

# **ECON 120A-Introduction to Statistics**

## **Fall 2016**

**Instructor:**

Martin Santamaria  
114 Economics

Email: [misantamaria@ucsd.edu](mailto:misantamaria@ucsd.edu)

Office Hours: Tuesday 10am-11am

The course introduces students to the science of statistics, building student skills in the analysis of data and introducing the formal methods used by statisticians to learn about the real world.

As a building block, students will be introduced to basic probability theory. We will gain an understanding of the collection of data and the problems and opportunities this affords. Students will be expected by the end of the course to understand the foundations of modern statistical analysis in preparation for 120B and 120C.

If you earn an A/A- grade in my class this quarter, I recommend that you take the one-unit honors class 120AH in the fall. Honors classes are capped at 20 students and you will get to know the faculty member well (important for getting letters of recommendation). These classes typically have you give a short presentation and write a short paper. Presenting and writing in the major are two valuable skills that are challenging for us to offer in large classes. I recommend you take advantage of the 120AH opportunity.

### **Course Outline**

Part I (1 week) (Chapters 1, 2) Introduction to descriptive statistics (mean, median, mode, variance, frequencies, interquantile analysis, etc) and graphical analysis.

Part II (3 weeks) (Chapters 3, 4 and 5) Basic Probability theory. Discrete and continuous Random Variables. Multiple Random Variables and their transformations.

Part III (3 weeks) (Chapters 6 and 7) Sampling and Point Estimation. Sampling distribution of an Estimator. Law of Large Numbers and Central Limit Theorem. Unbiasedness and Efficiency of estimators.

Part IV (3 weeks) (Chapters 8 and 9) Hypothesis Testing and Confidence Intervals. Critical and p-values. Type I and Type II errors. Duality of Hypothesis Testing and Confidence Intervals.

Part V (Time Permitting) Selection Problems. Endogeneity and simultaneous equations

## **Textbook**

“Introductory Statistics for Business and Economics” by T.H. Wonnacott and R.J. Wonnacott, Fourth Edition or Fifth Edition, John Wiley and Sons: New York. There is also a custom version of the book made for UCSD students. This book is exactly the same as non-custom version, only less expensive.

## **Lectures and Discussion Sections**

### **Lectures**

It is important to come to every lecture. If you should miss a class, it is your responsibility to get the notes and any information provided in class.

The schedule of lectures and discussion section can be checked at  
<https://act.ucsd.edu/scheduleOfClasses/scheduleOfClassesStudentResult.htm?page=3>

### **Discussion Sections**

There are weekly discussion sections for this course. They are not mandatory. However, it is **HIGHLY** encouraged since the TAs will go over practice problems, the kind of problems you may encounter on exams.

Ideally, you want to try working on the practice problems **BEFORE** you attend a discussion session so you have a better idea of where you need help from the TA's. Also, feel free to email the TA's in advance with suggestions on what problems to cover during the discussion session.

If you struggle to tackle your homework, we believe that PSET will be an efficient and effective way for you to learn how to think like an economist.

### **Teaching Assistants**

Lopez Videla, Bruno

[brlopezv@ucsd.edu](mailto:brlopezv@ucsd.edu)

Martinez Iriarte, Julian

[jum024@ucsd.edu](mailto:jum024@ucsd.edu)

## **Practice Problems**

The book has a lot of great problems to practice. In addition, I will assign extra practice problems every week. Even though they will not be collected or graded, it is VERY important to do them.

The book's problem and additional practice problems are the best way to learn and be prepared for the exams. The solutions to the problem sets will be covered by the T.A.s during the discussion sessions and solutions will be posted after the TA's have covered them.

## **Problem Solving and Economics Tutoring Center (PSET)**

Learn to solve problems on you own!

The Economics Department is making a problem solving and tutoring center available to all students in Econometrics (120ABC) on M-TH evenings and on the weekend. (Specific hours for PSET will be posted on the Department web page).

The ability to apply the concepts from class to solve problems is the most important skill we want you master in our core classes. PSET is designed to help you learn to tackle problems successfully by having grad and undergrad TAs there to help you think through a problem—right when you get stuck.

I encourage you to take advantage of these great resource, especially if you feel that your background for this class is not particularly strong. Let the tutors help you as you work on the practice problems.

## Exams and Grade

There will be two Midterm Examinations and a Final Exam.

Your grade will be determined as follows:

20% Midterm 1 (October 19<sup>th</sup>)  
25% Midterm 2 (November 21<sup>st</sup>)  
50% Final Exam (December 6<sup>th</sup>)

### **Midterm Exams** (50% of Final Grade):

The first midterm will take place on Wednesday October 19<sup>th</sup> during the usual lecture time and correspond to 20% of the final grade.

The second midterm will be on Monday November 21<sup>st</sup> during the usual lecture time and correspond to 30% of the final grade.

### **Final Exam** (50% of Final Grade)

The final is on Tuesday, December 6<sup>th</sup>, from 11:30 am until 2:30pm. Room will be announced when assigned by the Registrar.

### **Exam policies**

You may use a calculator, a simple one is enough. All grading problems must be rectified within a week of being returned. You will have to show full work and derivations to receive full credit.

There are no makeup exams. If you need to miss a midterm for a verifiable medical/legal reason, the rest of the exams will be reweighed so they account for 100% of your grade. Failure to notify me promptly that you must miss a midterm will result in a zero grade for that midterm. Unexcused absences will also result in a zero.

## **Administrative Issues**

1. If you have a documented disability, please come to talk to me as soon as possible so that I can make suitable accommodations for you. If you believe that you have a disability and desire accommodation, please register with the Office for Students with Disabilities.
2. If you choose to use a laptop to take notes during the lecture, please sit in the back row. No other use of electronic devices is allowed during class.
3. Students found guilty of academic dishonesty will earn a failing grade for the course. In addition, the Council of Deans of Students Affairs will impose a disciplinary penalty.
4. If you arrive late to an exam, I will allow you to take the exam in the time that remains as long as no one has turned in his/her exam.