INSTRUCTOR: Dr. John Rasp

OFFICE: 526A Lynn Business Center

PHONE: 822-7444

Please don't hesitate to call. And please don't hesitate to leave a message, if your call is answered by a machine. If I'm meeting with someone in the office when the phone rings, for reasons of courtesy I generally will *not* interrupt that conversation to answer the phone.

EMAIL: jrasp@stetson.edu

I check email often during the week (*not* weekends). This is a good way to contact me.

WEBPAGE: http://www2.stetson.edu/~jrasp/

This website contains copies of the class schedule and syllabus, as well as copies of all assignments, various datasets for class use, and other resources. If you mislay your copy of the homework (or even, [heaven forbid!] miss a class and not get a copy of an assignment), you can get the missing material here. Type the complete URL (as given above) into your browser – links to my page from the Stetson site may not be active. This is a website, *not* Blackboard.

TEACHING SCHEDULE: I am in class at the following times.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STAT 301 – 04</td>
<td>MWF 9:00 - 9:50</td>
<td>LBC 319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAT 301 – 05</td>
<td>MWF 11:00 -11:50</td>
<td>LBC 319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAT 440 – 01</td>
<td>MWF 1:30 - 2:20</td>
<td>LBC 317</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OFFICE HOURS: Mondays/Wednesdays/Fridays 10:00 - 11:00  
Mondays/Wednesdays 2:30 - 4:00

“Office hours” means that I am generally available to students during these time slots. (There may be minor exceptions, due to faculty meetings or unforeseen emergencies. I expect to give advance notice of these, if needed.) No appointment is needed during these times. As an experiment this semester, I plan to hold official office hours in the lobby of the Lynn Business Center. Please feel free to meet with me then and there.

I am also more than willing to make appointments to meet with students outside of these regular office hours.

I am generally on campus throughout the day weekdays (except Tuesdays). I am often in my office (526A in LBC) and am available to students anytime the office door is open. I do request, as a courtesy to your fellow students, that you avoid drop-in visits immediately prior to my classes (listed above), as this time is needed for final review and preparation for class.

Tuesday is my “research day.” I regret that I cannot generally be on campus or be available for appointments on Tuesdays.
INTEGRITY IN THE ACADEMY

“Business ethics” should not be an oxymoron. The recent financial scandals are but the latest examples of a false, and ultimately self-destructive, business ethic that values immediate monetary return above all else. The academy is in part to blame for the situation – for the academy has largely abandoned its role as a moral force in society.

Stetson University prides itself on being a values-driven institution. One way in which the university expresses this is through its Honor System. A central feature of the system is an Honor Pledge, a commitment to uphold high standards of integrity in academic work. The Pledge states:

As a member of Stetson University, I agree to uphold the highest standards of integrity in my academic work. I promise that I will neither give nor receive unauthorized aid of any kind on my tests, papers, and assignments. When using the ideas, thoughts, or words of another in my work, I will always provide clear acknowledgement of the individuals and sources on which I am relying. I will avoid using fraudulent, falsified, or fabricated evidence and/or material. I will refrain from resubmitting without authorization work for one class that was obtained from work previously submitted for academic credit in another class. I will not destroy, steal, or make inaccessible any academic resource material.

By my actions any my example, I will strive to promote the ideals of honesty, responsibility, trust, fairness, and respect that are at the heart of Stetson’s Honor System.

Expectation is that students will sign this Pledge as a demonstration of commitment to its values. A student reaffirms the Pledge regularly, by writing the word “Pledged,” followed by her/his signature, when submitting tests and assignments. Faculty likewise are expected to uphold and encourage high standards for academic integrity in their classes, and to facilitate a campus-wide ethic of academic honesty. A student Honor System Council is charged with responsibility for educating the campus community about the Honor System, and for ruling on cases of alleged academic dishonesty. Full details of the System are available online, at http://www.stetson.edu/other/honor-system/.

Both students and faculty have greater freedom and greater responsibility under an Honor System. Barring clear demonstrations to the contrary, I am willing to trust you not to cheat on exams. (I will not proctor them, but will be available for questions.) I am willing to believe that any absences are justified. (I don’t need to see “doctor’s notes” and similar paperwork.) I am willing to trust you to behave in an honorable manner, and to encourage others to act honorably. I do ask that you take reasonable steps not to place undue temptations before others. (Shield your papers during exams, for example.)

Studying from old exams is permitted (and encouraged). However, sharing information about current exams is not allowed, as this would give other students an unfair advantage. Of course, such egregious violations of academic integrity as plagiarizing a paper or looking at another student’s paper on an exam are clearly forbidden.

You are encouraged to work together on assignments in this class. However, all writeups are expected to be independent productions, in the student’s own words. Remember that collaboration is to facilitate your learning, not to excuse you from responsibility for it. Rule of thumb: if I can tell at a glance whom you worked with, then you have gone beyond the bounds of acceptable collaboration. Submitting a writeup that is identical (or nearly identical) to another student’s is considered an Honor System violation and will be referred to the Honor System Council.

The Stetson Honor System requests, but does not require, that you report any known or suspected violations of academic integrity. This may be done to me, or to any member of the Honor System Council. (Their names are given on the website, mentioned above.) I will refer any Honor violations to the Honor System Council. I will normally follow any recommendations they make, regarding academic penalties.
WHY TAKE THIS COURSE??

One question you should ask of this course, or any course you take in the university, is: “What can I expect to get out of this class?” The answer should be more than “one unit (four credits), and fulfilling a graduation requirement.” The college experience needs to be more than simply jumping through hoops to get a credential.

So what can you expect to get out of a course in “Business Statistics”? The Stetson University Bulletin states it rather prosaically:

A survey of statistical topics useful in support of managerial decision-making and focuses on estimation of parameters from one- and two normally distributed populations, statistical inference of one- and two-sample tests for means and proportions, the chi-square test, advanced regression and correlation analysis, and introduction to cluster and stratified sampling techniques. Computer applications are included. The course fosters application of knowledge to the contemporary business environment. Prerequisite: STAT 201 (or MATH 125Q) and satisfaction of the Information Technology Proficiency Requirement.

That's boring prose. It's also bad grammar. And, quite frankly, it's not really intended to give you a good idea about the course. (Its purpose is more to let professional educators know what's in the class. That way we can tell whether course content is sufficient for satisfying prerequisites, granting transfer credit, and the like.)

So what should you expect to get out of this course? My primary goal is that you have an appreciation for the usefulness of statistical tools. You should come out of this class saying good things, like “that's interesting stuff” and “I see how this gets used in real life.” You should be more quantitatively literate and computer literate. You should be better able to formulate decision problems in quantitative terms, know how to acquire the necessary data to answer the question, and know how to analyze those data. An important secondary goal is that you be better able to communicate the results of your analyses. The best technical skills in the world are of little use if you are unsuccessful in communicating your findings in a way others can understand.

We will focus on three important quantitative methods in this course, namely: (1) descriptive statistics, which includes knowledge of how to obtain good data and how effectively to summarize those data into meaningful information; (2) inferential statistics, including principles for designing effective studies, analyzing the resulting data, and generalizing those findings more broadly; and (3) statistical modeling, which aims at understanding mathematical realities underlying data and using those structures to make good predictions. These three tools are of immense value in the business “real world.” Mastery of these skills should make you highly valued in the marketplace.

What should you NOT expect out of this course? First, let's clear up one common misconception. “Stats” is NOT a mathematics course. This is not a class in deriving formulas and manipulating algebraic symbols. The goal is not to memorize an algorithm or to “plug numbers into a formula” to get an answer. Instead, our focus is on the reasoning behind, and interpretation of, quantitative tools. The focus is on concepts. The calculations we will do are NOT an end in themselves. Rather, they are part of an overall reasoning process that focuses on valid analysis and valid conclusions.

As for other expectations: You should NOT expect to do a lot of busy-work. You SHOULD expect to invest time into studies, and into homework that enables you to understand statistical procedures and applications. You should NOT say “I'll never use this stuff again.” You SHOULD be focused on real-world use of the material. Above all, you should NOT approach the course with a sense of worry or fear. The course does not involve advanced mathematics; nor is there an impossibly huge reading list. You SHOULD approach the course with the expectation that you will learn things that are useful and interesting - and that you will have fun while doing so.
WHAT PREPARATION SHOULD I BRING TO THIS COURSE?

PREREQUISITES: Formal prerequisites for this course are in flux, as the faculty make various minor modifications to the curriculum. So depending on when you entered Stetson, your “official” prerequisites for might include one or both Information Technology requirements (which could be met by a proficiency exam), one of a few different Mathematics courses, or even perhaps a prior introductory Statistics class.

But your previous coursework (if any) isn't important. What is important is your skill set – what you actually know, either from coursework or your own study. In particular, for this course, I assume an ability to do basic mathematics, at the level of a high school Algebra II course. I also assume basic abilities in the use of a spreadsheet program (Microsoft Excel or equivalent) – how cell formulas work, use of intrinsic functions, and relative and absolute addressing.

TEXTS: There is one textbook for this course.

STATISTICS FOR BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS, by Newbold, Carlson, and Thorne
This book is widely regarded as one of the better introductory statistics textbooks on the market today. It is written in part by Dr. Betty Thorne, a Stetson professor. Copies are available in the bookstore. I do not follow the textbook exactly. (I believe that textbooks should supplement the lectures, not provide a substitute for them.) Relevant portions of the text are indicated in the course schedule which accompanies this syllabus. Use of the textbook as a learning tool is encouraged. The textbook also has some supplemental software associated with it. Use of this software is optional. However, students needing and desiring an additional source of structured learning modules may find this software to be a valuable resource.

SUPPLEMENTAL TEXTS: Extensive readings will also be taken from the following book. It may be purchased from the university bookstore (or another source).

HOW TO CONDUCT YOUR OWN SURVEY, by Salant and Dillman

EQUIPMENT: This course involves extensive computations involving data. Accordingly, you will need to have appropriate computational tools for the class. Since we meet in a computer lab, you could opt to do these computations in a spreadsheet program. (We will use Microsoft Excel extensively in class.) Some students find that at least some of the number-crunching for the course is more conveniently done with a calculator. If you go that route (and many of you will), then use of a basic scientific calculator is in order. It need not be a fancy one, but should contain functions beyond the basic add-subtract-multiply-divide, including some basic statistical functionality.

I also recommend that you obtain a looseleaf notebook (NOT a spiral-bound) for the course. This course involves a lot of handouts and assignments. A looseleaf notebook will help you effectively organize this material for study and reference.

If you don’t already own a stapler, get one. You will want to staple multipage homework assignments for the course. Owning a stapler is more efficient that scurrying around trying to find one. You will get more longterm value out of a stapler than you will from many of the textbooks you buy for other courses.
HOW WILL WE ACHIEVE COURSE OBJECTIVES?

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS: You are enrolled in the best undergraduate school of business in Florida. This means that you should come out of this course (and this university) having learned more, and being better prepared for the workplace, than your peers at other institutions. We both have a role to play in this.

You may expect me to be well-prepared for class. You may expect me to structure the class to facilitate your mastery of the material. You may expect me to be sensitive to your time needs. (I will not assign “busy work.” I will provide sufficient course structure so that you may plan appropriately.) You may expect me to be available outside of class time. You may expect me to provide you with adequate and timely feedback. Most of all, you may expect me to do what I can to make this course a successful learning experience for you.

Likewise, I may expect you to make reasonable effort at mastering the material. I may expect you to come to class prepared. I may expect you to invest the necessary time and effort into homework and studies. (Learning does not happen, after all, by my simply unscrewing the top of your head and pouring the knowledge in.)

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION: Classroom time will often be used for lecture on course material. However, I do incorporate many “active learning” techniques – you frequently will be asked in class to take time to work a short problem, or interpret a statistical finding, etc., as a step toward enhancing your understanding of the material. Some class periods will be “workshops” or “discussion groups” in which you will work with a small group of fellow-students on a learning activity.

However, as with most (all?) university classes, the greatest amount of learning will happen when you interact with the course material outside the classroom. Daily review exercises, regular quizzes and exams, and homework/projects provide the structured format for this out-of-class learning.

TIME REQUIREMENTS: The standard expectation for a university-level class is that the student devote approximately two hours outside of class each week for every credit hour. This is a four-credit class; a semester lasts 15 weeks. This gives 120 out-of-class hours over the course of the semester. I have planned semester activities accordingly. Understand, however, that you are not on a time clock - you may need more or less time on any given activity. Remember that the goal is getting an education, not putting in hours.

DAILY REVIEW: A few straightforward review questions and computational exercises will be assigned following each lecture. These problems are intended to provide you with timely review and reinforcement of material discussed each class period. They are to be completed prior to the following lecture. Grades from collected daily homework will form a portion of the homework/quiz grade. Late papers will be penalized.

QUIZZES: Several short quizzes will be given, in class, throughout the term. The purpose of these quizzes is to provide an intermediate assessment of your mastery of course concepts. Quiz dates are given in the course schedule. The lowest two quiz grades will be dropped in computing the course grade. No makeup quiz will be given for any reason. All quizzes are cumulative.

HOMEWORK: The daily review exercises (mentioned above) focus on basic concepts and computations. They are necessary, but not sufficient. After all, we want to be able to use this material in the real world, not just crunch through textbook definitions and problems. Several longer homework assignments will be made during the term. These will involve readings or statistical analyses and interpretation beyond the level of routine textbook problems. Their purpose is to provide “real world” application of the material covered in the course. You are asked to do nine of the eleven homework assignments. (You can do all eleven, of course; I’ll just count the nine best grades. NO “bonus points” for doing extras.)
HOMEWORK SUBMISSION: Daily review assignments may be handwritten; their function is simply to provide you with timely review of course material. However, a higher standard is expected on the major homework assignments. Clear, timely communication of results is an important objective. *These homework assignments will not be accepted late for ANY reason.* They should be typed. Professional standards of communication are expected.

COLLABORATIVE WORK: We're here to learn. To that end, students are allowed, and encouraged, to work together on homework in this course. You will often learn more from working with others. However, a separate writeup is expected from each student, *in his/her own words.* (Do NOT submit work identical, or nearly identical, to that of another student. Collaboration is to facilitate your learning, not to excuse you from responsibility for it.)

Submitting a writeup that is identical (or nearly identical) to another student’s is considered an Honor System violation and will be referred to the Honor System Council.

PROJECTS: The course includes two group projects. The purposes of these projects are (1) to give you training and practical experience applying quantitative tools to solving open-ended, real-world practical problems, and (2) to give you training and practical experience in important business skills such as teamwork and effective communication. Groups will make brief oral presentations on their projects, to me in my office, as well as submitting a written report on their work. Dates are given in the course schedule. *Late projects are not accepted.*

EXAMS: Exams are designed to assess student knowledge of course material. All exams are cumulative. Makeup exams are not generally given. Students missing an exam for any reason will be excused from that exam, with the final exam counting proportionately more toward the final grade.

This course aims to provide you with (1) conceptual knowledge of the underlying principles of statistical reasoning, and (2) ability to make appropriate computations and inferences based upon statistical data. These “concept” and “computation” components of the course are complementary skills. They will be tested separately, in different ways. The “concept” exams are closed-book, closed notes. The “computation” exams are open-book, open notes.

FINAL EXAMINATION: You are required to sit for the final examination (both the “concept” and the “calculation” portions), in accordance with the university’s final examination schedule. You may not reschedule or miss the final exam without prior approval from the Dean’s office. If you are scheduled to take more than two final exams in one day, you may request of the Dean’s office that one examination be rescheduled. You must take, and pass, the final exam to receive a passing grade in the course. The “concepts” (closed-book) portion of the final exam is scheduled for class time on the last day of the semester, Wednesday, April 30. The “computations” (open-book) portion of the final exam is scheduled as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>9:00 – 10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Monday, May 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>5:00 – 7:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Saturday, May 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STUDYING FOR EXAMS: You should understand that the instructor does not believe in “studying for exams.” There are two reason for this. The first is about the goal. College should not be about doing well on exams. It should be about learning. (If you learn, you should do well on exams. But the converse is not necessarily the case.) The second reason is about the process. If you “cram” the night before a test, the material goes into short-term memory and is quickly forgotten. This is counter-productive (and downright stupid) - we're here to learn, not to forget. However, if you've kept up with the material throughout the term (and that's what the daily reviews are supposed to facilitate), you should not need a major “cram” the night before an exam. A brief review should be more than sufficient.
PROFESSIONALISM:  Professional behavior is expected of all students in the class. This includes regular, punctual classroom attendance; attentive and constructive participation in class discussion; conscientious out-of-class study habits; and neat and timely submission of class assignments. The work habits you have, or develop, in college are those you will take into the business world. Failure to abide by these norms may result in a failing grade in the class.

ATTENDANCE:  You are expected to attend class during each scheduled class meeting. If you cannot, for any reason, you are expected to inform the instructor in a timely manner. One unexcused absence (that is, one absence which you did not contact me about) puts you in jeopardy of failing the course. A second unexcused absence results in a failing grade in the course. Additionally, habitual tardiness or absence (even if nominally “excused”) may result in a failing grade.

PLEASE NOTE THIS BECAUSE IT IS DIFFERENT THAN WHAT YOU EXPERIENCE IN MOST OF YOUR CLASSES. That’s right … I said that any unexcused absence, even one, makes you liable for a failing grade – and that a second unexcused absence will result in a failing grade. So: what constitutes an “excused” absence rather than an “unexcused” absence?

(1) If you let me know about it in advance, it is excused, no matter what the reason. I don’t need to see doctor’s excuses, or your grandmother’s death certificate, or a note from your mom. Simply the fact that you let me know in advance that you weren’t coming to class is sufficient. I suggest you contact me by email (jrasp@stetson.edu); a message left on my office phone is also sufficient (386-822-7444).

(2) If you don’t let me know about it in advance (and I realize it is not always feasible to do so), then I’m going to make a judgment call based upon the nature of the situation, and the time in which you told me. Generally, if you let me know later in the day, and if the situation is one in which it was not reasonable to contact me ahead of time, then it will be considered “excused.” (Example: You overslept. I get an email or phone call from you two hours after class. I’ll excuse that. However, if you wait two days to let me know, I probably won’t excuse that … you could easily have let me know earlier.)

Moreover, being habitually late or habitually absent is grounds for a failing grade as well.

This policy is not intended to be harsh. Rather, it is simply intended to mirror “real-world” employment practices. Your boss will expect you at work, on time. You don’t get “extra credit” for meeting this basic professional requirement; it is expected of all employees. And while you may occasionally need to miss work, you can’t just come when you feel like it and you will be expected to notify the boss in a timely manner if you miss work. If you decide simply to take a couple of days off, and then stroll in the next day to grace the company with your presence … well, you’re not likely to be employed there for long.

ACCOMMODATION FOR SPECIAL NEEDS:  If you anticipate barriers related to the format or requirements of this course, please meet with me so that we can discuss ways to facilitate your full participation in the course. If you believe that disability-related accommodations are necessary, please register with the Academic Resources Center (822-7172; www.stetson.edu/arc) and notify me of your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. We can then plan how best to coordinate your accommodations.

CAVEAT: I reserve the right to make minor modifications in the course schedule and mechanics, as the situation warrants. I will announce any such changes in class. (I don’t anticipate any problems, but in today’s litigation-filled world you often have to say explicitly what a reasonable person would normally simply assume.)
**GENERAL PHILOSOPHY:** I am very much of the opinion that grades are overemphasized in contemporary academic practice. I like the following quote (which I stumbled across in a professional journal).

> It is not difficult to understand why students might come to the conclusion that instructors overly stress grade orientation and give only short shrift to learning orientation. Almost every syllabus contains descriptions of how grades are calculated; few address the need to find excitement in course material. Colleges regularly establish remedial classes for students receiving poor grades; they rarely, if ever, offer remedial instruction for students unable to find excitement in English literature or physics. Grades are a required part of every class, but instructors are not obliged to stimulate interest in course content. In fact, it is possible for someone to teach for an entire career and not excite interest in his or her discipline; any instructor who failed to assign grades would be dismissed after only a short tenure.

Howard R. Pollio and Hall P. Beck, “When the Tail Wags the Dog”
*Journal of Higher Education*, vol. 71, no. 1 (Jan/Feb 2000), p. 93

I will grade you fairly and objectively. I will not inflate grades. I will make every effort to provide prompt feedback. And I will maintain a focus that the grade is a *means* (to identify strengths in learning that can be acknowledged, and deficiencies in learning that can be remedied), rather than an *end*.

**GRADES:** Course grades represent the instructor's assessment of the student's mastery of the material. Grades are assigned according to the following interpretive framework:

A - An “A” indicates that the student has demonstrated outstanding mastery of the subject material. S/he shows a deep understanding of the material's concepts, implications, and applications.

B - A “B” indicates that the student has demonstrated a good solid competence in the mechanics of the subject matter, but is weak in understanding of the underlying motivations of the material.

C - A “C” indicates that the student has demonstrated basic ability in course concepts as reflected by foundational capability in calculation, but has marginal capabilities with material beyond these fundamentals.

Grades of “D” and “F” represent unacceptably low levels of course mastery, and will be assigned as required.

**GRADING:** Assessment of student mastery of course material will be on the basis of the following:

- Regular exams: 35%
- Comprehensive final exam: 20%
- Projects: 15%
- Homework/quiz grade: 30%

A scale of 90/80/70 will be used. All course assignments and exams will be written and graded with the interpretive framework and scale given above being kept in mind.