

STA497

READINGS IN STATISTICS: ETHICAL PRACTICE FOR STATISTICIANS

Course information

2021–22

FULL YEAR, HALF CREDIT

Calendar description

Independent study under the direction of a faculty member. Students wishing to take this course must have the permission of the Department of Statistical Sciences and of the prospective supervisor. Not eligible for CR/NCR option.

Prerequisites

At least 1.0 FCE 300+ level STA courses with a minimum grade of 80% in each course.

Learning objectives

The purpose of the course is to develop knowledge around ethical practice and skills as researchers and critical thinkers. By the end of the course, you should be able to:

1. **Engage critically** with ideas and readings on ethical practice.
2. Write and present an **overview** of the **literature** relevant to a specific research topic.
3. Participate actively in **discussions**, i.e., **listen actively**, **build** on the **ideas** of others, and contribute your **own perspectives** and opinions.
4. **Identify** and **communicate** key ideas on ethical professional practice for statisticians using **oral** and **written methods**.
5. Understand how to apply **ethical** considerations to your professional practice.
6. **Reflect effectively** on your own learning and professional development.
7. Identify issues with **graphical representations of data** that could lead to misleading conclusions.

Instructor: Liza Bolton

Please call me: Liza

How do you pronounce that?

- Liza: Like "lie" and "zuh", or [a video...](#)
- Bolton: Like the English words "bowl" + "tonne"

Pronouns: [she/her](#)

Email: liza.bolton@utoronto.ca



Course admin: Slack

Online meetings: Zoom

Meetings: Every two weeks, online (may move to in-person later, upon agreement)

Fall: Wednesdays 3:10–5:00 p.m. ET

Winter: TBD

How will your success be measured?

- Work on your **independent topic** is the main assessment area for this course.
- Active **participation** is worth more than you may have experienced in past statistics courses.
- There are two additional tasks, preparing and delivering a seminar and writing a peer reflection for each of the seminars you attend.

	Weight	Date(s)
Individual topic	70%	
Mid-year presentation	10%	Dec 1
Final presentation	10%	March 29
Annotated bibliography	15%	Dec 8
Final report	30%	Apr 5
Work log	5%	Ongoing
Seminar	20%	
Seminar	15%	Jan 25, Feb 8, Mar 1
Self and peer review/reflection	5%	Jan 26, Feb 9, Mar 2
Attendance, participation, and preparation (as demonstrated through discussions and check-in activities)	10%	Multiple/ongoing

How to succeed in this course

- Expect to spend 6–8 hours on it (including meetings) every two weeks during semester
- Work on your individual topic every week
 - Set yourself mini-deadlines
 - Update your work log up ‘real-time’ (don’t leave it till the last minute)
- Do the readings and actively take notes, check your understanding and formulate questions
- Be prepared and on time for meetings
- Ask good questions
- Demonstrate that you are trying

Meetings

Group meetings will typically be 90–110 minutes. Attendance at all meetings is expected, as there is no substitution for participating in the discussions that will take place. Please email your instructor if you are unable to attend a meeting because of illness.

Delivery (online vs in-person) will be decided and adjusted as a group, with online being the default. If you are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, stay home!

These meetings will be different from lectures. Sometimes, part of the meeting time will be dedicated to a formal lecture with slides highlighting key concepts. In most meetings, there will be assigned reading or work which must be done in preparation for the seminar meeting, and you are responsible for coming to class ready to identify aspects of the readings which need to be discussed further and for raising questions about points that are unclear. During discussions, you should be listening for three things to help you shape the group discussion that follows:

- Relevant questions/concepts/issues which require further discussion.
- One question/concept/issue which you don't yet fully understand.
- One question/concept/issue which you are interested in and would like talk about more.

Missed/late submission policies

No late work will be accepted without prior approval from the instructor. If you have concerns about meeting a deadline (e.g., if you are ill), please contact your instructor as early as possible to discuss alternative arrangements. When possible, alert your instructor to potential issues as early as you can. This will allow us to work together with you to find a suitable solution.

Marking concerns

Any request to have an assessment remarked must be emailed to your course instructor within one week of the grades being posted.

Accessibility

The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations for a disability or have any accessibility concerns about the course, the classroom, or course materials, please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible: email accessibility.services@utoronto.ca or visit the website at <http://accessibility.utoronto.ca>.

Academic integrity

Academic integrity is fundamental to learning and scholarship at the University of Toronto. Participating honestly, respectfully, responsibly, and fairly in this academic community ensures that the University of Toronto degree that you earn will be valued as a true indication of your individual academic achievement and will continue to receive the respect and recognition it deserves.

Plagiarism

In this course, probably more than your previous statistics courses, you may be at risk of plagiarising if you do not understand the rules and your responsibilities. You must not present the work of others as your own. This includes, but is certainly not limited to, copying text and including it in your writing without a citation and quotation marks. There are many resources to help you learn more:

- <https://www.academicintegrity.utoronto.ca/smart-strategies/>



Minimal technical requirements

All students should consult the [minimum technical requirements](#) for participation in online learning. If you are facing financial barriers to obtaining the required technology, please contact your [College Registrar's Office](#) to obtain information regarding your potential eligibility for a need-based bursary. If you anticipate having difficulty connecting to University websites (e.g., Quercus), please submit your question here: <https://www.utoronto.ca/covid19-contact>.

Intellectual property statement

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