

**Statistics for Behavioral Scientists**  
PSYC UN1610 (4 points)  
Spring 2021

**Lectures:** Tuesdays & Thursdays 10:10-11:25am

**Lab** (You must register for UN1610 **and** one section of UN1611):

- Section 1: Thursdays 4:10-6:00pm
- Section 2: Thursdays 6:10-8:00pm

**Instructor:** Christopher Baldassano, c.baldassano@columbia.edu

- [Zoom office hours](#): Wednesdays 3-4pm

**TA information:** You are welcome to attend any office hours (any TA's, and the instructor's), regardless of your section assignment. Please also request appointments with any of us outside of office hours if you cannot make the scheduled times.

- Jonathan Nicholas: TBA
- Manasi Jayakumar: TBA
- Matthew Siegelman: TBA

### **Course Description**

This course provides an introductory overview to the basic statistical concepts and procedures used in experimental research. The focus is on becoming familiar with how to interpret and perform statistical tests, in order to design experiments and interpret their results. It is not a course on mathematical theory; no mathematical skills beyond basic algebra are required. The course is instead intended to provide a basic degree of scientific literacy, with an emphasis on the psychological sciences. In addition to the lectures, students will participate in a mandatory laboratory section that meets once a week. Lab activities will consist primarily of hands-on data analysis using R, applying the concepts introduced in lecture.

### **Role in the Psychology Curriculum**

For the Psychology major, and for the Psychology Post-Bac certificate program, this course counts toward the statistics requirement. For the Neuroscience & Behavior major, this course counts toward the P3 (statistics/research methods) requirement. For the Psychology concentration, this course counts as an elective.

## **Course Requirements**

### **Lab Assignments**

Labs will be posted online on Monday morning each week, and are due by 5pm ET on Friday. You can work on the lab at any point during the week, but it is expected that you will need help to finish all the parts of the lab, and you should utilize the Thursday Zoom session corresponding to your lab section to get help from your TA. We do *not* recommend that you wait until Friday to start the lab, since TAs cannot guarantee a fast turnaround time to answer questions outside of their designated lab time. You can discuss the lab with other students in the class if you wish, but all code and text you write should be your own (not copy-pasted from another student).

## Written assignments

Homework. Practicing new knowledge is important in any subject, all the more so for statistics. Your homework assignments provide you with a chance to test your knowledge, cement concepts before we build on them in further lectures, and make instructive mistakes.

- **Homework assignments must represent your own—and only your own—work.** You may not collaborate or share answers with other students. See the Academic Integrity section below for additional information.
- **Show your work!** You will receive more of your points for using a correct method, as opposed to coming to a correct answer. This means that making a silly math error early on needn't cause you to lose all points for a question, even if that error makes your final answer wrong. It also means that you will not receive many points for a correct answer if the TAs cannot see how you arrived at it. Similarly, TAs can only give you points for work that they can read, so write legibly.
- **Homework is due at the beginning of class.** Points will be deducted per half day past the due date of the assignment, which will always be at 10:10am (when our class starts). If you have not finished your homework before class, the late penalty will be the same if you turn it in during or directly after class as if you turn it in any time before 10:10pm that night. That means that if you haven't been able to finish a homework assignment before class starts, there's no benefit to working on it during class rather than paying attention to the new material—we would rather you gain the full benefit of class, and then finish your homework later in the day.

Projects. In place of in-class exams, you will instead demonstrate your understanding of course concepts by completing a series of data-analysis projects. Think of these projects as take-home exams. Some important notes about projects:

- **Projects 1-3 should be completed within a 48-hour window of your choosing, and are due a week after they are assigned.** You should not open the project until you are ready to start your 48-hour window (your start time is tracked in Rstudio.cloud). In your submitted project, note the date and time that you started and finished working on the Project.
- **Project 4 is longer, and you can use the entire 1-week period to complete it.** You do not need to pick a 48-hour window. The project is not intended to take an entire week of work to complete, but is longer than the other projects and covers material from the whole course.
- **You are expected to work alone.** You may use any reference resources (lecture notes, readings, online resources), but you may not receive specific help on the questions in the project from fellow students, TAs, friends, internet message boards, or any other outside source. Receiving help from anyone on your projects for this class is considered the same as cheating on an exam, and will be reported to Columbia as academic misconduct. See the Academic Integrity section below for additional information.
- **Note that the first couple of projects are weighted less strongly toward your final grade than the latter two.** If you don't do as well as you would have liked on the first project, make sure to meet with your TA or the instructor to go over what you did wrong (but also what you're doing right!), so that you can improve your grade as the projects increase in value.

## Grading

This class is not graded on a curve, so your grade will be determined only by your own work, not by how well you do relative to the other students. Your grade will depend on the following:

Lab Assignments: 5%  
Homework: 30%  
Project 1: 10%  
Project 2: 15%  
Project 3: 20%  
Project 4: 20%

The cutoffs for each letter grade are as follows. Grades will only be rounded to the nearest 0.1%, and will not be “rounded up” to the next letter grade:

A+: 97-100%	B+: 87-89.9%	C+: 77-79.9%	D: 60-69.9%
A: 93-96.9%	B: 83-86.9%	C: 73-76.9%	F: 0-59.9%
A-: 90-92.9%	B-: 80-82.9%	C-: 70-72.9%	

## Academic Integrity

Academic honesty includes presenting only your own work in your assignments. Taking credit for work that is not your own is a serious violation within the academic community, and anyone found to be cheating in this class will be reported to the university. In this course, academic dishonesty includes receiving unauthorized help on your projects or homework assignments, copying another student’s work, copying answers from online sources, or helping other students with their work. Detailed definitions and examples of academic dishonesty (and a rundown of the consequences) are available at <http://www.college.columbia.edu/academics/integrity>. Ignorance of the rules is not a valid defense, so make sure you’ve read them. If you find yourself in a position where it feels like getting answers from another person is your only option, please reach out to your instructor and/or your TA before going elsewhere. It’s always preferable to deal with any issues before they get so bad that they become overwhelming, so please do come to us if you’re feeling stressed out about the class workload or if there’s a concept you’re just not understanding. Getting help before a homework assignment is due, and before a project is assigned, is always going to be the best option, but even if you’re reaching out after that, we’d rather you come to us rather than resorting to cheating. If you have an issue that you’d rather not talk about with us, you may contact your academic advisor or dean; or a Psychology Program Advisor (DUS); or the counselors at [Columbia’s CPS](#).

## Students with Disabilities

Students with special needs who may require accommodations should register with the Office of Disability Services (ODS) for support services. ODS often requires a few weeks to process an application, so please contact them as soon as you can. The procedures for registering with ODS can be found at <http://health.columbia.edu/services/ods> or by calling (212) 854-2388. Please note that students who ordinarily receive extra time to complete in-class exams are not generally eligible to receive more time to complete the projects in this course.

### **Readings**

There is no required textbook, but all lectures will also have an accompanying recommended reading, available electronically through Courseworks. These readings are intended to supplement the topics in the lectures, and provide a reference for a deeper understanding of the material.

### **Online course expectations**

All students should sign into Zoom before the start time of the class, to ensure that we can begin on time. Keeping cameras on during class is encouraged but not required. Please keep your mic muted when not talking; you can ask questions via chat or use the hand-raise function to indicate to that you have a question and would like to speak.

### **Learning during 2020-2021**

This is a very unusual year for all of us. All of you have had your lives disrupted, and for many of you or your family members you've lost jobs, been sick, and/or been given extra caregiving responsibilities. A study from the CDC found that 31% of all people in the US have been experiencing symptoms of anxiety or depressive disorders during 2020, and that number jumps to 63% for the 18-24 age group. If you are struggling with the course or facing logistical challenges participating in class, please contact me. All of the dates and requirements listed in this syllabus are flexible, and I can work with you if face changing circumstances over the semester. I hope that you will enjoy the class discussions and meet all the learning goals for the course, but your most important goal for this semester is to safeguard your mental and physical health.

### List of Topics & Readings

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Readings</b>	<b>Lab</b>	<b>Due</b>
1/12	Introduction	Poldrack Chapter 1		
1/14	Variables and Measurement	Poldrack Chapter 2	#1	
1/19	Data Visualization	Tufte Chapter 2		HW 1
1/21	Central Tendency and Variability	Gonick Chapter 2	#2	
1/26	Inference	Irizarry Chapter 15		HW 2
1/28	Testing for Differences	Moore Chapter 16, Section 16.5	#3	
2/2	Bootstrapping	Moore Chapter 16		HW 3
2/4	Correlation	Intro Stats Chapter 4	#4	Project 1
2/9	Linear Regression (Part 1)	Gonick Chapter 11		HW 4
2/11	Linear Regression (Part 2)	Dancey Chapter 12	#5	
2/16	Probability	Poldrack Chapter 3		HW 5
2/18	Probability Distributions	Intro Stats Chapters 5 & 7	#6	
2/23	Binomial Test	Kernler Chapter 6		HW 6
2/25	$z$ Test	Intro Stats Chapter 9	#7	Project 2
3/9	$t$ test	Gonick Chapters 8 & 9		HW 7
3/11	Rank tests	Moore, McCabe, Craig Chapter 15	#8	
3/16	Chi-Square test	Hannay Chapter 17		HW 8
3/18	ANOVA (Part 1)	Dancey Chapter 10	#9	
3/23	ANOVA (Part 2)	Dancey Chapter 11		HW 9
3/25	P Hacking	Poldrack Chapter 17	#10	
3/30	Effect Size	Ellis Chapter 1		HW 10
4/1	Power Analysis	Poldrack Chapter 10	#11	Project 3
4/6	Bayes Rule (Part 1)	Stone Chapter 1		HW 11
4/8	Bayes Rule (Part 2)	Poldrack Chapter 11	#12	
4/13	Analytic Strategy	McElreath Chapter 1		HW 12
4/15	Future Directions (Optional)			
4/22				Project 4