

Syllabus:

I. Instructor information:

Instructor: Arndt F. Laemmerzahl

Office: see web page

Phone: see web page - note that I don't check voice mail!

e-mail: alaemmer@gmu.edu **the best way of getting a hold of me**

Office hours: see web page

II. Books, manuals, etc.

Text: Statistics for the Life Sciences. Samuels and Witmer, 4th edition (2nd or 3rd are okay, but you will need to find page references and such on your own).

(You should easily be able to find a used 2nd or 3rd edition. Yes, the 3rd edition is a bit better, but the 2nd is good enough. It's also usually much cheaper (try Amazon).)

Software: R statistical software - available at <http://www.r-project.org/>

- note that this is open source and is free. It is also better than most other non-free statistical software, and is available for Windows, Mac-OS, and Linux.

- please follow the instructions on my web page to install this software.
(<http://mason.gmu.edu/~alaemmer/biostat/main.html>)

If you wish to use different statistical software that's up to you, but I will not be providing advice for anything other than R. Note that Excel is NOT a statistical package and you are not allowed to use Excel for any actual analyses.

Calculator: You will need a calculator that has statistical function. Chances are that if you own a "fancier" (e.g. scientific) calculator it will include these functions.

III. Exams:

Three exams. Your worst exam will count 10%, your middle exam 17%, and your best exam 23%.

Tentative exam schedule (all exam dates are subject to change):

Exam I, Thursday, June 13th.

Exam II, Tuesday, July 9th (*tentative; may move forward or back a day*).

Exam III (**FINAL**), Thursday, July 25th.

Exam structure - you'll get more information about this as the exams get closer. Exams will consist of two parts:

Part I - you'll need to know terms, definitions, & some simple formulas. This will be closed book.

Part II - you will need to work some problems. This will be open book/notes.

- you will need to hand in part I before you get to see part II.

- you will be allowed to use a calculator for part II (**but not part I**) on each exam.

You will have one hour and 15 minutes for the exam.

There will be lecture after each exam (we can not afford to loose that much time).

Also, note the following:

- you need to make sure you know how your calculator works (no computers!). This is your responsibility.

- you will still need to show all the steps in each problem. You will not get full credit if you just write down an answer your calculator spits out!

The final exam is cumulative, but will concentrate on the material after exam 2.

IV. Homework.

- You will be given 12 homework assignments, worth 2% each (the last one will be worth 3%). Homework assignments will be given out on Tuesdays and Thursdays and are due at the beginning of the following lab. If you think you may want to refer to homework assignments during an exam, you may wish to make a copy before handing in the homework.

- You are encouraged to ask about homework assignments during lab. Most labs will be fairly short in any case.

- Late homeworks: homeworks are due at the **beginning** of lab. If you do not hand in a homework assignment then, it will be considered late. Late homework assignments are penalized as follows:

- handed in after the beginning of lab, but on the same day: 25%
- handed in before the beginning of the next lab: 50%
- handed in at or after the beginning of the next lab: 75%
- later than that: 100%

However: you are allowed to hand in **one** homework assignment (*except the last*) during the semester up to one lab period late without penalty.

V. Labs

Lab is an important part of the course. It's an opportunity to put the lecture material into practice, ask questions that I can't go over in lecture, and improve your computer skills. Your lab instructor will talk more about lab. Lab is worth 25% of your grade.

If you own a laptop, you should bring it to lab. This is not required, but will make things easier for you.

You will be allowed to drop one lab **that you attended**. Any labs you do not attend will be scored a 0 unless you make arrangements with your lab instructor. Your lab instructor will take attendance.

Labs have the same late policy as homeworks, except that **all** labs are due at the beginning of the following lab (you are not allowed to hand in **any** lab late - after all you are allowed to drop one lab).

VI. Grading

Your final grade will be based on your percent out of 100. The usual grading scale applies: 90 - 100 = A, 80 - 89 = B, 70 - 79 = C, 60 - 69 = D, 59 and below = F.

I will occasionally give (+) grades, but never (-) grades.

VII. Miscellaneous

Honor code - if you are caught cheating, you will be taken to the honor committee. No arguments.

Missed class - if for some reason class is canceled, then the following class will cover the material for the missed class. This is particularly important should an exam day be canceled for whatever reason (the exam will take place in our next scheduled class).

If you are having problems - please come and see me. I am here to help you learn this material **and** pass this class. I will do what I can to make sure that you make it successfully. Please don't wait too long if you are having difficulties.

Comment on summer classes: Summer classes are intense and move fast. Although the B session is not quite as bad as the others, you will probably still not do well if you are taking more than one class at a time or trying to work (particularly full time!). Please keep this in mind.

Please try to be in class. You've probably heard it a million times already, but it's particularly true in this class. ***You will probably not do well if you are absent too often.***

Note: if absences become chronic, I reserve the right to change the point distribution slightly and add some pop quizzes.

VIII. Information that applies to all classes at GMU:

(Some of this is repetitive, but important. It applies to all your classes at GMU.)

Academic integrity

GMU is an Honor Code university; please see the University Catalog for a full description of the code and the honor committee process. The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously and violations are treated gravely. What does academic integrity mean in this course? Essentially this: when you are responsible for a task, you will perform that task. When you rely on someone else's work in an aspect of the performance of that task, you will give full credit to those people in the proper, accepted form. When doing homework, the work must be yours. It is totally unacceptable to copy the work of another student in this course in any form.

GMU email accounts

Students must use their Mason email accounts—either the existing “MEMO” system or a new “MASONLIVE” account to receive important University information, including messages related to this class. See <http://masonlive.gmu.edu> for more information.

USEFUL CAMPUS RESOURCES:

Writing center:

A114 Robinson Hall; (703) 993-1200; <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>

University libraries (“Ask a Librarian”)

<http://library.gmu.edu/mudge/IM/IMRef.html>

Counseling and psychological services (CAPS):

(703) 993-2380;
<http://caps.gmu.edu>

University policies:

The University Catalog, <http://catalog.gmu.edu>, is the central resource for university policies affecting student, faculty, and staff conduct in university academic affairs. Other policies are available at <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/>. All members of the university community are responsible for knowing and following established policies.

Disability Resource Center

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.