Statistics for Social Research I

Derrick Snow

Omega Graduate School

March 16, 2024

Professor

Dr. Taladay

Professor Nti

Assignment #4 – Course Learning Journal

The journal is a written reflection of your learning journey while working in each course. The Learning Journal integrates the essential elements of the course within your professional field of interest. The objective of the course journal is to produce a degree of acculturation, integrating new ideas into your existing knowledge of each course. This is also an opportunity to communicate with your professor insights gained as a result of the course. The course learning journal should be 3-5 pages in length and should include the following sections:

1. Introduction –Summarize the intent of the course, how it fits into the graduate program as a whole, and the relevance of its position in the curricular sequence.

2. Personal Growth - Describe your personal growth–how the course stretched or challenged you– and your progress in mastery of course content and skills during the week and through subsequent readings – what new insights or skills you gained.

3. Reflective Entry - Add a reflective entry that describes the contextualization (or adaptation and relevant application) of new learning in your professional field. What questions or concerns have surfaced about your professional field as a result of your study?

4. Conclusion – Evaluate the effectiveness of the course in meeting your professional, religious, and educational goals.

**Introduction**

Statistics for Social Research I is the first of a series of three statistics courses in the OGS Ph.D. program of Social Research (Integration of Religion and Society). Statistics is a fundamental skill and tool for quantitative social research. Statistics for Social Research I is an introductory level course to start building the understanding and skills necessary for further statistics courses. This course introduces students to the vocabulary of statistics, the use of descriptive statistics, and an introduction to hypothesis testing. It is a very important course in the curriculum where it is essential knowledge for conducting social research.

**Personal Growth**

I very much enjoy statistics and was happy to be finally in the course, the statistics and research courses are essential to the Ph.D. program and my field of sociology. I enjoyed the course content and wanted to go further in the study of statistics, it will come in time, I tell myself. This semester I have been thinking more about a dissertation topic and took the opportunity to review statistics being used in health geography research, a prospective dissertation topic, that uses geostatistics a field that uses statistics in relation to place. I am looking forward to learning more about geostatistics as I look further into this topic. Advanced statistics are built upon the base statistics, which this course covered a great deal of and has helped me understand more of the principles of statistics. The course material and course resources were very helpful. I have ordered some of the recommended books, including the Handbook of Parametric and Nonparametric Statistical Procedures by Daivid J. Sheskin, and look forward to using the book as a reference tool.

**Reflective Entry**

I was very pleased to get to this course in the line of courses, having a focus on sociology, where sociology is about social research and social research is about using statistics to study social phenomena. I have taken statistics courses in the past and have a career in which I am a practitioner of statistics in healthcare analytics. Statistics are used everywhere in business, government, healthcare, and even sports, so it is very useful to learn statistics, it provides a person an advantage in their career to be able to understand and do statistics. To many people statistics is a thing of fright, probably due to its mathematical principles, however with today's computing power we can let computer programs do the statistical calculations, we just need to understand the principles behind the statistical methods and understand how to interpret statistical output as well as how to work within the statistical programs. I found the resources of the course very helpful and good tools to use not only in my studies but also in my career.

I thought the course was well structured and the content was good. I do feel like the course was structured for students new to learning statistics. I understand I am a bit of an oddball student since I do have a background in academic statistics and as a practitioner of statistics. It seems like at OGS most students are not from a social science background and the courses are structured more for the non-social science students. I do think that modified courses could be a real benefit to OGS and social science students since we would have a background in statistics and research.

**Conclusion**

This course was taught by Dr. Taladay and Professor Nti, where Professor Nti took the lead in teaching the course, both did a wonderful job teaching statistics and how it ties into social research. Professor Nti is a gifted instructor of statistics, his teaching methodology is very good and allows the students to grasp the concepts of statistics. My time with the course may have been easier than probably other students since I have a background in statistics, but I did learn and found that the explanations of some concepts were applied and were very useful in my further understanding of some statistical concepts.