

Valley City State University
PSYC/COMM/SOC/POLS 330: Understanding Statistics
Fall 2020

Contact Information:

Instructor: Dr. Kiersten Baughman

Phone: 701-845-7327

E-mail: kiersten.baughman@vcsu.edu

Office: McFarland 323B

Office hours: Monday/Wednesday/Friday 10-12noon; Tuesday/Thursday 1-2PM or by appointment. I am in my office most of each day so please feel free to stop in or e-mail to schedule another time that works better for you.

Class Meeting Time: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays 9:00AM-9:50AM in McFarland 207 and on [Teams](#)

Required Texts:

Essentials of Statistics for the Behavioral Sciences, 10th edition by Gravetter, Wallnau, Forzano, & Witnauer

A Simple Guide to IBM SPSS for Version 23.0, 14th edition by Kirkpatrick & Feeney

Access to **MindTap** via Cengage Unlimited

A note about Cengage Unlimited: For \$119.99, you receive a code that allows you to access over 22,000 Cengage products online, including a full electronic version of our textbooks. Should you wish to purchase a physical copy of either textbook, you can do so for only \$7.99 by renting it for the semester from Cengage. Our MindTap course, where you will complete weekly assignments, is linked through Blackboard, so you will be logging into the site via Blackboard once you have set up your account

SPSS – available from Technology Services

Catalog Description: (3 credits) This course is an introduction to descriptive, inferential, and correlated statistics. Emphasis is placed on determining when to use each type of test and how to read and discuss statistical analyses. Cross-referenced with COMM 330, POLS 330, and SOC 330.

Course Purpose and Goals:

Purpose: This course is designed to provide an introduction to how social science researchers utilize statistics and the scientific method when conducting their studies. This course also introduces APA style and requires students to design a research study on a topic of their choosing and practice the writing style by composing introduction and methods sections of the paper.

Learner Outcomes/Competencies:

- Students will define fundamental statistics terms/concepts.
- Students will compare/contrast multiple statistical perspectives.
- Students will demonstrate that they understand and can apply proper statistical techniques.
- Students will use critical thinking skills to apply psychological concepts to a topic of interest.
- Students will learn about analyzing data in SPSS and create their research project proposals.
- Students will be introduced to APA style and will use it effectively in their writing.

VCSU Psychology Program Outcomes

The VCSU Psychology Program strives to meet five goals the American Psychological Association has set forth for a comprehensive undergraduate experience in psychology. Here is how this course addresses each:

Goal 1: Knowledge Base in Psychology

This course will give a comprehensive account of statistics including mathematics, descriptive, and inferential statistics. This course will introduce students to SPSS, a statistical data analysis software package, as well as APA style, the preferred scientific writing style for psychology.

Goal 2: Scientific Inquiry and Critical Thinking

You will be exposed to the scientific method that frames how psychologists explore issues related to human behavior. You will learn how to differentiate between different statistical techniques.

Goal 3: Ethical and Social Responsibility in a Diverse World

You will learn about ways in which psychology explores topics that are theoretically universal to all humans and topics that are divergent between cultures. You will learn about ethical issues in psychology research. You will learn about psychology's understanding of intergroup conflict, prejudice, and cognitive biases.

Goal 4: Communication

To improve your ability to communicate ideas in psychology to others, you will participate in group discussions and will write about topics in psychology. Discussions will be moderated and writing will be evaluated. You will compose an introduction and method section of an APA-style paper based on your novel research project. You will learn how to analyze and interpret data using SPSS.

Goal 5: Professional Development

You will learn statistics, be introduced to one of the most commonly utilized statistical software packages in social science, SPSS, and will learn APA style.

Course Philosophy and Policies:

Course Philosophy: PSYC/COMM/SOC/POLS 330 is a social science course that builds upon previously learned basic math skills. It is an introduction to understanding how research is conducted in the social sciences that introduces statistical techniques, how to analyze and interpret data using a software package called SPSS, and introduces APA writing style, a leading style of reporting research findings in social science.

Learner-Centered: In this course, the student is expected to take primary responsibility for his/her learning. This includes completing assignments in a thorough and timely manner, participating in reflections and class activities fully and thoughtfully, seeking out answers to questions, and developing the art of intellectual inquiry. The role of the instructor is to facilitate the learning process by designing appropriate assignments, offering ample constructive feedback, and providing opportunities for students to create and apply new understandings of the course content.

My goal is to provide prompt grading and feedback to benefit your learning and overall understanding of the content of this course. Students can expect that weekly assignments including MindTap assignments and Reflections will be graded within 2 weeks of the deadline. Please refer to the "Feedback" section of the grade for detailed information about what you've done well for that particular assignment as well as any tips or guidance for future assignments. If for any reason a specific item will not be graded within this timeframe, I will let you know through a Blackboard announcement when you can expect to have that feedback.

ADA Statement: If you need course adaptations, adjustments, or accommodations because of documented disability, or have emergency medical information to share, please make an appointment to talk with me during the first week or class, or when the medical situation arises. Also, contact Jackie Owen in Student Academic Services (located in the Learning Commons) and she will work with you and your instructors to make the necessary arrangements.

Title IX Reporting

As a member of the Department of Social Science, I recognize that some of the topics covered in this course might spark strong emotional responses due to personal circumstances. I encourage you to reach out to me as a resource. I also want to make you aware that Title IX standards encourage you to report to the campus Title IX Coordinator any occurrence of gender discrimination, sexual assault, sexual harassment, sexual violence, relationship (dating or domestic) violence, or stalking. Should you desire to discuss any of these situations in a confidential manner, VCSU does have free confidential [Counseling & Health Services](#) available to students.

Student Support Services: A variety of services are available to assist you in your academic endeavors at VCSU, including the Learning Center, Disability Support Services, and Allen Memorial Library. For more information, check the link in Blackboard titled Student Support/Policies.

Face Masks in the Classroom: In accordance with CDC recommendations, all members of the VCSU Community, including students, faculty, and staff, are required to wear face masks in public areas such as hallways, restrooms, and classrooms. If you are not able to wear a face mask, please plan to attend your classes using synchronous remote delivery.

COVID-19 Classroom Access Statement: Every member of the VCSU community is expected to exhibit responsible behavior to support the health of the rest of the community. To help you make responsible choices, all face to face classes at VCSU are available via synchronous remote delivery. Please use this feature

- If you feel sick
- If you are in quarantine because you or a close contact have COVID
- If you are at risk, or live with someone who is at risk and need to limit your contact with others
- If you are unable to wear a face mask in the classroom

In all cases, be sure to contact your instructor so s/he is aware of your remote presence and can make the effort to involve you directly in the class activities. You do not have to indicate your health status; synchronous remote delivery is available to every student who needs it. Simply let your instructor know that you will be attending remotely, either on a given day or for a specified period of time.

You are expected to attend synchronously, meaning during the regularly scheduled course time, from your remote location. This course will use Microsoft Teams to connect you to the classroom. Please contact your instructor for connection instructions if you are not sure how to proceed.

Thank you for taking the health and well-being of your fellow students, faculty, and staff seriously.

Plagiarism Statement: Academic integrity is the foundation of intellectual pursuit and participation in a scholarly community. The student handbook describes the expectations for academic honesty and indicates the possible consequences of academic dishonesty. When an act of academic dishonesty is discovered, faculty are required to complete an Academic Integrity Report to document the incident and sanction to the Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA) as well as the department chair.

I have a zero-tolerance policy regarding plagiarism and cheating. Incidents of confirmed plagiarism and/or cheating will be immediately reported to both the VPAA and the Social Science Department Chair. First offenses will receive a reduced grade or 0 (zero). Second and subsequent offenses (as documented in the VPAA office) over the student's entire academic career at VCSU will result in additional sanctions, which may range from academic probation to expulsion.

Understanding what constitutes plagiarism and what is proper use of another's work can be difficult to determine so I expect that you will have questions as you complete your work. It is your responsibility to ask those questions and seek help BEFORE submitting your work. If you ask first, you avoid any issues of academic dishonesty and you learn how to continue doing this properly in the future. If you just try something without asking and the result constitutes plagiarism, you will be held responsible for that and the sanctions outlined above will apply. Do yourself a favor and ask first!

See the [VCSU Student Handbook](#) for more details on this policy.

Make-up Work: Late assignments are not generally accepted. You have a course schedule at the end of this syllabus that contains all deadlines for the duration of this course – be sure to make any necessary arrangements to meet those deadlines. If you know you will be unavailable on the day an assignment is due (e.g., you will be traveling without internet access) you need to submit it early in order to earn the points. I will make exceptions to this rule only in extreme circumstances (e.g., hospitalization, funeral attendance). In the event that you need to request an extension, please let me know of your situation as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements. Documentation of your circumstance may be requested before late assignments will be accepted. Should I need to cancel class for any reason, I will notify students via email and a Blackboard announcement.

Blackboard:

I will use Blackboard as the primary form of communication with you to post grades, assignments, announcements and all other information pertaining to class. Please check Blackboard often to ensure your assignments are completed in a timely fashion, participate in the online discussions with your peers, and that you are staying caught up on class announcements and updates.

Final Exam: University policy states that each class must meet and complete a meaningful academic activity during the scheduled final exam time. This course will include a final exam to be completed on **Monday, December 14 at 1PM**. This final exam will be cumulative, holding students accountable for all of the content covered in the class. Each student must be present for the final exam, so please plan accordingly.

Grading: There will be a total of 600 points possible in this course. The grading scale in this course is as follows:

537-600 points	A
477-536 points	B
417-476 points	C
357-416 points	D
356 or fewer points	F

Reflections (100 pts):

How to write a great reflection: In statistics, it is critical for you to practice what we're learning in class. These assignments will give you time to reflect on your progress toward mastery of the concepts that week. I have carefully constructed each prompt to allow you the opportunity to apply the information you've learned about psychological topics, make progress toward your final research project, and reflect on how the week overall has gone. These assignments should be a minimum of 1 full page typed, double-spaced, and will be submitted via Blackboard. Each will be worth 10 points, and you will complete 10 of these assignments throughout the semester for a total of 100 points.

Reflections will be due by **Friday night at 10PM** in the week they are scheduled (end of the week).

Application Assignments (260 pts): There will be a total of 13 assignments during the semester, each worth 20 points. Each assignment will require you to apply the content from that module. These assignments will require you to log in to complete them multiple times throughout the week, so please plan your time each week accordingly. Assignments will be completed via MindTap and due by **10PM Friday** each week.

Research Paper (140 pts): Students will choose a topic they are passionate about and propose a research study demonstrating their ability to integrate sources and select an appropriate design based on content. Deadlines are listed in the course outline, and students will ultimately complete the introduction and methods section of APA-style paper to be submitted the final day of class, **Friday, December 11.**

Presentation (50 pts): In addition to the written paper over your chosen research topic, you will create and record a 10-12 minute presentation that will be shared with your classmates describing what you intend to do for the research project. This presentation will be submitted via VoiceThread, and a rubric will be available via Blackboard. Each student will be required to review and comment on at least 2 presentations from their peers. The presentation is due Monday, December 7 at 10PM and the comments are due Wednesday, December 9 at 10PM.

Final Exam (50 pts): During the final week of the class on Monday, December 14 at 1PM, you will take a cumulative Final Exam assessing your understanding of the concepts covered throughout the entire semester. This final exam will be administered in our classroom, McFarland 207.

Tentative Course Schedule:

Dates	Topic	Reflections Friday by 10PM	MindTap Assignments due Friday at 10PM
M Aug 24- F Aug 31	Intro to course; Literature Review; APA Style		
M Aug 31- F Sept 4	Ch. 1 Introduction to Statistics	Reflection 1	MT Ch. 1
M Sept 7- F Sept 11	LABOR DAY – MONDAY OFF Ch. 2 Frequency Distributions		MT Ch. 2
M Sept 14- F Sept 18	Ch. 3 Central Tendency; Friday – Bring 5 articles to class	Reflection 2	MT Ch. 3
M Sept 21- F Sept 25	Ch. 4 Variability		MT Ch. 4
M Sept 28- F Oct 2	Ch. 5 Z-Scores	Reflection 3	MT Ch. 5
M Oct 5- F Oct 9	Ch. 6 Probability	Reflection 4	MT Ch. 6
M Oct 12- F Oct 16	Ch. 7 Sampling Distribution of the Mean	Reflection 5	MT Ch. 7
M Oct 19- F Oct 23	Ch. 8 Hypothesis Testing	Reflection 6	MT Ch. 8
M Oct 26- F Oct 30	Ch. 9 1-Sample t-Testing	Reflection 7	MT Ch. 9
M Nov 2- F Nov 6	Ch. 10 Independent Samples t-Test	Reflection 8	Rough Draft of Intro and Method due by Friday 11/6; MT Ch. 10
M Nov 9- F Nov 13	Ch. 11 Dependent Samples t-Test	Reflection 9	MT Ch. 11
M Nov 16- F Nov 20	Ch. 15 Chi-Square; Ch. 14 Correlations		MT Ch. 15
M Nov 23- F Nov 27	THANKSGIVING BREAK		MT Ch. 14
M Nov 30- F Dec 4	Ch. 12 Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)	Reflection 10	MT Ch. 12
M Dec 7- F Dec 11	Ch. 13 Factorial Analysis; Review for Final Exam		Final Paper due by Friday 12/11
M Dec 14	1PM -2:50PM CUMULATIVE FINAL EXAM		FINAL EXAM MONDAY DEC 14