
ISOM 2500-L6
Business Statistics
Course Description and Schedule
Spring 2026

Instructor:	Professor Lancelot James Chair Professor, Dept. of ISOM
Office:	Room 4022, LSK lancelot@ust.hk
Office Hours:	Flexible by Appointment
Teaching Assistant:	Dr. Alex A. Jürgenson Room 4049C, LSK imalexj@ust.hk
Class meets:	Feb 5 – May 7
Room:	5403, Academic Building
Time:	Tuesday and Thursday 12:00 – 1:20
Holidays:	17-19 Feb (CNY), 7 Apr (Tue)

Course Objectives

Statistics is the science of collecting, organizing, analyzing and interpreting data. Data loosely equates with information that can somehow be quantified. Naturally, statistics plays an important role in every discipline that utilizes data. Statistics is used in such diverse areas as marketing surveys, testing of automobiles or drugs, experimental quantum physics or lotteries. Within a business context statistics can play an important role in decision making (prediction, forecasting) as this may relate to, for instance, assessing the best candidates for hiring, checking whether operations are running smoothly or adjustments need to be made, checking for fraud, predicting trends in the stock market, risk management, and assessing the feasibility of new investments.

In this class the overall goal will be to become familiar and, perhaps most importantly, comfortable with basic but useful statistical methodologies relevant to business.

By the end of the course, you should be able to:

- Have a basic understanding of common statistical procedures
- Be able to process and critique reports or information from surveys that are presented to you.
- Be able to decide what statistical techniques are most appropriate to use in a given situation and state their advantages and limitations
- Use statistics as a **component** in decision making
- Be able to perform analysis, using simple regression and other tools, with a view towards multiple regression.

- Be able to present your analysis clearly and in a non-technical fashion both verbally and in written form.
- Have, through homework, coherent discussions with group members about statistics as it relates to problem solving in a business context.
- Understand the general limitations of any statistical procedure as it relates to the quality and amount of data.
- Understand that statistics is not simply about doing calculations. Statistical software can often do this for you
- Overcome any anxiety you may have about taking a statistics course.

Course Materials

The following are REQUIRED for ISOM2500.

- An open and inquisitive mind. Class participation is a must.
- Textbook:
 - (i) *Statistics for Business: Decision Making and Analysis.* by Robert Stine and Dean Foster. (Required)
 - (ii) I may use supplemental material not directly in textbook.
- Statistical Software. I will use two statistical packages, JMP and Kstat. Kstat is an Excel Macro developed at Northwestern University. You may use any software you like. This will not be required for exams and quizzes. There will be two Excel labs that will cover basic Excel skills only, and not the abovementioned packages.
- Additional required reading assigned by me.

General Approach

An essential element in grasping statistical concepts is actively and repeatedly engaging in problem solving and reading. My lectures are designed to give a broad overview of concepts, alert you to some key points and provide further clarification. We will use statistical software for presentation purposes and to reinforce the point that formulas are not the primary focus of this course. However, the lectures are not a substitute for practicing. To facilitate this, you will be given regular homework assignments. The homework will be done in groups. Homework must be completed in a professional/presentable manner. Grading will be done lightly. Solutions will be provided. Warning, materials similar to your homework may appear on your quizzes or exam. You will be given two short multiple-choice quizzes to be taken during the regular class time. You will be able to utilize statistical software throughout the class, however you will learn that this is not a substitute for understanding how to use statistics. Moreover, this is not a course on how to use excel for statistics.

Sessions will focus mainly on introducing and presenting new topics and concepts, followed by discussion and application of concepts. There will be short group homework projects. One group will be selected every session to present their work during the first 5-10 minutes of the session. Every group is expected to present their solutions at least once during the term.

Grading

The grade you earn in ISOM2500 will be based on the following activities.

- 10% Individual Class Participation and Professionalism based on weekly group presentations and feedback given (All students should be able to obtain the maximum points, disruptive behavior, **excessive absences** (see attendance requirements) or refusal to answer questions may result in a lower score)
- 10% Group Assignments.
- 40% Quizzes x2 (20% each) In class (Tentative quiz dates are March 10 and April 9) Quiz 1 content – Material Prior to March 10, Quiz 2 Content – Material from March 6 to Apr 2 (inclusive)
- 40% Final Exam

VENUE:

Room 5403, 5/F, Academic Building, new Lift 18

