

Applied Quantitative Methods

College of Charleston, Department of Biology, Spring 2019

Course and Instructor info:

- Meeting time: 9:25 – 10:40 am TR; RITA 271
- Instructor: Dr. Dan McGlinn
- Email: mcglindj@cofc.edu
- Office: RITA 239
- Phone: 843-953-0190
- Office hours: email for an appointment
- Course website: http://dmcglinn.github.io/quant_methods

Course Description:

This course is a three hour seminar for advanced undergraduate and graduate students. The goals of the course are to develop students' knowledge of more advanced and applied topics in statistical analysis, as well as, provide students the opportunity to apply these methods to their own research projects.

Course Structure:

The course will be roughly divided in half between time spend learning about tools and time spend developing one's own project.

Student Learning Objectives:

1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the theoretical basis of modern quantitative methods such as (but not limited to):
 - R programming
 - Version control
 - Database SQL
 - GIS tools
 - Spatial statistics
 - Multivariate Statistics
2. Students will demonstrate the ability to apply these methods in the development of weekly assignments and a research project.
3. Students will demonstrate the ability to explain different quantitative methods and their application through peer instruction which will include but not be limited to peer interactions in the classroom, posting solutions to the course webpage, providing constructive feedback on peer research projects.
4. Students will demonstrate the ability to develop, analyze, and synthesize results of a research project via a written manuscript and oral research project presentation.

Student Evaluation:

Graduate Students will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- 5% Participation
- 5% Peer Teaching

- 5% Quizzes
- 40% Assignments
- 45% Project
 - 15% oral presentation
 - 15% project code
 - 15% written description of analysis (e.g., Methods and Results section of a paper)

Undergraduate Students will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- 5% Participation
- 5% Quizzes
- 40% Assignments
- 50% Project
 - 25% oral presentation
 - 25% project code

Project - The project in this course may span a wide range of potential topics and for all students will include an evaluation of contributed code and oral presentation. Graduate students will also contribute a scientific paper on the project topic. More information on the project assignments can be found on the Projects page.

Prerequisites:

Introductory statistics is required. Programming experience is not required but an interest in learning how to program is required.

Course Schedule:

- Jan 08 - Week 01 - Introduction to R
- Jan 15 - Week 02 - Introduction to R (con't)
- Jan 22 - Week 03 - Introduction to Version Control and the Terminal
- Jan 29 - Week 04 - Regression and Model Selection
- Feb 05 - Week 05 - Multivariate Models
- Feb 12 - Week 06 - Spatial Models
- Feb 19 - Week 07 - GIS manipulations
- Feb 26 - Week 08 - Project Pitch (oral presentation)
- Mar 05 - Week 09 - Rshiny
- Mar 12 - Week 10 - Work on class project
- Mar 19 - Week 11 - Spring Break (no class)
- Mar 26 - Week 12 - Work on class project
- Apr 02 - Week 13 - Work on class project
- Apr 09 - Week 14 - Peer Code Review and Peer Feedback
- Apr 16 - Week 15 - Oral presentations
- Apr 23 - Week 16 - No class (Turn in code and written project components this week)

Course Policies:

Class time - Our time in class will be used primarily for 1) learning new quantitative methods, 2) working on exercises, 3) presenting to the rest of the class, and 4) developing student projects.

Assignments - Most weeks during the first half of the semester there will be a homework assignment associated with the content learned in lecture. Your code and a written explanation of your solution are required. Although I encourage collaboration on code development, your explanation of your solution should be written in your own words. The assignment should be submitted via a your personal github page. One

problem from each assignment (selected at my discretion after the assignments have been submitted) will receive a thorough code review and a detailed grade. Other problems will be graded as follows:

- Produces the correct answer using the requested approach: 100%
- Generally uses the right approach, but a minor mistake results in an incorrect answer: 90%
- Attempts to solve the problem and makes some progress using the core concept: 50%
- Answer demonstrates a lack of understanding of the core concept: 0%

Late assignments will be docked 5% per day and will not be accepted after Monday night at 11:59 pm Eastern Time except in cases of genuine emergencies that can be documented by the student or in cases where this has been discussed and approved in advance. This policy is based on the idea that in order to learn how to program well students should be programming at least every other day. Time has been allotted in class for working on assignments and you are expected to work on them outside of class. It is intended that you should have finished as much of the assignment as you can based on what we have covered in class by the following class period. Therefore, even if something unexpected happens at the last minute you should already be close to done with the assignment. It also allows me to provide rapid feedback by returning assignments quickly, which is crucial to learning.

Final grades will be assigned based on the following scale:

Undergraduate Students

Letter	Grade	Quality Points
A	Superior	4.000
A-		3.700
B+	Very Good	3.300
B	Good	3.000
B-		2.700
C+	Fair	2.300
C	Acceptable	2.000
C-		1.700
D+		1.300
D	Barely Acceptable, Passing	1.000
D-		0.700
F	Failure	0.000
WA	Failure Due to Excessive Absences*	0.000
XXF	Failure Due to Academic Dishonesty	0.000
RA-RF	Repeat; include GPA/exclude hours**	
XA-XF	Repeat; exclude GPA and hours**	
GA-GC	3 Year Option; include hours/exclude GPA**	
A ^{-F}	Used for EDLS ONLY	0.000

Graduate Students

Letter	Grade	Quality Points
A	Superior	4.000
B+	Very Good	3.500
B	Good	3.000
C+	Fair	2.500
C	Acceptable	2.000
F	Failure	0.000
XXF	Failure Due to Academic Dishonesty	0.000
RA-RF	Repeat; include GPA/exclude hours*	

Students with Disabilities and Special Needs - The College will make reasonable accommodations for persons with documented disabilities. If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact the Center for Disability Services (CDS/SNAP program) located in the Lightsey Center, Suite 104, 953-1431, SNAP@cofc.edu. If you have a documented disability and need accommodations, please come talk with me and bring your Professor Notification Letter (PNL) as soon as possible. SNAP students are requested to make arrangements with the instructors well in advance of exams.

Academic integrity – Academic integrity is essential at the College of Charleston and to the practice of science. You will therefore be held to a high standard of integrity in this course. Plagiarism, lying, cheating or attempted cheating are violations of the College’s honor code. Any honor code violations that occur will be handled as outlined in the student handbook. Please be absolutely sure that you understand what the honor code requires of you (see pages 10-12 of the student handbook, <http://cofc.edu/generaldocuments/handbook.pdf>). If you have any questions or concerns about honor code expectations or about how to avoid violations, please consult with the instructor.

Plagiarism - Plagiarism is any use of words or ideas produced by another person without proper attribution, and includes failing to paraphrase adequately or to cite sources properly. Plagiarism, both intentional and unintentional, is forbidden by the honor code. Please consult the instructor if you have any questions or concerns about how to use and cite sources to avoid plagiarism.

Collaboration - Many of your assignments will involve working with other students. Nevertheless, the work you submit must be completed independently and must represent your own independent ideas, unless the instructor specifically requires a joint product. Please be sure that you understand the distinction between collaborating and copying; ask your instructor if you have any doubts. Suspicions of unauthorized collaboration will be dealt with according to the honor code.

Re-using work - Please be aware that using work that you or anyone else has done for this or any other class or project, either in whole or in part, is a violation of the honor code, even if the work is revised.