

Course Syllabus
Nonprofit Data Analytics
Fall 2024
Dr. Elizabeth Searing

Course Information

Title: Nonprofit Data Analytics
Number: PA 7381
Term: Fall 2024
Meetings: GR 3.402B, Thursdays from 7pm - 9:45pm

Professor Contact Information

Office Location: GR 3.818
Email Address: Elizabeth.Searing@utdallas.edu
Office Hours: Synchronous online: Thursdays, 4p to 6p
Online or in person: By appointment

Course Modality and Expectations

Instructional Mode	The course will be taught using a traditional, in-person format.
Course Platform	This course will be delivered using four mechanisms: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. In-person lecture and discussion;2. Resources posted on eLearning (including assignments, readings, and required learning materials);3. Zoom for weekly Office Hours4. Microsoft Teams or Zoom for meetings between the students and the professor
Expectations	Diligence, engagement, and respect for the opinions of others are essential. The bulk of each class session will be devoted to discussion of the assigned readings and in-class tasks. Doing the assigned readings and coming to class prepared for the discussion and data engagement are the most important tasks of a student. Further details are in the grading and assignment section below.

Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions

There are no formal course pre-requisites or co-requisites. A working knowledge of Stata will be useful for assignments.

Course Description

This class

- explores the types and sources of data for civil society;
 - introduces best practices for working with U.S. government data on nonprofits;
 - illustrates how data can be used to create normative standards and inform practice;
 - explores the different types of empirical research underway in the nonprofit field.
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Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

- **Objective:** Students will demonstrate competency in research design and analysis by conceiving and executing research projects that apply appropriate research design and analytic methods to address important data questions in the U.S. nonprofit sector.
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Class Materials and Technology

Class Materials

The Instructor may provide class materials that will be made available to all students registered for this class as they are intended to supplement the classroom experience. These materials may be downloaded during the course, however, these materials are for registered students' use only. Classroom materials may not be reproduced or shared with those not in class, or uploaded to other online environments except to implement an approved Office of Student AccessAbility accommodation. Failure to comply with these University requirements is a violation of the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

Required Textbooks and Materials

There are no required textbooks. Required readings will be made available through eLearning. Students must have access to Stata for assignments.

Suggested Course Materials

Peri Pakroo. *Starting and Building a Nonprofit*, 7th ed., Berkeley, CA: NOLO, 2017, ISBN 978-1413323573. Since this is only recommended (though strongly so for those with no nonprofit experience) and will not be used in class, feel free to use whichever edition you want. The most recent will have the most up-to-date information.

Selected Journals of Interest (not required)

- *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* (the journal of the Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA))
 - *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*
 - *Nonprofit Quarterly* (industry journal and daily newswire)
 - *Voluntas* (the journal of the International Society for Third Sector Research (ISTR))
 - *Stanford Social Innovation Review*
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Technical Requirements

In addition to a confident level of computer and Internet literacy, certain minimum technical requirements must be met to enable a successful learning experience. Please review the important technical requirements on the [Getting Started with eLearning](#) webpage.

Course Access and Navigation

This course can be accessed using your UT Dallas NetID account on the [eLearning](#) website.

Please see the course access and navigation section of the [Getting Started with eLearning](#) webpage for more information.

To become familiar with the eLearning tool, please see the [Student eLearning Tutorials](#) webpage.

UT Dallas provides eLearning technical support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The [eLearning Support Center](#) includes a toll-free telephone number for immediate assistance (1-866-588-3192), email request service, and an online chat service.

Communication

This course utilizes online tools for interaction and communication. Some external communication tools such as regular email and a web conferencing tool may also be used during the semester. For more details, please visit the [Student eLearning Tutorials](#) webpage for video demonstrations on eLearning tools.

Student emails will be answered within 3 working days under normal circumstances.

Distance Learning Student Resources

Online students have access to resources including the McDermott Library, Academic Advising, The Office of Student AccessAbility, and many others. Please see the [eLearning Current Students](#) webpage for more information.

Server Unavailability or Other Technical Difficulties

The University is committed to providing a reliable learning management system to all users. However, in the event of any unexpected server outage or any unusual technical difficulty which prevents students from completing a time sensitive assessment activity, the instructor will provide an appropriate accommodation based on the situation. Students should immediately report any problems to the instructor and also contact the online [eLearning Help Desk](#). The instructor and the eLearning Help Desk will work with the student to resolve any issues at the earliest possible time.

Class Participation

Regular class participation is expected. Students who fail to participate in class regularly are inviting scholastic difficulty. A portion of the grade for this course is directly tied to your participation in this class, including both engaging in group or other activities during class that solicit your feedback on homework assignments, readings, or materials covered in the lectures (and/or labs). Class participation is documented by faculty. Successful participation is defined as consistently adhering to University requirements, as presented in this syllabus. Failure to comply with these University requirements is a violation of the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

Course Plan

	<i>Class Topics</i>	<i>Assignments, Preparation, or Guest Speaker for Class</i>
Week 1 <i>Aug 22</i>	What is Civil Society?	Course Survey Due (no points)
Week 2 <i>Aug 29</i>	The History of U.S. Nonprofit Data	
Week 3 <i>Sep 5</i>	Comparative Civil Society	Country Data Report and Presentation Due Have read: Searing, Grasse, Rutherford (2023) Promise and Perils
Week 4 <i>Sep 12</i>	Non-Administrative Data in the Nonprofit Sector	<i>Guest lecture: Dr. Allison Russell</i> Come prepared to explain your favorite non-990 SE empirical paper
Week 5 <i>Sep 19</i>	Basics in Administrative Data: The Form 990	Topic Rankings Due (no points) Have read: Materials and websites provided by Dr. Searing
Week 6 <i>Sep 26</i>	Discretion and Cleaning	Have prepared personal data environment
Week 7 <i>Oct 3</i>	Exploring the Sector: Subsector, Size, and Ways of Grouping	<i>Guest lecture: Dr. Jesse Lecy</i>
Week 8 <i>Oct 10</i>	Text Fields, Merged Data, and Other New Horizons in Data	<i>Guest lecture: Dr. Dominik Meier</i>
Week 9 <i>Oct 17</i>	Digging into the Metrics	Annotated Literature Review Due <i>Guest lecture: Dr. Thad Calabrese</i>

Week 10 Oct 24	<i>Meeting with Charity Navigator</i>	
Week 11 Oct 31	Team Meetings with Dr. Searing <i>(During class time, sign up for time slot)</i>	Initial Summary Statistics Report Due
Week 12 Nov 7	Panel Modelling Techniques & Other Specifications	<i>Guest Lecture: Dr. Nathan Grasse</i>
Week 13 Nov 14	Advanced Topics & ARNOVA Practice Presentations	Draft Full Report Due
Week 14 Nov. 21	Guest Lecture & Workshop	Team Meetings with Dr. Searing (Sign Up for Virtual Time Slot)
Nov 28		<i>THANKSGIVING</i>
Week 15 Dec 5	Team Presentations (up to CN whether in person or virtual class)	Team Presentations Due Dec. 5 Team Paper Due Dec. 12

Assignments & Grading Policy

Assignment Type Overview:

A. Class Participation

Country Data Report and Presentation	100 pts
In-Class Discussion & Exercises	200 pts

B. Writing

Annotated Literature Review	150 pts
Initial Summary Statistics Report	100 pts
Draft Paper	100 pts

Final Paper	250 pts
C. Presentation	<u>100 pts</u>
	1000 pts

Assignment Types Detail:

- 1. Country Data Report and Presentation.** The U.S. has one of the most developed data pictures of civil society in the world. However, this generally only reflects formalized civil society, plus U.S. scholars tend to take this data for granted. For this assignment, students will write a 4-page summary of the data available for a country of their choice that is not the U.S. or Canada. The findings will be shared in class during an informal discussion. Students should be prepared to present their country for 5 minutes; slides are optional.
- 2. In-Class Readings Discussion.** As a doctoral seminar, the course rewards thoughtful participation in class discussions and exercises. The topics we cover are rich and can certainly be discussed for more than one class period. It is important for the students to prepare for class discussions by reading all assigned materials in advance, to engage in class discussions responsibly, and to contribute to a productive in-class learning environment through their comments, questions, and answers.
- 3. Annotated Literature Review.** Using a template provided by the professor, this assignment involves reading and pulling important information out of articles to complete a thorough, but manageable review of a topic area. Please see assignment instructions for details. ~~The review should contain 25 articles, and it ideally will serve as the foundation for the final paper.~~
- 4. Initial Summary Statistics Report.** This will provide an introductory look at the metric chosen by the team. Additional information will be provided following selection of metrics.
- 5. Draft and Final Paper.** The culminating project for the semester is a research paper written either singly or in teams of two. Unlike the paper in the Nonprofit Research doctoral seminar, this will be a FULL PAPER. In other words, this paper should contain an abstract, introduction, research question and motivation, literature review (including both theoretical and empirical works), methodological approach, data description, findings, discussion, and conclusion. Topics will be based on the metrics covered in class; topic choice and deviations from this structure will be approved in consultation with the professor.

- 6. Presentation.** You will present your Final Paper to the class using a conventional professional format (NOT a Pecha Kucha.) This presentation will involve both classmates and representatives of Charity Navigator. More details will be available during the semester.
- 7. Final Grade:** Final grades will be based on the point distribution described above. Final letter grades will be assigned as followed:

Grade	Total Percentage Achieved
A	93% or more
A-	90%-92%
B+	87%-89%
B	83%-86%
B-	80%-82%
C+	77%-79%
C	73%-76%
C-	70%-72%
F	Less than 70%

Course & Instructor Policies

Late and Make-up Policy: Since weekly readings and assignments are discussed and utilized during class, I am unable to accept late submissions for weekly assignments.

For other written assignments, if it is turned in within 24 hours of the due date and time, the assignment is eligible for 90% of the original point total. A written assignment submitted between 24-48 hours after it was due is eligible for 80% of the original point total. No written assignments will be accepted more than 48 hours after they are due except for a documented emergency situation. A documented emergency situation is hospitalization (with accompanying paperwork), the death of an immediate family member, or situations of similar magnitude. All emergencies must have documentation, and the treatment of each is totally within the professor's discretion. If you know that you will have difficulty turning in an assignment at a certain time (travel, work obligations, etc.), you should plan ahead and/or turn in assignments early.

Course Evaluations: Your honest assessment of this course is an important source of feedback for both me and the department. We will have course evaluations both mid-semester and at the conclusion. These are an important

part of curriculum development, so please take the time to fill out the evaluations thoughtfully.

Class Recordings

Students are expected to follow appropriate University policies and maintain the security of passwords used to access recorded lectures. Unless the Office of Student AccessAbility has approved the student to record the instruction, students are expressly prohibited from recording any part of this course. Recordings may not be published, reproduced, or shared with those not in the class, or uploaded to other online environments except to implement an approved Office of Student AccessAbility accommodation. Failure to comply with these University requirements is a violation of the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

The instructor may record meetings of this course. These recordings will be made available to all students registered for this class if the intent is to supplement the classroom experience. If the instructor or a UTD school/department/office plans any other uses for the recordings, consent of the students identifiable in the recordings is required prior to such use unless an exception is allowed by law.

Comet Creed

This creed was voted on by the UT Dallas student body in 2014. It is a standard that Comets choose to live by and encourage others to do the same:

“As a Comet, I pledge honesty, integrity, and service in all that I do.”

Academic Support Resources

The information contained in the following link lists the University’s academic support resources for all students. Please go to [Academic Support Resources](#) webpage for these policies.

UT Dallas Syllabus Policies and Procedures

The information contained in the following link constitutes the University’s policies and procedures segment of the course syllabus. Please review the catalog sections regarding the [credit/no credit](#) or [pass/fail](#) grading option and withdrawal from class. Please go to [UT Dallas Syllabus Policies](#) webpage for these policies.

The descriptions, readings, and timelines contained in this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.

