COURSE SYLLABUS

ADVANCED RESEARCH METHODS

Moravian College Spring 2006

Dr. D. Wetcher-Hendricks

CONTACTING THE PROFESSOR

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COURSE READING MATERIAL

Babbie, Earl. *The Practice of Social Research*, 10th Edition. Wadsworth Publishing, 2003. ISBN:0534574742

Green, Samuel B. and Neil J. Salkind. *Using SPSS for Windows and Macintosh*, 4th Edition. Prentice Hall, 2005. ISBN:013146597X

COURSE OUTCOMES

This course should provide students with the following.

1. familiarity with the tools of data collection, organization, and analysis, specifically using computers (Excel and SPSS programs)
2. skills for interpreting raw data, including recognition of appropriate basic statistical processes used to analyze data
3. the ability to draw conclusions that are useful to social service personnel, policymakers, future researchers, etc.
4. proficiency in presenting and explaining research findings in both written and oral forms.
5. competence in objectively assessing the appropriateness of a research project, identifying any shortcomings and possible improvements

Evaluation

Throughout the course, students must complete five laboratory practicals, which take the forms of 30-minute in-class assignments. The assignments require students to organize and analyze provided data. When necessary, specific instructions or details about practicals are provided prior to the class in which they are scheduled. Please see the course schedule for specific dates.

Each student must complete a research project involving organization of data and basic statistical analysis using SPSS software. This project involves the submission of two written reports. Detailed descriptions of these reports can be found in "Course Project Guidelines."

Two examinations are given in this course. The exams assess students' understandings of the theoretical components of data analysis, their abilities to draw conclusions from data, and their skills of presenting these elements in written form. Please see the course schedule for exam dates.

Although attendance, itself, does not directly affect students' grades in this course, each student receives a class participation grade. IT IS NECSSARY TO ATTEND CLASS TO RECEIVE CLASS PARTICIPATION CREDIT. Contributions to class discussions and activities increase students' participation grades. Obvious inactivity (including sleeping), disruptions, or lack of effort lowers the grade.

To determine a course grade, the preceding factors are combined in the following manner.

laboratory practicals	20% (4% each)
project	30% (15 % each)
exams	40% (20% each)
class participation	10%

Course grades follow the letter-grade system. Please consult the Moravian College Student Handbook for description of the requirements for attaining each grade. The numerical ranges used in assigning each letter grade in this course are as follows.

A	92%-100%	B-	80%-81.9%	D+	68%-69.9%
A-	90%-91.9%	C+	78%-79.9%	D	62%-67.9%
B+	88%-89.9%	C	72%-77.9%	D-	60%-61.9%
B	82%-87.9%	C-	70%-71.9%	F	0%-59.9%

All policies listed in the college catalog that deal with attendance, withdrawal, cheating, plagiarism, and any other pertinent issues apply to this class.

It is the responsibility of the student to obtain information and distributed materials from any class the he or she misses. Please make every possible effort to take laboratory practicals and exams and to hand in papers on the scheduled dates. All missed practicals and exams are given on the make-up/ review day at the end of the semester. Project and laboratory practical reports must be submitted on time to receive full credit. Late papers are accepted with a five-point penalty for each overdue day (including weekends and holidays), beginning with the due date.

NOTE: The Course Schedule on the following page provides an anticipated agenda of topics and assignments. Please be aware that this schedule is subject to change based upon the progression of the term.

COURSE SCHEDULE

NOTE: Chapters in the textbook (Babbie) should be carefully read. Lessons in the handbook (Green and Salkind) can simply be reviewed.

class date	topic	assignment
January 16	introductions and data entry (EXCEL)	▫Buy book(s) ▫Read handout
January 23	collection and organization of qualitative data	▫Read Chapter 13 (pgs. 370-338) ▫Read Chapter 14 (pgs. 396-400)
January 30	PRACTICAL data entry (SPSS)	▫Review Lessons 1,2,3,4,6 ▫Read Chapter 14 (pgs. 401-418)
February 6	basic descriptive statistics	▫Read handout ▫Review Lesson 19
February 13	PRACTICAL basic descriptive statistics correlation and regression	▫Review Lesson 20 ▫Read Chapter 16 (pgs. 441-451)
February 20	correlation and regression PHASE 1 REPORT DUE	▫Read Chapter 16 (pgs. 441-451) ▫Read handout
February 27	PRACTICAL and EXAM 1	▫Study!
March 6	REST AND RELAX!!!	
March 13	statistical significance and chi-square	▫Read Chapter 16 (pgs. 458-468)
March 20	chi-square and t-tests	▫Review Lessons 39 and 21
March 27	PRACTICAL t-tests and analysis of variance	▫Review Lessons 22 and 23
April 3	analysis of variance	▫Review Lessons 24 and 25
April 10	PRACTICAL and EXAM 2	▫Study!
April 17	ENJOY EASTER BREAK!!!	
April 24	reporting results and conclusions	▫Re-review Lessons 39,22,23 24,35 RESULTS ▫Read handout
May ?? (exam day)	PHASE 2 REPORT DUE	