



PADM 596—Research Methods for Public Managers
Spring 2014
Class room/time: SSCO 3030/Friday 4:00-6:30 pm

CONTACT INFORMATION

Professor: Agustín León, PhD
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PRE-REQUISITES

STAT 145 or equivalent coursework

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Welcome to PADM 596—Research Methods for Public Managers! This course is designed to provide you with basic tools for applied research and analysis in public administration and policy. The course provides you with skills and knowledge you will need to understand and effectively use various research methods. We will begin the course by discussing basic concepts and components of applied research and then focus on to issues and techniques in data analysis and reporting.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course presents methods for inquiry and analysis by public managers and students of public administration. It covers strategies for design of quantitative and/or qualitative analysis and for collection of information in institutional and field settings.

Students who successfully complete the course are expected to leave with the ability to:

- Develop research questions for applied research
- Conduct original analysis of data to address research questions
- Understand the different types of data used most frequently by managers, policy analysts, and researchers in public administration
- Learn when and how to use each analysis technique
- Appreciate the necessity of using clear and direct language to communicate research concepts and findings
- Use SPSS to analyze statistical data.

The following MPA core learning outcomes are addressed in this course. Students will:

1. Analyze policies and programs by applying appropriate information technology and data management tools.
2. Analyze policies and programs by applying appropriate quantitative and/or qualitative analysis methods.

COURSE MATERIALS

Required

1. Healey, Joseph F. 2013. *The Essentials of Statistics: a Tool for Social Research*, 3rd edition. Belmont, CA: Cengage. ISBN-13: 978-1-111-82956-8. **Please don't buy earlier editions.**
2. Access to SPSS. Available at UNM Computer Labs: <http://computing.unm.edu/map/>
3. Access to UNM Learn and e-mail

Recommended

1. Calculator such as Casio FX-300ES Natural Display Scientific
2. Cunningham, James B., and James O. Aldrich. 2012. *Using SPSS: an Interactive Hands-on Approach*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. ISBN 978-1-4129-9515-3

GRADES

Participation	10
Quizzes	20
Problem sets	20
Research project	20
Final exam	30
Total grade	100 points

Participation: Class participation will be worth 10 points out of 100 course points. Attendance is important, but participation also includes asking questions, commenting on the class material, answering instructor's questions, and citizenship behavior in class. Please feel free to interrupt the instructor if having any question or comment.

Quizzes: Online quizzes will be worth 20 points out of 100 course points. They will assess weekly reading assignments. **Readings must be completed prior to class** sessions, when those readings will be discussed. Weekly readings will be based on the textbook, but additional readings may be assigned in the semester. Quizzes will be due on Tuesday at noon; the quizzes will be open on UNM Learn at least 24 hours in advance.

Problem sets: Short problem sets will be worth 20 points out of 100 course points. They will include textbook exercises and SPSS computer applications. Weekly problem sets will be announced via UNM Learn or e-mail. Student answers to these problem sets will be collected at the end of every class session. One of the purposes of the exercises is to give you an opportunity to practice for the final exam.

Research project: An applied research project will be worth 20 points out of 100 course points. This project will include the submission of a report and an oral presentation. The report must follow and complete every activity from Appendix E of the textbook. For this assignment, you must use data from the General Social Survey (GSS) of 2010. Grading will reward successful application of the research methods learned from this course. The report may be submitted by May 16th, yet **earlier submission is welcome and encouraged.**

Final Exam: The final exam will be worth 30 points out of 100 total points. It will be a comprehensive examination of all course materials. It will be administered at the date/time scheduled by the UNM Final Exam Schedule.

POLICIES

Syllabus Change: As a guide to the course, **this syllabus is subject to update**. Assignments may be added or changed during the semester. The instructor reserves the right to change the grade weights allocated to course assignments. If syllabus changes are made, I will announce them either in class or by e-mail.

E-mail Communication: As required by SPA policy, students must use their UNM e-mail for all electronic communications with the instructor.

Time/Workload Commitment: This course is a core course of the MPA program. To learn the course material, graduate students should devote at least 12 (twelve) hours per week to the course outside of class. **Please study carefully the material** in preparation for class.

Academic Integrity: The UNM Student Handbook outlines the University's expectations for the integrity of students' academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Student Code of Conduct and for upholding the highest standards of integrity in this class. Violation of the Code carries penalties discussed in the Code.

Accommodation for Disabilities: Students with disabilities needing accommodation should: (1) register with and provide documentation to the Accessibility Resource Center, and (2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type. This should be done during the first week of class. This syllabus and class materials are available in alternative format upon request. For more information about services available to UNM students with disabilities, please contact the Accessibility Resource Center: <http://pathfinder.unm.edu/campus-services/services-students-disabilities.html>

APPENDIX

Schedule of Assignments (subject to update)			
<i>Week</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Read</i>	<i>Problem Sets</i>
1	Jan 24	This syllabus	
2	Jan 31	Chapter 1. Introduction	TBA
3	Feb 07	Chapter 2. Descriptive statistics	TBA
4	Feb 14	Chapter 3. Central tendency	TBA
5	Feb 21	Chapter 4. Dispersion	TBA
6	Feb 28	Chapter 5. Normal curve	TBA
7	Mar 07	Chapter 6. Sampling	TBA
8	Mar 14	Chapter 7. One-sample hypothesis testing	TBA
9	Mar 21	Spring break	
10	Mar 28	Chapter 8. Two-sample hypothesis testing	TBA
11	Apr 04	Chapter 9. ANOVA	TBA
12	Apr 11	Chapter 10. Chi-square	TBA
13	Apr 18	Chapter 11. Bivariate association, nominal measures	TBA
14	Apr 25	Chapter 12. Bivariate association, ordinal measures	TBA
15	May 02	Chapter 13. Bivariate association, interval measures	TBA
16	May 09	Chapter 14. Intro to correlation and regression	TBA
17	May 16	Final exam	Project due