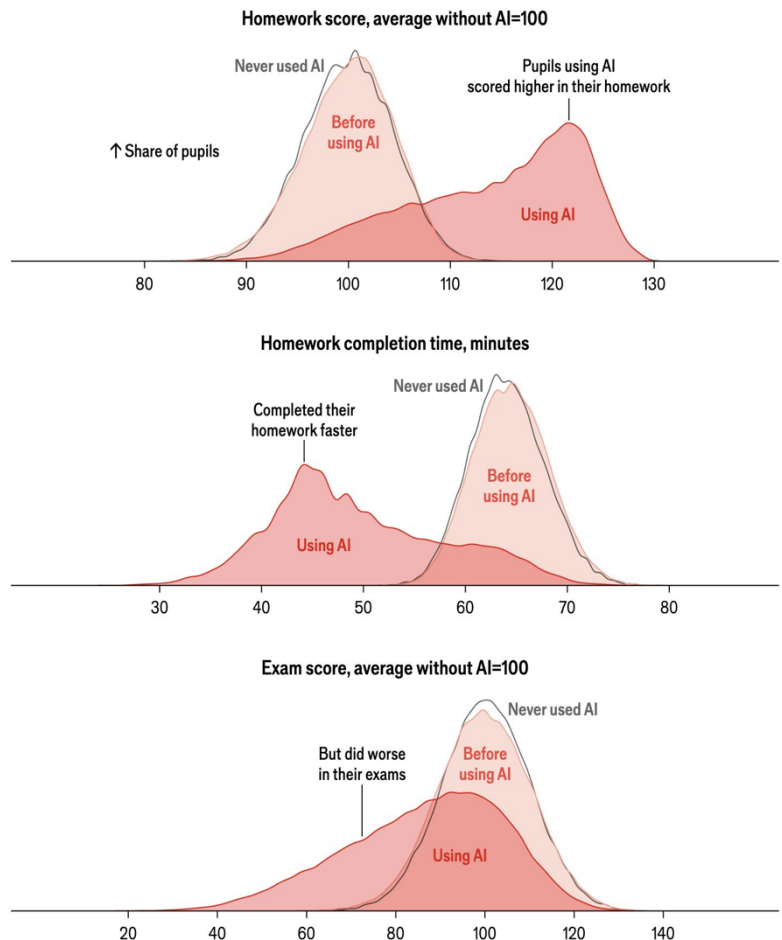
If you are struggling with the weekly reading, you may use one of these models to help you understand what the reading is saying. But you should include in all prompts starting new conversations the following text: *"I am a student in an MPA course in quantitative methods. I am reading a reading about {short description}. I am looking for help understanding some specific concepts. In addition to providing additional information about this concept, I also want you to share online resources from reputable sources where I can separately go read more. The text that I am struggling to understand in this source is '{put text here or write see attached screenshot}'. Specifically, I understand {X, Y, and Z} but do not understand {A, B, and C}."*

Problem Sets

When working on problem sets, follow the following process when using one of these tools.

Before putting away your problem set, write a prompt for the tool. Include the smallest amount of the problem that's needed to get help where you're stuck. If you're including the entire problem in the prompt, specifically instruct the model NOT to give you the entire solution

1. *Put away your problem set (e.g. in a folder or binder) and take out a blank sheet of paper*
2. *Incrementally, work through the part of the specific problem where you are having trouble. Once you think you know where to go from there, recycle the piece of paper and delete the*



Source: "The generative AI learning penalty: evidence from Chinese secondary education", by D. Strömberg et al., preprint June 2026

*26,811 pupils aged 12-18

Citation: Figure is from Paul Novosad (@paulnovosad), X/Twitter, August 19, 2026 at 8:06am ET. The figure is based on data from a working paper by Strömberg, Lei & Wu (2026), "The Generative AI Learning Penalty: Evidence from Chinese Secondary Education," SSRN 6868618.

conversation with the AI tool. (This is the analog to “throw the paper in the recycling bin” in the collaboration policy.)

3. *Return to your problem set and continue working through the problem*
4. *Repeat as necessary, even if on the same problem*

At the end of the problem set, include a brief discussion (1-3 sentences) of how you used AI on the problem set.

Preparing for the Quiz and Exam

Follow the AI policy for “Weekly Readings” if you’re trying to understand a specific concept or “Problem Sets” if you are working through a specific problem.

Generative AI Use is Allowed for Certain Purposes and/or Assignments

This course assumes that all work submitted by students - which includes all process work, drafts, brainstorming artifacts, final works – will be generated by the students themselves, working individually or in groups as directed by course assignment instructions. This policy indicates the following constitute violations of academic honesty and “cheating”: any unauthorized use of generative AI tools (such as ChatGPT), as outlined in UNR Academic Standards (UAM 6,502).

Some assignments may allow for the use of the authorized use of such tools, but will be expressly described in the assignment instructions. For the purposes of those assignments, specific instructions will be provided on the use of generative AI tools regarding the type of work being allowed (i.e. brainstorming, drafts, final works, etc.). Please email the instructor for any questions or concerns.

Course Calendar

Week 1 - August 27

Topic: Introduction to Social Science Research and Analytics

Weekly Pre-Class Reading:

- Understanding a Key Concept – “hypothesis testing” and “p-values”
 - *Note: Later in the course, we will spend multiple weeks talking about these concepts in detail. These concepts are tricky and somewhat counter-intuitive! It can be very helpful to start thinking about them early – and from multiple perspectives. To get us started, please review the following materials.*
 - One Minute Economics. "Statistical Significance, the Null Hypothesis and P-Values Defined & Explained in One Minute." YouTube video, 1:00. February 13, 2018. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nb75_GFPD9A.
 - Hewitt, Kyle. "What is a p-value? An expert explains the most misunderstood number in science." *The Conversation* (2026). <https://theconversation.com/what-is-a-p-value-an-expert-explains-the-most-misunderstood-number-in-science-288491>

- Munroe, Randall. "Significant." *xkcd*. April 6, 2011. <https://xkcd.com/882/>
- **[Optional, but heartwarming]** Kozyrkov, Cassie. "Explaining p-Values with Puppies." HackerNoon, February 21, 2019. <https://hackernoon.com/explaining-p-values-with-puppies-af63d68005d0>
- Examples of Social Science Research (access through UNR Library)
 - **[Revisited in Week 7]** Ewing, Sean. "Profit Over Public Good: The Impact of Investment Firm Ownership on Local News and Political Behavior." *Political Communication* 43, no. 3 (2026): 501-538.
 - **[Revisited in Week 4]** Oberfield, Zachary W. "Change and stability in public workforce development: A 10-year study of new officers in an urban police department." *Public Management Review* 21, no. 12 (2019): 1753-1774.
 - **[Revisited in Week 10]** Strömblad, Christopher T., Ryan G. Baxter-King, Amirhossein Meisami, Shok-Jean Yee, Marcia R. Levine, Aaron Ostrovsky, Daniel Stein et al. "Effect of a predictive model on planned surgical duration accuracy, patient wait time, and use of presurgical resources: a randomized clinical trial." *JAMA surgery* 156, no. 4 (2021): 315-321.

Problem Set 1: Due by Wednesday, September 9 by 11:59pm PT.

- *Note: Problem sets will generally be due one week after class. This is an exception since there is no class next week.*

Week 2 - September 3 (No Class, Weekly Reading and Problem Set Only)

Topic: *There is no class this week as the instructor is at a conference. There is a problem set and weekly reading.*

Weekly Pre-Class Reading:

- Campbell, Donald. 1969. "Reforms as Experiments." *American Psychologist* 24:409-29.
- Eller et al. Chapters 1-3
- Look through the Sparks Performance Portal: <https://portal.cityofsparks.us/performanceportal>
 - Next week, come to class prepared to discuss two key questions: What can we learn from the portal and what can we not learn from the portal?

Problem Set: Continue working on Problem Set 1

Week 3 - September 10

Topic: Research Questions: Dependent and Independent Variables; Association and Causation and Validity

Reading Questions (Readings from Weeks 2 and 3): Due by Wednesday, September 9 by 11:59pm PT.

Weekly Pre-Class Reading:

- Eller et al. Chapters 4 and 5
- Carroll, Aaron. 2018. "Workplace Wellness Programs Don't Work Well. Why Some Studies Show Otherwise." *New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/06/upshot/employer-wellness-programs-randomized-trials.html>
 - Note: Can be accessed through UNR Library.
- Wright, Bradley E., Shahidul Hassan, and Darwin A. Baluran. "Motivation, Meaning, and Burnout: Understanding Frontline Public Service Workers' Work Experiences During Turbulent Times." *Public Administration Review* 86, no. 3 (2026): 741-755.

Problem Set 2: Due by Wednesday, September 16 by 11:59pm PT.

Week 4 - September 17

Topic: Research Design I – Variables and Measurement

Reading Questions for Week 4: Due by Wednesday, September 16 by 11:59pm PT.

Weekly Pre-Class Reading:

- Eller et al. Chapters 6 and 12
- Nevada Department of Education's School Rating System – "Nevada School Performance Framework" (NSPF)
 - Overview of NSPF:
 - Link: https://webapp-strapi-paas-prod-nde-001.azurewebsites.net/uploads/Nevadas_School_Rating_System_NSPF_dc3793fb31.pdf
 - Read the 2024 NSPF manual, especially Section 1 and Section 5.3:
 - Link: https://webapp-strapi-paas-prod-nde-001.azurewebsites.net/uploads/nevada_school_performance_framework_manual_2025_60a85d2704.pdf
- Jerrim, John, Phil Parker, and Nikki Shure. 2019. "Bullshitters. Who Are They and What Do We Know About Their Lives?" *IZA Institute of Labor Economics Discussion Papers* No. 12282.
- **[REVISIT]** Oberfield, Zachary W. "Change and stability in public workforce development: A 10-year study of new officers in an urban police department." *Public Management Review* 21, no. 12 (2019): 1753-1774.

Problem Set 3: Due by Wednesday, September 23 by 11:59pm PT.

Week 5 - September 24

Topic: Research Design II – Sampling

Reading Questions for Week 5: Due by Wednesday, September 23 by 11:59pm PT.

Weekly Pre-Class Reading:

- Eller et al. Chapter 7
- Trochim, William. "Sampling." *Research Methods Knowledge Base*. <https://conjointly.com/kb/sampling-in-research/> [Online]
- Committee on Health Care for Homeless People. 1988. Homelessness, Health, and Human Needs. National Academy Press. <https://nap.nationalacademies.org/catalog/1092>
 - Pages 1 through 4 and Appendix B – The Methodology of Counting the Homeless
- Department of Housing and Urban Development. 2024. The 2024 Annual Homelessness Assessment Report to Congress, Part 1. <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/ahar/2024-ahar-part-1-pit-estimates-of-homelessness-in-the-us.html>
 - Pages viii–xiv
- U.S. Government Accountability Office. 2020. Homelessness: Better HUD Oversight of Data Collection Could Improve Estimates of Homeless Population. GAO-20-433. Washington, DC. <https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-20-433>.
 - Highlights page and pages 7-20

Problem Set 4: Due by Wednesday, September 30 by 11:59pm PT.

Week 6 – October 1

Topic: Researcher-Designed Experiments (Lab, Field, Survey)

Reading Questions for Week 6: Due by Wednesday, September 30 by 11:59pm PT.

Weekly Pre-Class Reading:

- White, Ariel, Noah Nathan, and Julie Faller. 2015. "What Do I Need to Vote? Bureaucratic Discretion and Discrimination by Local Election Officials." *American Political Science Review* 109(1): 129-142.
- Lu, Xiaoli, Weijie Wang, and Hao Xu. "Who can serve as the proxy for public employees in public administration experiments? a cross-sample comparison." *Public Management Review* 24, no. 6 (2022): 819-839.
- Oberfield, Zachary W., and Matthew B. Incantalupo. "Racial discrimination and street-level managers: Performance, publicness, and group bias." *Public administration review* 81, no. 6 (2021): 1055-1070.

Problem Set 5: Due by Wednesday, October 7 by 11:59pm PT.

Week 7 – October 8

Topic: Research Design III – Natural Experiments and Observational Data

Reading Questions for Week 7: Due by Wednesday, October 7 by 11:59pm PT.

Weekly Pre-Class Reading:

- Card, David and Alan Krueger. 1993. "Minimum Wages and Employment: A Case Study of the Fast-Food Industry in New Jersey and Pennsylvania." *NBER Working Paper No. 4509*.
- Halling, Aske. "Taxing Language: Do interpreting fees affect immigrant healthcare usage? Evidence from a regression discontinuity design." *Public Administration Review* 85, no. 4 (2025): 1019-1037.
- **[REVISIT]** Ewing, Sean. "Profit Over Public Good: The Impact of Investment Firm Ownership on Local News and Political Behavior." *Political Communication* 43, no. 3 (2026): 501-538.

Problem Set: No problem set due next week.

Week 8 - October 15

Topic: Quiz + An Introduction to Data

Reading Questions for Week 8: Due by Wednesday, October 14 by 11:59pm PT.

Weekly Pre-Class Reading:

- Eller et al. Chapter 13
- Harvard Business Review. "Telling Stories with Data in 3 Steps (Quick Study)." Featuring Scott Berinato. October 30, 2019. YouTube video. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r5_34YnCmMY.
- Wellington, Ben. "Making Data Mean More Through Storytelling." TEDxBroadway, New York, NY. Posted April 20, 2015. YouTube video. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6xsvGYIxJok>.

Problem Set 6: Due by Wednesday, October 21 by 11:59pm PT.

Week 9 - October 22

Topic: Probability I: Independent events, dependent events, and conditional probability

Reading Questions for Week 9: Due by Wednesday, October 21 by 11:59pm PT.

Weekly Pre-Class Reading:

- Eller et al. Chapter 14
- Wheelan Chapter 5

Problem Set 7: Due by Wednesday, October 28 by 11:59pm PT.

Week 10 - October 29

Topic: Probability II: Standard Error and Confidence Intervals

Reading Questions for Week 10: Due by Wednesday, October 28 by 11:59pm PT.

Weekly Pre-Class Reading:

- Wheelan Chapter 8
- Irwin, Neil, and Kevin Quealy. "How not to be misled by the jobs report." *The New York Times* 803 (2014). <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/05/02/upshot/how-not-to-be-misled-by-the-jobs-report.html>
- **[REVISIT]** Strömblad, Christopher T., Ryan G. Baxter-King, Amirhossein Meisami, Shok-Jean Yee, Marcia R. Levine, Aaron Ostrovsky, Daniel Stein et al. "Effect of a predictive model on planned surgical duration accuracy, patient wait time, and use of presurgical resources: a randomized clinical trial." *JAMA surgery* 156, no. 4 (2021): 315-321.

Problem Set 8: Due by Wednesday, November 4 by 11:59pm PT.

Week 11 - November 5

Topic: Statistical Relationships and Hypotheses I

Reading Questions for Week 11: Due by Wednesday, November 4 by 11:59pm PT.

Weekly Pre-Class Reading:

- Eller et al. Chapters 15 and 16
- Belle, Nicole and Paola Cantarelli. 2021. "Nudging Employees through Descriptive Social Norms in Healthcare Organizations." *Public Administration Review* 81(4): 589-598.

Problem Set 9: Due by Wednesday, November 11 by 11:59pm PT.

Week 12 - November 12

Topic: Statistical Relationships and Hypotheses II

Reading Questions for Week 12: Due by Wednesday, October 11 by 11:59pm PT.

Weekly Pre-Class Reading:

- Wheelan Chapter 9
- Baxter-King, Ryan, Alexander Coppock, Graham Straus, and Lynn Vavreck. "Endorsements vs. information: Experimental evidence of backlash and parallel persuasion during the COVID-19 public health crisis." *PNAS nexus* 4, no. 6 (2025): pgaf185.

Problem Set 10: Due by Wednesday, November 18 by 11:59pm PT.

Week 13 - November 19

Topic: The Logic of Regression

Reading Questions for Week 13: Due by Wednesday, October 18 by 11:59pm PT.

Weekly Pre-Class Reading:

- Eller et al. Chapter 17
- Wheelan Chapter 11
- Koebele, Elizabeth A. "Policy learning in collaborative environmental governance processes." *Journal of Environmental Policy & Planning* 21, no. 3 (2019): 242-256.

Problem Set 11: Due by Wednesday, November 25 by 11:59pm PT.

Week 14 - November 26 (No Class)

Topic: No Class – Thanksgiving

Reading Questions for Week 15: None

Weekly Pre-Class Reading: *None. Happy Thanksgiving!*

Problem Set: No Problem Set Due Next Week

Week 15 - December 3 (Final Presentations on Thu 12/3, Final Memo Due by Wed 12/2)

Topic: Final Presentations and Wrap-Up

Reading Questions for Week 15: None

Weekly Pre-Class Reading: None

Problem Set: None

University Policies

Statement on Academic Standards

The University Academic Standards Policy defines academic dishonesty, and mandates specific sanctions for violations. See the University Academic Standards policy: [UAM 6,502](#).

Statement on Student Compliance with University Policies

In accordance with section 6,502 of the University Administrative Manual, a student may receive academic and disciplinary sanctions for failure to comply with policy, including this syllabus, for failure to comply with the directions of a University Official, for disruptive behavior in the classroom, or any other prohibited action. "Disruptive behavior" is defined in part as behavior, including but not limited to failure to follow course, laboratory or safety rules, or endangering the health of others. A student may be dropped from class at any time for misconduct or disruptive behavior in the classroom upon recommendation of the instructor and with approval of the college dean. A student may also receive disciplinary sanctions through the Office of Student Conduct for misconduct or disruptive behavior, including endangering the health of others, in the classroom. The student shall not receive a refund for course fees or tuition.

Statement of Disability Services

Any student with a disability needing academic adjustments or accommodations is requested to speak with me or the [Disability Resource Center](#) (Pennington Achievement Center Suite 230) as soon as possible to arrange for appropriate accommodations.

Statement on Audio and Video Recording

Student-created Recordings

Surreptitious or covert video-taping of class or unauthorized audio recording of class is prohibited by law and by Board of Regents policy. This class may be videotaped, or audio recorded only with the written permission of the instructor. In order to accommodate students with disabilities, some students may have been given permission to record class lectures and discussions. Therefore, students should understand that their comments during class may be recorded.

Instructor-created Recordings

Class sessions may be audio-visually recorded for students in the class to review and for enrolled students who are unable to attend live to view. Students who participate with their camera on or who use a profile image are consenting to have their video or image recorded. If you do not consent to have your profile or video image recorded, keep your camera off and do not use a profile image. Students who un-mute during class and participate orally are consenting to have their voices recorded. If you do not consent to have your voice recorded during class, keep your mute button activated and only communicate by using the "chat" feature, which allows you to type questions and comments live.

Statement on Maintaining a Safe Learning and Work Environment

The University of Nevada, Reno is committed to providing a safe learning and work environment for all. If you believe you have experienced discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic/dating violence, or stalking, whether on or off campus, or need information related to immigration concerns, please contact the University's Center for Civil Rights and Equal Access at 775-784-1547. Resources and interim measures are available to assist you. For more information, please visit the [Center for Civil Rights & Equal Access](#) page.

Statement on Campus Closures or Delays

In the event of class cancellations or delays caused by inclement weather conditions, fire/smoke conditions, or other unforeseen emergencies, the safety and well-being of students are the University's top priority. Official notifications will be disseminated through the University website and other official channels with details related to any campus delays or closures.

In the event of a campus closure, you will be informed as to whether the class will be offered remotely or if it will be canceled. If the class is cancelled, you will receive information on how to address any missed course content.

Students facing significant impacts due to these events are encouraged to communicate with their instructor for potential accommodations.

Statement for Academic Success Services

Your student fees cover usage of the University Math Center, (775) 784-4433; University Tutoring Center, (775) 784-6801; and University Writing & Speaking Center, (775) 784-6030. These centers support your classroom learning; it is your responsibility to take advantage of their services. Keep in mind that seeking help outside of class is the sign of a responsible and successful student.

Mental Health Support Statement

There are times when you may experience difficulties in life, and you may benefit from seeking help. Mental health services are available to you as a student at no additional cost through Counseling Services at the Pennington Student Achievement Center. This includes same-day in-person and tele mental health initial consultations, brief individual counseling, and group counseling sessions. Limited same-day appointments can be scheduled online via Counseling Services or by calling 775-784-4648. Additional brief drop-in "Let's Talk" student consultations are also available in the Counseling Services Annex located at the southwest corner of Great Basin Hall.

Veteran Statement

Veterans, Reservists, National Guard and military connected family members may wish to check the office of Veteran Services for benefits and support. Besides processing VA educational benefits, the department offers a variety of programs year-round to support student academic and personal success while transitioning to higher education and throughout your educational experience. They welcome inquiries regarding VA benefits and assist in navigating resources, the campus, and in the Reno community.

Classroom and Classmate Respect

Political science courses can deal with controversial topics where people hold different views. A cornerstone of this course is productive, civil discourse where individuals can learn from one another. Doing well in this course does not require you to either share, defend or hide your political views. However, your obligation is to engage with others in ways that do not hinder their learning experiences. If at any time you feel that this course has lost this level of respect, please contact me.

Violations of this classroom respect, per UNR's policies on complying with university policies may lead to students being academically sanctioned, changes in how they are able to interact with other students, and if deemed necessary, administrative removal from the course.

Technology in the Classroom: I am also going to ask you to take notes by hand, except when laptops (or keyboard-enabled tablets) are explicitly allowed. You may take notes using a tablet (e.g. iPad) and electronic pencil – as long as the tablet is flat on the desk.

This is to say that, except in specific situations, laptops are not permitted for use during class sessions. In my experience, laptops create a "wall" between the student and the instructor – as well as the other students. Additionally, the ease of switching to another screen distracts not only the student in question but also surrounding students. Finally, some research suggests that taking notes by hand requires us to *synthesize* material, leading to better retention, rather than just copying down every word said by the instructor or a fellow student.

Of course, if you have a specific reason you need to use a laptop in the classroom, please contact me.