

# Advanced Methods of Political Analysis

**Place:** *Web Synchronous*

**Professor:** Matthew Wilson

**Dates:** 01/11/21 - 04/30/21

**Email:** wilso929@mailbox.sc.edu

**Time:** M 5:50 PM-8:35 pM

**Office/Hours:** *Online by appointment*

## COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This graduate seminar covers statistical techniques for measuring and interpreting the relationship between variables, with a focus on linear regression. This includes a review of some of the basics of statistics and significance tests, an overview of ordinary least squares (OLS) and generalized linear models (GLM), and choices associated with statistical modeling, including model diagnostics, model selection procedures, and dealing with missing data. The course should enable students to evaluate empirical relationships using linear regression and provide them with a foundation for understanding more advanced modeling techniques.

## EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES:

As a result of the class, students will be able to:

- import and transform data, perform statistical tests, and estimate linear models in R.
- identify the assumptions and approaches of OLS and GLM.
- interpret the results of a linear model.
- diagnose and correct issues related to model misspecification.

## COURSE MATERIALS:

The course requires regular access to a computer and focuses on programming in R. It follows the material in three required texts:

- Fox Jr., John. 2016. *Applied Regression Analysis and Generalized Linear Models*. Third Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Fox Jr., John and Sanford Weisberg. 2019. *An R Companion to Applied Regression*. Third Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Neumayer, Eric and Thomas Plümper. 2017. *Robustness Tests for Quantitative Research*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.  
(Free; Ebook available from the University library.)

Though not required, the course will also cover material from the following texts:

- Diez, David, Mine Çetinkaya-Rundel, and Christopher D. Barr. 2019. *OpenIntro Statistics*. Fourth Edition. (Free; available on Blackboard.)
- Wickham, Hadley, and Garrett Grolemund. 2017. *R for Data Science: Import, Tidy, Transform, Visualize, and Model Data*. 1st Edition.  
(Free; available here: <https://r4ds.had.co.nz/>)

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

1. *Attendance and Participation* (10%)
2. *Problem sets and replication file* (12 x 5% each = 60%, due by 11:59 PM on the next Sunday.)  
After each class, students must complete the corresponding problem set and submit it through Blackboard before 11:59 PM on the following Sunday.  
Submissions must include both 1) responses to the questions and/or interpretations of the output and 2) the code necessary to complete each exercise in R.  
The assignment will be graded based on the correctness of the code/output and the thoroughness of description and interpretation.
3. *Analysis/Replication* (30%, due by 11:59 PM on 26 April)  
Students must submit a final paper through Blackboard that utilizes the skills developed in this class to conduct an original analysis or replication (due by 11:59 PM on 26 April).  
The paper should:
  - outline the argument motivating the analysis;
  - justify the inclusion of the covariates of interest;
  - summarize and visually represent the data/variables;
  - present a regression model (or models) and interpret the results;
  - include diagnostic tests of the model(s);
  - illustrate quantities of interest;
  - consider and compare alternative specifications; and
  - discuss potential extensions and next steps (more advanced techniques and tests).

There is no minimum requirement regarding page or word length.

The assignment will be graded based on the extent to which it satisfactorily accomplishes each objective and the correctness of description and interpretation.

Students may use material from other classes with the professor's consent.

**GRADING SCALE:**

A: 90-100; B+: 87-89; B: 80-86; C+: 77-79; C: 70-76; D+: 67-69; D: 60-66; F: 0-59.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

Students are responsible for knowing both university and course schedules.

The academic calendar is available at: [https://sc.edu/about/offices\\_and\\_divisions/registrar/academic\\_calendars/2020-21\\_calendar.php](https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/registrar/academic_calendars/2020-21_calendar.php).

Information on graduate academic regulations is available at:

<http://bulletin.sc.edu/content.php?catoid=97&navoid=2837>.

**FINE PRINT:**

Academic integrity. I will enforce rigorous standards of academic integrity in all aspects of this course. For the detailed policy of the University of South Carolina regarding the definitions of acts considered to fall under academic dishonesty and possible ensuing sanctions, see the University Honor Code: <http://www.sc.edu/policies/ppm/staf625.pdf>. Should you have any questions about possibly improper research citations or references, or any activity that may be interpreted as academic dishonesty, please see me before the assignment is due to discuss the matter.

Personal integrity. I am committed to creating and fostering a positive learning and working environment based on open communication, mutual respect, and inclusion. I will not tolerate discrimination and harassment on the basis of identity or status, including race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, genetics, or veteran status. For more information on the University Student Non-Discrimination and Non-Harassment Policy, see [https://www.sc.edu/about/offices\\_and\\_divisions/equal\\_opportunities\\_programs/documents/student\\_non-discrimination\\_and\\_non-harassment\\_policy.pdf](https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/equal_opportunities_programs/documents/student_non-discrimination_and_non-harassment_policy.pdf). If you want to speak to someone about an incident involving harrassment, sexual assault, or interpersonal violence, you can call 803-777-8248 to talk to a trained interpersonal violence advocate.

Accommodations. If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in this class, please advise me and make appropriate arrangements with the Student Disability Resource Center. All disability accommodations must be approved through the Office of Student Disability Services. For more information, see [https://sc.edu/about/offices\\_and\\_divisions/student\\_disability\\_resource\\_center/](https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/student_disability_resource_center/). Special accommodations are also available for veterans on duty and for parents. Although the University does not have a formal policy on children in the classroom, breastfeeding in class is welcome as needed.

**CLASS SCHEDULE:**

- 01/11** Introductions  
R basics; reading and manipulating data; replication file etiquette  
**Readings:**  
Fox and Weisberg, Chapters 1,2  
OpenIntro, Chapter 1  
*Skim R for Data Science*
- 01/18** [*Martin Luther King Jr. Day; no class*]
- 01/25<sup>†</sup>** Types of data; visualizing and transforming data  
**Readings:**  
Fox, Chapters 3, 4  
Fox and Weisberg, Chapter 3  
OpenIntro, Chapters 2, 4
- 02/01<sup>†</sup>** Fundamentals of statistics and statistical tests  
**Readings:**  
OpenIntro, Chapters 3, 5  
(See also OpenIntro, Chapter 6)
- 02/08<sup>†</sup>** Ordinary Least Squares I  
**Readings:**  
Fox, Chapters 5.1, 9.1, 9.2, 9.3, 9.4  
Fox and Weisberg, Chapters 4, 5  
OpenIntro, Chapters 7, 8
- 02/15** [*Presidents' Day; no class*]
- 02/22<sup>†</sup>** Ordinary Least Squares II  
**Readings:**  
Fox, Chapters 5.2, 9.5  
OpenIntro, Chapter 9.1
- 03/01<sup>†</sup>** Generalized Linear Modeling and Maximum Likelihood: introduction  
**Readings:**  
Fox, Chapters 14, 15  
Fox and Weisberg, Chapter 6  
OpenIntro, Chapter 9.5
- 03/08<sup>†</sup>** Linear-Model Diagnostics  
**Readings:**  
Fox, Chapters 11, 12  
Fox and Weisberg, Chapter 8  
OpenIntro, Chapter 9.3
- 03/15<sup>†</sup>** Types of variables and relationships  
*To be assigned*

- 03/22<sup>†</sup> Model selection  
**Readings:**  
Fox, Chapter 22  
OpenIntro, Chapter 9.2
- 03/29<sup>†</sup> Missing data  
**Readings:**  
Fox, Chapter 20
- 04/05<sup>†</sup> Prediction and bootstrapping  
**Readings:**  
Fox, Chapter 21
- 04/12<sup>†</sup> Embracing uncertainty I  
**Readings:**  
*Skim* Neumayer and Plümer
- 04/19<sup>†</sup> Embracing uncertainty II  
**Readings:**  
*Skim* tutorials at <https://easystats.github.io/bayestestR/>
- 04/26 Extensions; Summary and conclusion  
**Readings:**  
*Skim* Fox, Chapters 16, 17, 18, 19

<sup>†</sup>Problem set due by 11:59 PM on the following Sunday.