

Dr. Brian L. Withrow  
Spring 2014

**Criminal Justice 7321 (Linear Regression for Criminal Justice Research)**  
**Hines 201, Monday, 6:30 pm – 9:20 pm**

**Course description:** Instruction on the use of advanced linear modeling techniques in criminal justice research is addressed. After completing this course, students should be able to evaluate quantitative research articles in the major criminal justice journals and be prepared to complete a major quantitative research project of their own.

**Required text:** Gordon, Rachel A. (2010). Regression Analysis for the Social Sciences. New York, NY: Routledge/Taylor & Francis (ISBN: 978-0-415-99154-4)

**Office and classroom hours**

<u>Day</u>	<u>Office Hours</u>	<u>Classroom Hours (Room)</u>
Monday	3:00 pm – 5:00 pm	5:00 pm – 6:20 pm (H205) 6:30 pm – 9:20 pm (H201)
Tuesday	By appointment	None
Wednesday	By appointment	None
Thursday	By appointment	None
Friday	By appointment	None

**Contact information**

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Students are encouraged to regularly monitor their Texas State email accounts and the TRACS site for this course in order to remain well informed during the semester.

**Assessment**

Grades will be based on the following criteria

- Attendance
- An evaluation of the student developed regression model and its description
- The student's ability to evaluate statistical models found in the literature
- Completion of the final examination

*Attendance (100 points)*

There are fourteen class days. Students will receive 7.25 points for each class they attend and participate in. At the end of the semester the instructor will multiply the number of class days attended by 7.25 to determine this portion of the grade.

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*Regression Model Assignment (100 points)*

At the beginning of the class the students will be introduced to SPSS, a software package that many social science scholars use when conducting quantitative research. In addition, the students will be provided with a small data set that they can use to practice using this software. After spring break the instructor will assign the students to develop a regression model using the data set provided. In addition, the students will be asked to report their statistical findings in a written report (to the instructor) and in class.

*Evaluating the Work of Others Assignment (100 points)*

Students will be assigned to read an article from the empirical literature and write a brief critique on the author's use and interpretation of a regression model.

*Final exam (200 points)*

Students will be given an option of two questions, similar to those that are traditionally developed for the doctoral comprehensive examination. Each student will respond to one of the questions. This will be a timed exam and likely administered online.

<b>Points earned</b>	<b>Letter grade</b>
450-500	A
400-449	B
350-399	C
300-349	D
Less than 300	F

**Classroom conduct**

An important part of this class relies on peer collaboration. This means that each student's work will be shared and assessed during class. The purpose of this peer assessment is to improve the student's ability to understand and communicate the material. While important to the learning process, the peer assessment will not be used to determine semester grades. We are a community of learners and as such we have an obligation to be constructive in our criticisms of other people's work. Furthermore, criminal justice scholars often confront difficult and controversial social topics. Therefore, in no case will a student be allowed to belittle or confront another student at a personal level. Such behavior will be considered a violation of the Texas State University Honor Code.

**Recording and electronic devices**

Students MAY NOT use electronic devices while in class. This includes, laptops, audio recorders, video recorders, cellular telephones, pagers and any other electronic devices. Under no circumstances will a student be allowed to electronically record (audio or video) any lecture or classroom activity. For security purposes students may bring electronic devices (e.g. cellular telephones and laptops) into the classroom, but they must be turned off or switched to an inaudible mode. Students who use electronic devices in class (e.g. texting) will be asked to leave and counted absent for that class period.

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### **Student with learning disabilities and differences**

The professor is committed to creating an environment wherein all students can be successful. Students with bona fide learning disabilities and differences are encouraged to informally seek advice from the professor on potential accommodations. More formally, in accordance with university policy and federal law, reasonable and appropriate accommodations will be made for qualified students with disabilities. Students with disabilities are asked to contact the Office of Disabilities Services who will then coordinate any necessary accommodations.

### **Texas State University Honor Code**

All students taking classes in Criminal Justice must subscribe to the Texas State University Honor Code (UPPS 07.10.01). Failure to adhere to any component of the honor code entails consequences ranging from serious (e.g., unexcused absences, 0 points assigned for exam grades, etc.) to severe (a course grade of “F” or even dismissal from the university).

<b>Dates</b>	<b>Tentative Schedule and [Reading References]</b>
1/13	Introduction to course and regression; Research methods review; Statistics review [Chapters 1 & 2; Instructor supplied materials available on TRACS (Resources tab)]
1/20	<i>University Holiday – Class does not meet</i>
1/27	Introduction to SPSS (Class meets in CJ lab); Managing and manipulating data [Chapters 3 & 4, skim only]
2/3	Bivariate Regression [Chapter 5]
2/10	Multiple Regression [Chapter 6]
2/17	Dummy Variables [Chapter 7]
2/24	Interactions [Chapter 8]
3/3	Nonlinear Relationships [Chapter 9]
3/10	<i>Spring Break – Class does not meet</i>
3/17	Indirect Effects [Chapter 10]
3/24	Outliers, Heteroskedasticity and Multicollinearity [Chapter 11]
3/31	Model building and key diagnostics [Instructor supplied materials]
4/7	<b>Model building assignment due</b> ; Evaluation of student developed models and descriptions
4/14	Evaluating the work of other scholars [Chapter 1]
4/21	<b>Evaluating the work of others assignment due</b> ; Research strategies [Instructor supplied materials]
4/28	Assessment strategies [Instructor supplied materials]
5/5	<b>Final exam due by 7:30 pm</b>