Brooklyn College The City University of New York
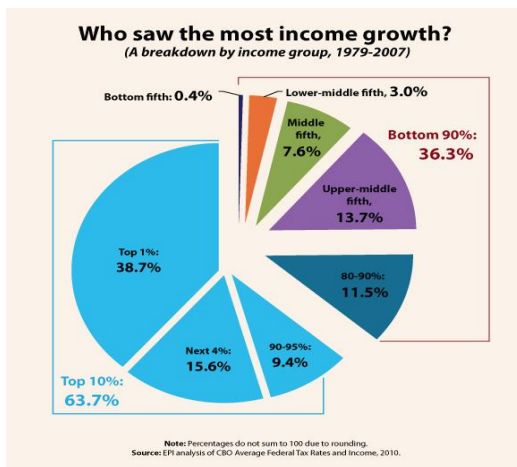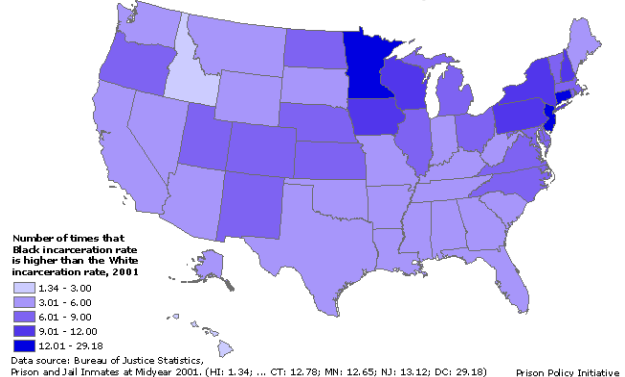
Department of Sociology

Research Methods II
SOCY 2112 TY2 – Section 15387
Fall 2017

Instructor: Mara Getz Sheftel

Class: Tuesdays & Thursdays 2:15-4:30

Room: James Hall 3611

email: msheftel@gradcenter.cuny.edu

Office hours: Tuesdays 12:15-1:15 or by appt

Office: James Hall 3416

Who saw the most income growth?
(A breakdown by income group, 1979-2007)

Bottom fifth: **0.4%**
Lower-middle fifth, **3.0%**
Middle fifth, **7.6%**
Bottom 90%: **36.3%**
Upper-middle fifth, **13.7%**
Top 1%: **38.7%**
80-90%: **11.5%**
90-95%: **9.4%**
Next 4%: **15.6%**
Top 10%: **63.7%**

Note: Percentages do not sum to 100 due to rounding.
Source: EPI analysis of CBO Average Federal Tax Rates and Income, 2010.

Disparities between Black and White incarceration rates, 2001

Number of times that Black incarceration rate is higher than the White incarceration rate, 2001

- 1.34 - 3.00
- 3.01 - 6.00
- 6.01 - 9.00
- 9.01 - 12.00
- 12.01 - 29.18

Data source: Bureau of Justice Statistics,
Prison and Jail Inmates at Midyear 2001. (HI: 1.34; ... CT: 12.78; MN: 12.65; NJ: 13.12; DC: 29.18)   Prison Policy Initiative

Course Description

What are social statistics? How are they produced? How are they used? And why are they important? The second course in the methods sequence in Sociology, this course introduces students to basic quantitative methods commonly used in the social sciences. Students will develop their "quantitative literacy" by identifying research questions best suited to quantitative methods, understanding the logic of statistical methods, analyzing quantitative data in SPSS (a statistics computer program), and communicating those findings. After completing this course, students will have the skills to pursue and critically evaluate research using quantitative methods in future academic and career settings, as well as be critical readers of sociological literature and press reports that use statistics.

Deep gratitude to Professor Emily Molina who generously shared her curriculum and course materials for SOCY 2112, upon which the curriculum for this Fall 2017 section was built

Course Goals

- Ease anxiety about using math and statistics in sociological methods
- Understand what types of sociological questions are best suited to quantitative methods
- Understand basic statistical concepts
- Understand how statistics are used (and misused!)
- Compute and interpret basic descriptive statistics, measures of bivariate association, and simple regressions
- Learn the basics of SPSS and Excel for quantitative data analysis
- Communicate findings clearly by writing short reports based on original data analyses

Student Expectations

Learning statistics is like learning a new language. Our work together will focus on learning new ways of analyzing quantitative data, practicing them, and practicing them again. Because we will constantly build on the techniques we learn as the semester goes on, *it will be very difficult for you to do well in this course if you don't attend all scheduled lectures and labs and ask questions.*

To do well in this course it is crucial that you:

- **Attend all classes and labs**.
- Complete assigned reading and assignments before class.
- Ask questions in class.
- Ask questions during office hours.
- Let the professor know **right away** if you are having trouble.
- Avoid falling behind.
- Study with your classmates.
- Bring your text, other assigned readings, and USB drive to every class.
- Do practice problems.

Course Materials

- Healey, Joseph. *Statistics: A Tool for Social Research*. **9th Edition**
  Available via Amazon or the Brooklyn College online bookstore:
  http://brooklyn.textbookx.com/institutional/index.php?action=browse#books/1522692/
- Additional readings on Blackboard
- USB drive
- Hand calculator (provided by the Sociology Department)

Assignments and Grading

Your grade is based on your attendance and participation in class, 18 labs, 5 homework assignments, a final lab report summarizing the findings from your labs (3-5 pages), and 3 exams (including the cumulative final.)

Attendance and participation 10%
> Full attendance and attentiveness and participation during the class and lab are **critical** to your success in this class. Further, making sure to bring questions to office hours to avoid falling behind is critical and the responsibility of the student.

Labs 10%
> There will be 18 labs throughout the semester. The majority of the work on these labs will be completed in class during lab time, although some labs will require students to finish them outside of formal lab time. The majority of these labs will focus on our study of Stop and Frisk policies in NYC and it is recommended that they be completed together with classmates working on the same NYC Borough. Labs are worth up to 1 point each and full credit will be granted if the lab is fully completed with minimal mistakes.

Homework 35%
> There will be five homework assignments to complete throughout the semester. Together they will make up 35% of your final grade.

Final lab report and group research presentation on stop and frisk data 10%
> Within small groups working together on the same Borough, students will be required to submit a final lab report summarizing their lab findings over the semester. In addition, groups will be responsible for presenting their findings to the rest of the class in the form of a presentation. More details on this assignment are posted in the assignment sheet on Blackboard.

Exams 35%
> Three in class exams will be given throughout the semester including a cumulative final exam. Together they will make up 35% of your final grade. Students will be allowed to bring the calculator provided by the department one 8.5 by 11in sheet of paper into exams. The paper may have anything written on it but no formulas or other guidance will be provided on exams themselves.

Course and College Policies

Late assignments
No late work is accepted without a university-approved, documented excuse (i.e. a doctor's note.) Make-up exams must be taken within a week of the original exam date. **If you miss a class, you miss the opportunity to complete the lab** without a documented excuse. If you know that you may need to miss a class in advance, please let me know as soon as possible.

Blackboard and Email Communication

Check your email address listed with Blackboard regularly. I will send out announcements and reminders periodically via Blackboard. **It is your responsibility to keep up to date and make sure that BC and Blackboard have your correct email listed.** All students are required to update their **email addresses** listed through Blackboard to their current and active email addresses. Students who have not updated their email address will miss them. For ALL technical issues, contact the Brooklyn College ITS Help Desk 718.951.4357 helpdesk@brooklyn.cuny.edu **I cannot provide technical assistance—students are responsible for handling technology issues on their own!**

Communication with the Instructor
When contacting your instructor by email make sure to include your full name as well as the course title/number. You can expect to receive a response via email within 48 hours during the week (i.e. excluding the weekend). If you do not receive a response after 48 hours email again or use Blackboard to send me a message to make sure your original email did not go to spam.

Class expectations
Be on time for class. Being late means you miss important information and your entrance into the classroom distracts your peers. Late arrivals will be counted as absent. Turn off all electronic devices before class. Do not use email or internet on lab computers during class. Failure to follow these expectations will impact your grade.

University Policy on Academic Integrity
The faculty and administration of Brooklyn College support an environment free from cheating and plagiarism. Each student is responsible for being aware of what constitutes cheating and plagiarism and for avoiding both. The complete text of the CUNY Academic Integrity Policy and the Brooklyn College procedure for implementing that policy can be found at this site: http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/bc/policies. If a faculty member suspects a violation of academic integrity and, upon investigation, confirms that violation, or if the student admits the violation, the faculty member MUST report the violation.

Services for students with disabilities
In order to receive disability-related academic accommodations students must first be registered with the Center for Student Disability Services. Students who have a documented disability or suspect they may have a disability are invited to set up an appointment with the Director of the Center for Student Disability Services, Ms. Valerie Stewart-Lovell at 718-951-5538. If you have already registered with the Center for Student Disability Services please provide your professor with the course accommodation form and discuss your specific accommodation with him/her.

Services for undocumented students
As an educator, I fully support the rights of undocumented students to an education and to live free from the fear of deportation. If you have any concerns in that regard, feel free to discuss them with me, I will respect your wishes concerning confidentiality and can direct you to free confidential assistance like CUNY Citizenship Now: http://www1.cuny.edu/sites/citizenship-now/

Religious holidays

New York State Education Law (Title I, Article 5, Section 224-a) requires that we "make available to each student who is absent from school, because of his [or her] religious beliefs, an equivalent opportunity to make up any examination, study or work requirements which he [or she] may have missed because of such absence on any particular day or days." Please inform me of any absences for any observed religious holidays that overlap with class time.

Brooklyn College Academic Regulations
Be sure to read the Brooklyn College Bulletin, especially pp. 35-59 and 74-83, for a complete listing of academic regulations at the College.

Course Schedule

Date	Topic	Assignments Due	Lab
Tuesday 8/29	Introduction to the course	*[Read Healy, Prologue: Basic Math Review if more review is needed]*	Lab #1: Basic math review
Thursday 8/31	The Research Process	Read Healey, Chapter 1, p.1-9 Read "Is Stop-and-Frisk Worth It?" (on Blackboard)	Lab #2: Intro to stop and frisk data, research questions
Tuesday 9/5	Levels of Measurement	Read Healy, Chapter 1, p.9-20	Lab #3: research questions, hypotheses, levels of measurement
Thursday 9/7	Descriptive statistics and visualization	Read Healey, Chapter 2 Read Chapter 1 of *Damned Lies and Statistics* by Best (on Blackboard)	Lab #4: Descriptive statistics in Excel
Tuesday 9/12	Measures of central tendency	Read Healey, Chapter 3 **HOMEWORK #1 DUE**	Lab #4: Descriptive statistics in Excel
Thursday 9/14	Measures of dispersion	Read Healey, Chapter 4	Lab #4: Descriptive statistics in Excel
Tuesday 9/19	Normal curve	Read Healey, Chapter 5, pp. 118-121	Lab #5: Measures of central tendency and dispersion
Thursday 9/21		NO CLASS – Rosh Hashanah	
Tuesday	Z scores	Read Healey, Chapter 5. Pp. 121-129	Lab #6: The

9/26		**HOMEWORK #2 DUE**	normal curve and computing Z scores
Thursday 9/28	Exam review	Come prepared with questions	
Tuesday 10/3	**EXAM #1**	Chapters 1-5 and Chapter 5 through p. 129	
Thursday 10/5	Inferential statistics: Probability	Read Healey, Chapter 5 pp. 130-133 **Bring a deck of cards to class**	Lab #7: Blackjack and probability
Tuesday 10/10	Inferential statistics: Sampling	Read Healey, Chapter 6 pp. 141-146	Lab #8: Choosing a sampling strategy
Thursday 10/12	Inferential statistics: Sampling Distribution	Read Healey, Chapter 6 pp. 147-156	Lab #9: Reeses Pieces & Sampling Distribution
Tuesday 10/17	Estimation procedures	Read Healey, Chapter 7	Lab #10: Confidence intervals
Thursday 10/19	Hypothesis testing: 1-sample case (means)	Read Healey, Chapter 8, pp. 181-198	Lab #11: One-sample hypothesis test for means
Tuesday 10/24	Hypothesis testing: 1-sample case (proportions)	Read Healey, Chapter 8, pp. 203-207 **HOMEWORK #3 DUE**	Lab #12: One-sample hypothesis test for proportions
Thursday 10/26	Hypothesis testing: 2-sample case (means)	Read Healey, Chapter 9, pp. 212-218	Lab #13: Two-sample hypothesis test for means
Tuesday 10/31	Hypothesis testing: 2-sample case (proportions)	Read Healey, Chapter 9, pp. 221-231	Lab #14: Two-sample hypothesis test for proportions
Thursday 11/2	Review Sampling	Review Healey, Chapter 6 pp. 141-146 Read "Is Welfare Reform Working?" by Lindhurst et al (on Blackboard) **HOMEWORK #4 DUE**	Start working on adapting Lab 4 and compiling findings from Labs 5 and 10-14 for final Lab Report
Tuesday	Exam review	Come prepared with questions	

11/7			
Thursday 11/9	**EXAM #2**	Covers: Chapter 5 p. 130-134 and Chapters 6-9	
Tuesday 11/14	Bivariate analysis for nominal variables	Read Healey Chapter 11, pp. 272-275 and Chapter 12	Lab #15: Bivariate analysis for nominal variables
Thursday 11/16	Bivariate analysis for ordinal variables	Read Healey, Chapter 13	Lab #16: Bivariate analysis for ordinal variables
Tuesday 11/21		NO CLASS – Follows Friday Schedule	
Thursday 11/23		NO CLASS - Thanksgiving	
Tuesday 11/28	Bivariate analysis for interval variables: Scatterplots and correlation	Read Healey, Chapter 14	Lab #17: Bivariate analysis for interval variables (scatterplots & correlation)
Thursday 11/30	Bivariate analysis for interval variables: Regression	Review Healey, Chapter 14, pp. 373-378	Lab #18: Bivariate analysis for interval variables (regression)
Tuesday 12/5	Bivariate analysis review	Read "How Well You Sleep May Hinge on Race" (on Blackboard) **HOMEWORK #5 DUE**	Work on final lab report and presentation
Thursday 12/7	Stop and frisk research and conclusions	**GROUP PRESENTATIONS** **FINAL LAB REPORTS DUE**	
Tuesday 12/12	Review for final	Come prepared with questions	
Thursday 12/14 1:00-3:00pm	**FINAL EXAM**	Cumulative (entire semester), with focus on chapters 12-14	