Fall 2015

**MURP 6020**

Marla Nelson  
*University of New Orleans*

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MURP 6020 Analytic Methods for Planners

Fall 2015  
Instructor: Marla Nelson, 300 Milneburg Hall  
E-mail: mnelson@uno.edu  
Phone: 504.280.3110  
Office Hours: M 2-4 PM, W 3-5 PM, TH 1-3 & by appt.

Course Description and Content

This course introduces students to various quantitative methods for describing and analyzing data used in urban and regional planning practice. Specifically, it covers a variety of techniques for analyzing and presenting secondary data, preparing population estimates and projections, and conducting regional economic analyses and evaluations.

Learning Goals and Objectives/Outcomes

The course has three objectives. The first is to develop an understanding of the methods introduced. In meeting this objective, students will develop the skills to collect, process and interpret data and information from a variety of sources. The second objective is to develop the ability to clearly and concisely communicate findings to clients, decision-makers, the public and other planners. Finally, this course is designed to foster an ability to critically evaluate the products of planning research. In that regard, we recognize that you will be both producing and consuming research during the course of your career. Using the material covered during the semester you will be in a better position to discern good research from bad, an important skill in making informed planning decisions.

Required Texts and Readings


In addition to the text, there are copies of required readings posted on Moodle. Students are responsible for accessing and downloading these materials.
Course Requirements

Readings: Students are expected to come to class familiar with the reading material to review it and ask questions. A thorough understanding of the reading assignments is necessary to effectively participate in class and complete class assignments.

Problem Sets: Students are required to complete 3 problem sets over the course of the semester. The problem sets are designed to give you practice with particular techniques. They will require a considerable amount of work outside of class; be sure to get started immediately after an exercise is introduced.

Professional Project Requirement: One of the problem sets will count as the professional project requirement for the course. The purpose of the professional project requirement is to assess student readiness for practice. Students are expected to complete professional quality work and must earn a B or higher this assignment.

Individual Assignments: In addition to problem sets, students are required to complete a number of shorter, less comprehensive individual assignments throughout the semester.

Group Assignment: Working in groups of three or four students will complete a group assignment consisting of written assignment and a class presentation.

Final exam: There will be an in-class final exam on December 9, 2015.

Class attendance & participation: Students are required to attend all classes. Failure to do so will result in a lower class grade. The courtesy of e-mail prior to the start of class is requested if you must be absent. In addition to regular and timely attendance, students must actively participate in class to receive a strong participation grade.

Criteria for grading and grading standards

All assignments and problem sets will be introduced and discussed during class. In all assignments students will be graded based upon their knowledge and application of particular planning methods and techniques and the clarity, thoroughness and creativity of their presentation.
All coursework will be graded on a numerical scale based on a specific number of points:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Breakdown</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Problem Sets</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>(3 @ 16% each)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Assignments</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>(3 assignments @ 5% each)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Assignment</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>(written-6%; presentation-6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To calculate the final grade, I will sum the numerical grades from all of the course assignments and convert it to a letter grade based on the following:

**Grading System**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Late assignments and Incompletes:** All assignments are due at the beginning of class. Late work will not be accepted except under highly unusual situations such as a serious illness or family emergency. No incompletes other than for medical reasons will be given.

**Student Conduct in the Classroom**

Students, as well as faculty, have a responsibility for creating and maintaining an environment that supports effective instruction. The university expects students to conduct themselves in an orderly and cooperative manner. Cell phones should be turned off while in the classroom.

**Academic Integrity**

Academic integrity is fundamental to the process of learning and evaluating academic performance. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following: cheating, plagiarism, tampering with academic records and examinations, falsifying identity, and being an accessory to acts of academic dishonesty. Refer to the Student Code of Conduct for further information. The Code is available online at [http://www.studentaffairs.uno.edu](http://www.studentaffairs.uno.edu).
**Accommodations**

It is University policy to provide, on a flexible and individualized basis, reasonable accommodations to students who have disabilities that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. Students with disabilities should contact the Office of Disability Services as well as their instructors to discuss their individual needs for accommodations. For more information, please go to [http://www.ods.uno.edu](http://www.ods.uno.edu).

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**Schedule of Topics, Readings and Assignments**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Familiarize yourself with Excel through the use of a free online tutorial. I recommend Chandoo: <a href="http://chandoo.org/wp/">http://chandoo.org/wp/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Supplemental reading</strong> (optional but helpful, particularly with assignment 1):</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 Aug</td>
<td>Basic Quantitative Skills in Data Analysis; Gathering Data from Secondary Sources; Accessing Online Data</td>
<td>Quinterno, J. (2013). Chapter 1: Regional Geography (pp. 7-28). <em>Running the Numbers: A Practical Guide to Regional Economic and Social Analysis</em>. ME Sharpe.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


*Skim:*

The Data Center website: http://www.datacenterresearch.org/


PDF also available on Blackboard.


PDF also available on Blackboard.


*Assignment 1 due*

2 Sept  

**Data Analysis and Effective Communication**


**Graphics**


Presentations


Assignment 2 due

9 Sept   Gathering Your Own Data: Observation


Assignment 3 due

16 Sept   Gathering Your Own Data


Additional readings to be assigned

Group Assignment due
23 Sept

Describing populations and analyzing change


30 Sept

NO CLASS

IHSP-CIRM Conference, Montreal, Canada

7 Oct

Projections and forecasts: Introduction and mathematical extrapolation


14 Oct  Projections and forecasts: Cohort component analysis


*Problem set 1 due*

21 Oct  NO CLASS   ACSP Conference, Houston, TX

28 Oct  Projections and forecasts: Migration models; Estimating needs


4 Nov  Using and presenting economic and employment data


*Problem set 2 due*

11 Nov  Economic base analysis and location quotients

McClean and Voytek, op. cit. Chapter 4, pp. 51-66.


18 Nov Shift-share analysis

McClean and Voytek, op. cit. pp. 67-72; 75-81.


MAKING DECISIONS

25 Nov Impact Analysis


**2 Dec**  
**Cost Benefit Analysis**


*Problem set 3 due*

**9 Dec**  
**Final exam**
Syllabus Attachment
Fall 2015

Important Dates
Last day to adjust schedule w/out fee ........................................ 08/18/2015
Semester Classes Begin ..................................................... 08/19/2015
Last day to adjust schedule w/fee, or withdraw with 100% refund ........................................... 08/25/2015
Last day to apply for December commencement ..................................................... 09/18/2015
Final day to drop a course or resign ........................................ 10/14/2015
Mid-semester examinations ............................................. 10/08-10/09/2015
Final examinations .......................................................... 12/07-12/11/2015
Commencement .............................................................. 12/18/2015
*Note: check Registrar’s website for Saturday and A/B sessions, and for items not listed here: http://www.registrar.uno.edu

Fall Semester Holidays
Labor Day ................................................................. 09/07/2015
Mid-semester break .......................................................... 10/15-10/16/2015
Thanksgiving ............................................................ 11/26-11/27/2015

Withdrawal Policy – Undergraduate only
Students are responsible for initiating action to resign from the University (withdraw from all courses) or from a course on or before dates indicated in the current Important Dates calendar. Students who fail to resign by the published final date for such action will be retained on the class rolls even though they may be absent for the remainder of the semester and be graded as if they were in attendance. Failure to attend classes does not constitute a resignation. Check the dates on the Registrar’s website, http://www.registrar.uno.edu. Please consult The Bulletin for charges associated with dropping and adding courses.

Incomplete Policy – Undergraduate only
The grade of I means incomplete and is given for work of passing quality but which, because of circumstances beyond the student’s control, is not complete. The issuance of the grade of I is at the discretion of the faculty member teaching the course. For all graduate and undergraduate students, a grade of I becomes a grade of F if it is not converted before the deadline for adding courses for credit (as printed in the Important Dates Calendar) of the next regular semester including summer semester.

Repeat Policy
When a student is permitted to repeat a course for credit, the last grade earned shall be the one which determines course acceptability for degree credit. A student who has earned a C or better in a course may not repeat that course unless, (1) the catalog description indicates that the course may be repeated for credit, or (2) the student’s Dean gives prior approval for documented extenuating circumstances.

Academic Dishonesty Policy

Safety Awareness Facts and Education
Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender is a Civil Rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, etc. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find the appropriate resources here:
http://www.uno.edu/student-affairs-enrollment-management/

UNO Counseling Services and UNO Cares
UNO offers care and support for students in any type of distress. Counseling Services assist students in addressing mental health concerns through assessment, short-term counseling, and career testing and counseling. Find out more at http://www.uno.edu/counseling-services/. First-year students often have unique concerns, and UNO Cares is designed to address those students succeed. Contact UNO Cares through http://www.uno.edu/fye/uno-cares.aspx.

Emergency Procedures
Sign up for emergency notifications via text and/or email at E2Campus Notification: http://www.uno.edu/ehso/emergency-communications/index.aspx. All emergency and safety procedures are explained at the Emergency Health and Safety Office:
http://www.uno.edu/ehso/.

Diversity at UNO
As the most diverse public university in the state, UNO maintains a Diversity Affairs division to support the university’s efforts towards creating an environment of healthy respect, tolerance, and appreciation for the people from all walks of life, and the expression of intellectual point of view and personal lifestyle. The Office of Diversity Affairs promotes these values through a wide range of programming and activities.
http://diversity.uno.edu/index.cfm

Learning and Support Services
Help is within reach in the form of learning support services, including tutoring in writing and math and other supplemental instruction. Visit the Learning Resource Center in LA 334, or learn more at http://www.uno.edu/cls/

Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity
UNO is an equal opportunity employer. The Human Resource Management department has more information on UNO’s compliance with federal and state regulations regarding EEOC in its Policies and Resources website: http://www.uno.edu/human-resource-management/policies.aspx

Graduate Policies
Graduate policies often vary from undergraduate policies. To view the applicable policies for graduate students, see the Graduate Student Handbook: