Instructor

Dr. Gustavo Ovando-Montejo.
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Office Hours

I will hold digital office hours every Wednesday from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM. I will be available through Zoom at your request. My goal is to break the hurdles of the online setting by using technology to communicate. If you prefer another time/day or method of virtual communication, send me an email and I will make the necessary arrangements.

Course Description

This course shows students how to use quantitative techniques to make sense and gain a better understanding of the interactions between nature and humans. It demonstrates methods and data suited for the study of recreation resource management and environmental issues. It is important to clarify that although this course uses statistical methods, it is not a statistics class. Instead, this course reinforces, builds, and places statistics in an environmental and natural resource management context. This course intends to get students acquainted with the quantitative skills necessary to practice evidence-based conservation and natural resource management.

Course Objectives

At the end of the course students will be able to:

- Find and collect reliable sources of data that can help you in an environmental or natural resource management environment.
- Organize the data in an effective manner.
- Analyze data using relevant statistical methods.
- Present the results in effective ways to communicate concise knowledge.
- Use data from already published sources.

Learning Experiences
The course will be segmented into modules. Each week a new module will be available on Canvas with the materials and instruction for activities and assignments to be completed within each particular module. Materials in each module will include assignments, video presentations, or discussions about a particular topic.

Evaluation Methods and Criteria

There will be something to do generally every week so pay attention and keep engaged with the content. In some weeks the assignments will be designed to assess whether you’ve learned important concepts or techniques, and other weeks they’re more designed to help you engage in and reinforce understanding of the subject matter. The course is designed to build up to a final assignment – the synthesis exercise – where to succeed you’ll need to draw upon most of what you’ve learned throughout the term.

Below is the list and description of assignments and activities:

- **Discussions (5)** – These are worth five points each and will encourage you to engage with others in the class to think about the importance and uses of what you learn. Because this is a fairly large class and it’s hard to maintain a discussion when 50 people are talking, each student will be assigned to a smaller discussion group of 6-7 people who share common career goals and/or interests. As long as your comments are at all relevant to the topic, you’ll receive all 3 points available. However, no late submissions will be accepted so that others can move on to the next topic.

- **Exercises (5)** – These are worth 15 points each and will ask you to complete relevant tasks (for example, create a hypothesis that could be tested using visitor monitoring data; interpret a journal article and apply it to a specific management context). Grades may include decimal points, and late submissions will be marked down at a rate of 0.5 points per day.

- **Reality checks (10)** – These are short two-point assignments each and ask a single question which I use mainly to assess how the course is going. For example, I might ask which concept, if any, you found most confusing that week. If it turns out that the same thing confuses a lot of people, we’ll come back to it the next week. No late submissions are allowed for this activities.

- **Synthesis exercise (1)** – This is worth 30 points and is your final product that shows you’ve not only learned about the techniques and concepts covered in the course, but you also know how to put them together to gather, analyze, and present evidence that can be applied to a management situation. It will involve using a real-world case study and actual data.

Grade Distribution

Discussions = 25  
Exercises = 75  
Reality checks = 20  
Synthesis exercise = 30

Total = 150 points

Course Schedule/Outline
Module 1 - Introduction
Module 2 - What are statistics good for?
Module 3 - What is evidence-based management?
Module 4 - Data sources and hypothesis formulation
Module 5 - Sampling
Module 6 - Central tendency and spread
Module 7 - Monitoring your environment
Module 8 - Learning about a population through surveys
Module 9 - Organizing and analyzing data
Module 10 - Data presentation
Module 11 - Common statistical analyses for environment-society studies
Module 12 - Common statistical analyses, part II
Module 13 - Getting useful information from a journal article
Module 14 - Synthesizing evidence for decision-making
Module 15 - Reflection/work on synthesis project

Grade Scheme

The following grading standards will be used in this class:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>100 % to 93.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>&lt; 93.0 % to 90.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>&lt; 90.0 % to 87.0%</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>&lt; 87.0 % to 83.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>&lt; 83.0 % to 80.0%</td>
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<td>C+</td>
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<td>C-</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>&lt; 67.0 % to 60.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt; 59.0 % to 0.0%</td>
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</tbody>
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Library Services

All USU students attending classes in Logan, at our Regional Campuses, or online can access all databases, e-journals, and e-books regardless of location. Additionally, the library will mail printed books to students, at no charge to them. Students can also borrow books from any Utah academic library. Take advantage of all library services and learn more at libguides.usu.edu/rc. (http://libguides.usu.edu/rc)

Classroom Civility

Utah State University supports the principle of freedom of expression for both faculty and students. The University respects the rights of faculty to teach and students to learn. Maintenance of these rights requires classroom conditions that do not impede the learning process. Disruptive classroom behavior will not be tolerated. An individual engaging in such behavior may be subject to disciplinary action. Read Student Code Article V Section V-3 (https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode/article5) for more information.

University Policies & Procedures

COVID-19 Classroom Protocols

In order to continue to provide a high standard of instruction at USU, and to limit the spread of COVID-19 during the pandemic, students are asked to follow certain classroom protocols during the fall 2020 semester. These protocols are in place not only for your safety but also the safety of the rest of the campus community. You will be asked to clean your desk area at the start of each class, sit in designated seats, wear face coverings, and follow dismission instructions. There may be individual medical circumstances that prevent some students from using face coverings. These circumstances will be rare, but if they do exist, we ask that everyone be respectful. It is imperative that we each do our part so that on-campus instruction can continue.

Academic Freedom and Professional Responsibilities

Academic freedom is the right to teach, study, discuss, investigate, discover, create, and publish freely. Academic freedom protects the rights of faculty members in teaching and of students in learning. Freedom in research is fundamental to the advancement of truth. Faculty members are entitled to full freedom in teaching, research, and creative activities, subject to the limitations imposed by professional responsibility. Faculty Code Policy #403 (http://www.usu.edu/hr/files/uploads/Policies/403.pdf) further defines academic freedom and professional responsibilities.

Academic Integrity – "The Honor System"

Each student has the right and duty to pursue his or her academic experience free of dishonesty. To enhance the learning environment at Utah State University and to develop student academic integrity, each student agrees to the following Honor Pledge:

"I pledge, on my honor, to conduct myself with the foremost level of academic integrity."

A student who lives by the Honor Pledge is a student who does more than not cheat, falsify, or plagiarize. A student who lives by the Honor Pledge:

- Espouses academic integrity as an underlying and essential principle of the Utah State University community;
- Understands that each act of academic dishonesty devalues every degree that is awarded by this institution; and
- Is a welcomed and valued member of Utah State University.

Academic Dishonesty
The instructor of this course will take appropriate actions in response to Academic Dishonesty, as defined the University’s Student Code. Acts of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to:

- **Cheating**: using, attempting to use, or providing others with any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, examinations, or in any other academic exercise or activity. Unauthorized assistance includes:
  - Working in a group when the instructor has designated that the quiz, test, examination, or any other academic exercise or activity be done “individually;”
  - Depending on the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments;
  - Substituting for another student, or permitting another student to substitute for oneself, in taking an examination or preparing academic work;
  - Acquiring tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty member, staff member, or another student without express permission;
  - Continuing to write after time has been called on a quiz, test, examination, or any other academic exercise or activity;
  - Submitting substantially the same work for credit in more than one class, except with prior approval of the instructor; or engaging in any form of research fraud.

- **Falsification**: altering or fabricating any information or citation in an academic exercise or activity.

- **Plagiarism**: representing, by paraphrase or direct quotation, the published or unpublished work of another person as one’s own in any academic exercise or activity without full and clear acknowledgment. It also includes using materials prepared by another person or by an agency engaged in the sale of term papers or other academic materials.

For additional information go to: ARTICLE VI. University Regulations Regarding Academic Integrity (https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode/article6)

**Sexual Harassment/Title IX**

Utah State University is committed to creating and maintaining an environment free from acts of sexual misconduct and discrimination and to fostering respect and dignity for all members of the USU community. Title IX and USU Policy 339 (http://www.usu.edu/policies/339) address sexual harassment in the workplace and academic setting.

The university responds promptly upon learning of any form of possible discrimination or sexual misconduct. Any individual may contact USU’s Office of Equity (https://equity.usu.edu/) for available options and resources or clarification. The university has established a complaint procedure to handle all types of discrimination complaints, including sexual harassment (USU Policy 305 (http://www.usu.edu/policies/305/)), and has designated the Office of Equity Director/Title IX Coordinator as the official responsible for receiving and investigating complaints of sexual harassment.

**Withdrawal Policy and "I" Grade Policy**

Students are required to complete all courses for which they are registered by the end of the semester. In some cases, a student may be unable to complete all of the coursework because of extenuating circumstances, but not due to poor performance or to retain financial aid. The term ‘extenuating' circumstances includes: (1) incapacitating illness which prevents a student from attending classes for a minimum period of two weeks, (2) a death in the immediate family, (3) financial responsibilities requiring a student to alter a work schedule to secure employment, (4) change in work schedule as required by an employer, or (5) other emergencies deemed appropriate by the instructor.

**Students with Disabilities**

USU welcomes students with disabilities. If you have, or suspect you may have, a physical, mental health, or learning disability that may require accommodations in this course, please contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) (http://www.usu.edu/drc/) as early in the semester as possible (University Inn # 101, (435) 797-
All disability related accommodations must be approved by the DRC. Once approved, the DRC will coordinate with faculty to provide accommodations.

Students who are at a higher risk for complications from COVID-19 or who contract COVID-19 may also be eligible for accommodations.

**Diversity Statement**

Regardless of intent, careless or ill-informed remarks can be offensive and hurtful to others and detract from the learning climate. If you feel uncomfortable in a classroom due to offensive language or actions by an instructor or student(s) regarding ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation, contact:

- Division of Student Affairs: [https://studentaffairs.usu.edu](https://studentaffairs.usu.edu), (435) 797-1712, studentservices@usu.edu (mailto:studentservices@usu.edu), TSC 220
- Student Legal Services: [https://ususa.usu.edu/student-association/student-advocacy/legal-services](https://ususa.usu.edu/student-association/student-advocacy/legal-services), (435) 797-2912, TSC 326
- Access and Diversity: [http://accesscenter.usu.edu](http://accesscenter.usu.edu), (435) 797-1728, access@usu.edu (mailto:access@usu.edu); TSC 315
- Multicultural Programs: [http://accesscenter.usu.edu/multiculture](http://accesscenter.usu.edu/multiculture), (435) 797-1728, TSC 315
- LGBTQ Programs: [http://accesscenter.usu.edu/lgbtqa](http://accesscenter.usu.edu/lgbtqa), (435) 797-1728, TSC 3145
- Provost's Office Diversity Resources: [https://www.usu.edu/provost/diversity](https://www.usu.edu/provost/diversity), (435) 797-8176

You can learn about your student rights by visiting:
The Code of Policies and Procedures for Students at Utah State University: [https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode](https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode)

**Grievance Process**

Students who feel they have been unfairly treated may file a grievance through the channels and procedures described in the Student Code: Article VII [https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode/article7](https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode/article7).

**Full details for USU Academic Policies and Procedures can be found at:**

- Student Conduct [http://www.usu.edu/studentconduct](http://www.usu.edu/studentconduct)
- Student Code [https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode](https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode)
- Academic Integrity [https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode/article6](https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode/article6)

**Emergency Procedures**

In the case of a drill or real emergency, classes will be notified to evacuate the building by the sound of the fire/emergency alarm system or by a building representative. In the event of a disaster that may interfere with either notification, evacuate as the situation dictates (i.e., in an earthquake when shaking ceases or immediately when a fire is discovered). Turn off computers and take any personal items with you. Elevators should not be used; instead, use the closest stairs.

**Mental Health**

Mental health is critically important for the success of USU students. As a student, you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events
may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. Utah State University provides free services for students to assist them with addressing these and other concerns. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus at Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) (https://counseling.usu.edu).

Students are also encouraged to download the “SafeUT App” (https://healthcare.utah.edu/uni/programs/safe-ut-smartphone-app) to their smartphones. The SafeUT application is a 24/7 statewide crisis text and tip service that provides real-time crisis intervention to students through texting and a confidential tip program that can help anyone with emotional crises, bullying, relationship problems, mental health, or suicide related issues.