Purpose of course

Build practical business analysis skills, focusing on spreadsheet analysis and applied statistics. Specifically, by the end of the semester, you should be able to analyze business problems:

1. With spreadsheet analysis
2. With statistical methods, for example using simple summary statistics, hypothesis testing, and regression

The intent of this course is to improve your understanding & use of spreadsheets to solve business problems. However, it is not intended to make you an expert in Excel.

This course is a prerequisite to several upper level COBA courses. This course is intended to prepare you for success in these later courses.

What to buy:

Purchase the Course Pack, 20th Edition, which is only available at the University Bookstore in Reeve Union. This course pack contains all assignments, review notes, and many of the classroom handouts. Assignments will require computer files that will be available electronically after the semester starts.

NOTE: Course packs from previous semesters are not reusable this semester.

Optionally, you may purchase an additional Excel book to gain more in-depth knowledge. The course pack you purchase contains step-by-step instructions in using these packages; so buying an additional book may not be necessary. Many good beginning Excel books are available. We suggest you browse a bookstore and purchase one if desired.
Excel is available in all campus computer labs. If you want to work on your own personal computer, you will need the appropriate software. If you don’t currently have the software, or if you have a version other than Office 2007 or Office 2010, you can order it through the Wisconsin Integrated Software Catalog (WISC). Go to:


The package is available for around $70, plus sales tax.

If the Excel you use at home is not Excel 2007 or 2010, then the instructions will not be 100% correct.

Note that Office 2008 for Apples/Macs will not work for some homeworks, as Microsoft removed some functionality needed for this course. Office 2011 for Apples/Macs may work, but you will still need to take exams on the Windows Version.

**General information on grading and on passing the course:**

The exams include two spreadsheet-oriented exams and two statistics-oriented exams. Exams are graded based on 100 points and are equally weighted. Exam-2 will cover all material pertaining to the first half of the semester, which is the spreadsheet-oriented material. Exam-4 will cover all material pertaining to the second half of the semester, which is the statistics-oriented material.

To pass the course (i.e. receive a grade other than an ‘F’), you must score an average of 60% or better across the two spreadsheet-oriented exams, and you must score an average of 60% or better across the two statistics-oriented exams. If your average exam score is 60% or better across the spreadsheet exams or across the statistics exams, but not both, then you will be assigned a grade of incomplete. The incomplete grade will convert to a grade of “F” unless you pass a late-completion exam before the end of the following semester. Your professor will have details about the late-completion exam, when it is offered, and how your course grade would be assigned if you pass the late-completion exam.

Among people who pass the exams as described above, the semester grade will be based on the following, which includes the exams plus homework:

20% Exam-1
20% Exam-2
20% Exam-3
20% Exam-4
20% Homework assignments

**Makeup policy**

We do not provide make-up exams for unexcused absences. You must take all exams to pass.

**Conduct**

Your conduct in class and on campus should be beyond reproach. Your grade is at risk if you commit academic misconduct or behave in a manner that reflects negatively on the university and college. **We strictly follow the Student Discipline Code in cases of academic misconduct, and any cases of misconduct will result in an ‘F’ removal from the course.** Specific examples will be discussed on the first day of the course.
Attendance

As per university and college policies, your attendance and participation is expected. Please notify us in a timely manner (i.e., as soon as possible) if you will miss a class. Nametags will be distributed and used to mark attendance. Always bring your nametag. The attendance policy is:

- For in-class meetings, attendance is required. On non-exam days, unexcused absences will result in a **2.5% reduction** in your final percentage grade, applied before any curving.
  - Arrive on time: For each portion of five-minute period you are tardy, 1% will be removed, up to 2.5% reduction/day, applied to your final percentage grade before curving.
- For in-lab meetings you will work on group assignments. If you are going to be absent it is your responsibility to email your group your homework. You will receive a zero for an assignment submitted the day you are absent if:
  - you have not submitted your individual work to your group, or
  - you attend lab but do not assist your group.

To convert scores into letter grades

Among people who pass the exams, we will use the following *(the “<” indicates no rounding)*:

- **A** scores of 93% and above
- **A-** scores of 90.5% through < 93%
- **B+** scores of 88% through < 90.5%
- **B** scores of 83% through < 88%
- **B-** scores of 80.5% through < 83%
- **C+** scores of 78% through < 80.5%
- **C** scores of 73% through < 78%
- **C-** scores of 70.5% through < 73%
- **D+** scores of 68% through < 70.5%
- **D** scores of 62% through < 68%
- **D-** scores of 60% through < 62%
- **F** scores of < 60%

Note there is no rounding of grades and no extra credit available.

Curving

If curving is used, it will be based upon the course average grade after the final exam across all sections. **To clarify**: If a curve is applied, it is applied to all sections as though they are one large class. The curve will be applied to people who passed the course, and therefore you cannot be ‘curved’ into passing. We use a multiplier and curve potentially to a 2.5 average GPA, but this 2.5 is not guaranteed. If curving is applied, we would first review homework grading and adjust to compensate for grading differences between instructors. If additional curving is warranted, we would then apply the multiplier. The curve is not available to those who complete the late completion exam.
**Group homework assignments**

Submitting homework: You will be assigned to a three or four-person group for each assignment. The assignments will be rotated so you work with several different groups during the semester. The first group assignments will be made on the first day of lab. The calendar for your section indicates when you will receive new group assignments.

All group members are responsible for independently preparing a draft of each assignment that answers all questions (each homework assignment has four or five questions) and submitting the draft to the appropriate dropbox on D2L before lab starts. Failure to turn in a draft will result in the individual losing 2.5 points from the team grade on the assignment.

**Be sure you receive a confirmation email after submitting a file to a dropbox on D2L, and save that email in case you need proof of submission.** If you do not receive the confirmation email, resubmit the file. We will strictly use D2L’s dropbox in determining if a homework has been submitted on time.

These drafts also must be brought to the computer lab session held just before the assignment is due. Thus, for assignments due at the end of a lab session, and for assignments due at the start of the next in-class sessions, all group members should come to that lab session prepared with their two drafts or make appropriate arrangements with their group members to be prepared for their work sessions.

When your group meets in a lab, simply compare solutions. Develop one group submission and provide names for all group members involved. You will be instructed as to what information should be included on each homework assignment.

Someone in the group needs to keep your graded homeworks when they are returned to you. If one of your group members appeals a grade, we will require that person to supply the graded homework as part of their appeal.

**We expect to grade only the group submission.** But if warranted, we will review individual work. We do not expect to provide differential credit in this case, but we will certainly consider the circumstances and provide differential credit if warranted.

The rationale for this group format is four-pronged:

1. This format is consistent with our college goal of enhancing your group work experience. And a four-person group makes it hard for two people to ‘gang up’ on a third.
2. We expect people will learn more by being challenged to discuss different solutions provided by different group members. We hope you will better understand the material due to the collective knowledge of your teammates in contrast to strictly the book- or instructor-provided learning.
3. Networking is an important skill and we encourage development of that skill. You may be amazed by the benefits of networking: short and long-term benefits, as well as job and life-oriented benefits.
4. This format allows us to spend quality-time with every submission. Review what you write, because we will read everything.

**Important:** Grades will be based on your answers to questions posed in the assignments. But if an answer includes a number, reporting this number is only part of what we are grading. How you convey your answer is just as important. You are expected to provide tables, to highlight important numbers in your tables, to indicate units, and to report with grammatically correct and accurate language.