

PSY 315 · FALL 2026

Syllabus

Statistics for Psychological Research · St. Joseph's University, New York · Professor Magee



Hi, I'm Sigma

Meetings	Tuesdays & Thursdays, 1:40–3:05 PM · Room MCE 402 (computer lab)
Instructor	Michael Magee, Ph.D.
Office	Lorenzo Hall (top floor) · Office hours by appointment, in person or Zoom
Email	mwmagee@sjny.edu
Prerequisite	PSY-100 and MAT-151
Credits	3

Welcome — statistics is not math (it just uses some)

Let's get the scariest myth out of the way first: **this is not a math class**. Statistics *uses* arithmetic — and none of it is harder than eighth-grade algebra — but the real skill is **thinking**: knowing which number answers your question, running it, and saying what it means in plain English. You'll do every calculation in **Google Sheets**, the same way real researchers do, so we spend our energy on understanding instead of on long-hand arithmetic. By the end of the

semester you'll take raw data and carry it all the way to a real analysis — the kind you'll use in Research Methods and beyond.

Course description

This course covers inferential statistical techniques for hypothesis testing in psychological research — including group comparisons, bivariate correlation, and linear regression — along with the logic of probability, sampling, and parameter estimation that underlies them. **Prerequisites:** PSY-100 and MAT-151.

What you'll be able to do

- ✓ Organize and summarize data with tables, graphs, and the right kind of average.
- ✓ Measure how spread out data is, and standardize scores using the normal curve (z-scores).
- ✓ Describe relationships between variables with correlation and regression.
- ✓ Explain sampling, the Central Limit Theorem, and the logic of hypothesis testing.
- ✓ Run and interpret **t-tests** and **ANOVA** (including two-way ANOVA with interactions) in Google Sheets.
- ✓ Choose the correct analysis for a question and communicate the result clearly.

Materials — nothing to buy

- **Free unit readings** posted on Canvas and on this site (written for this course — short and clear).
- **Google Sheets** (free through your SJNY account; used in every class).
- *Optional reference: OpenStax Introductory Statistics 2e* (free PDF) for students who want extra examples.

You'll work on a lab computer every class, so there is **no textbook to purchase** and nothing to print.

How your grade works

Almost everything is **auto-graded on Canvas**, and the low-stakes work is designed to reward students who simply show up and keep up.

Component	Weight	Notes
4 in-class exams	50%	Hands-on; you analyze real data in Google Sheets
Weekly T/F quizzes	25%	Short, auto-graded; two lowest dropped
Multiple-choice tests	20%	A few across the term; lowest dropped
Citizenship (attendance)	5%	See policy below

Grading scale

A = 90–100% · B = 80–89% · C = 70–79% · D = 60–69% · F = below 60%

Weekly T/F quizzes (25%)

Before almost every class, a short true/false quiz on the **previous** class's material is due on Canvas. They're quick, they keep you current, and they're the easiest points in the course. Your **two lowest quizzes are dropped**, so a couple of rough weeks won't hurt you.

Multiple-choice tests (20%)

A handful of slightly tougher, auto-graded tests (with some light calculations) that pull a whole block of material together. Your **lowest test is dropped**.

In-class exams (50%)

Four exams across the semester (not cumulative). You'll use Google Sheets to analyze a dataset, make a graph, and interpret the result — exactly what we practice in class. There is **no final exam**.

How exam Sheets work

I create your exam Google Sheet and share an individual copy with you **from my own account**, so the file lives in my Drive and I retain access to it — including its full edit history. Work *only* in the copy I share with you; please don't make your own or share it with anyone. This keeps everyone honest and lets me see your real work.

Citizenship — attendance (5%)

You begin the semester with the **full 5%**, and simply attending protects it. You may miss **three classes with no penalty**. Beginning with your **fourth absence, each absence deducts 2% from your final course grade. Three late arrivals count as one absence**. Because this course is hands-on and cumulative, missing class is the single biggest predictor of a low grade — please come.

Extra credit

- **Perfect attendance** (no absences and no lates) earns **+2%** added to your final grade.
- **Finals-week statistics game:** instead of a final exam, we meet during finals week for a team game; your team can earn additional extra credit.

Classroom rules

No digital devices on your person

We work on the lab's computers, so you won't need — and may not use — personal **laptops or tablets** for note-taking (unless you have an approved accommodation), and **phones may not be on you** during class. Please leave them at the threshold: at the start of each class, put your phone in your assigned spot in the **phone cubby** (always in sight, behind the door). You'll sign the "No Digital Device" policy before our second meeting. The reasoning is evidence-based — see the science of digital devices in the classroom. Violations cost points off your final grade. Thanks for helping keep the room distraction-free.

Recording of lectures. You may not film or record lectures without my permission. Unauthorized audio or video recording of any lecture material is prohibited and will be reported to the University administration.

Email & Canvas. Email is my main channel — check your college email often, **sign every email with your full name**, and include the course in the subject (I teach several; I generally reply within two business days). Canvas is used **exclusively** for announcements, materials, quizzes, and assignments, so set it up to reach you: in Canvas go to **Account ► Notifications** and set **Announcements** to notify you **immediately**. "I didn't see it" isn't an excuse once something is posted. The Canvas mobile app helps too.

Scanning handwritten work. A few assignments ask you to write by hand and upload a PDF — easy to do on an iPhone/iPad or Android device.

Late & make-up work. Meeting deadlines is a life skill. Quizzes and tests have generous Canvas windows, so plan ahead — **nothing is accepted late** (miss the deadline, miss the points; your dropped scores are your cushion) and there are **no make-up quizzes**. If you're absent, you're responsible for finding out what you missed — please don't email to ask. Exam make-ups are granted only for serious, **documented** emergencies.

Getting help. If something doesn't click, ask early — this material builds on itself. Use class time and office hours; I'm always glad to walk through something again.

Academic & university policies

Academic integrity. The University expects students to observe academic integrity in all aspects of their academic life. Plagiarism, cheating on examinations, and all forms of academic dishonesty are forbidden and treated very seriously; consequences **will include** a reduction in grade and may include failure in the course, suspension, or expulsion. In this course you'll use Google Sheets for all analysis — that's expected — but quizzes, tests, and exams are **your own individual work**. For exams you work only in the individual Google Sheet I share with you from my account, and I retain access to it (including its full version history).

AI tool usage

A central goal of this course — and of SJNY — is to help you become an independent, critical thinker. You are therefore **forbidden from using AI tools to create any text, images, audio, or other media that ends up in your work** for this class (assignments, activities, responses, quizzes, tests, exams). Any work crafted even in part by AI tools is treated as plagiarism under SJNY's academic-integrity policy: a first infraction earns a **zero** on the assignment and a report to the Academic Dean; a repeat infraction results in **failure of the course**. If anything here is unclear, talk with me *before* you submit.

♿ Student Accessibility Services

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), St. Joseph's University provides reasonable accommodations for students with documented physical, psychological, cognitive, and/or medical disabilities. Contact the **Office of Student Accessibility Services, Brooklyn Campus** — McEntegart Hall, Room 300A · Coordinator Hannah Singer · 718.940.5859 · hsinger@sjny.edu. It is the student's responsibility to communicate with faculty; please share your accommodation letter with me early so we can set things up. All information is kept confidential.

Wellness

All of us benefit from support during times of struggle, and asking sooner rather than later almost always helps. If you or someone you know is dealing with academic stress, difficult life events, or feelings like anxiety or depression, the **Office of Counseling and Wellness (Brooklyn)** is here: 718-940-5853 · bkwellness@sjny.edu · start the intake process.

Schedule at a glance

Full dates and what's due are on the **class schedule**. The shape of the semester:

Block	Topics	Exam
1 — Describing data	Frequency distributions · central tendency · variability · z-scores & the normal curve	Exam 1 — Oct 1
2 — Relationships	Correlation · regression	Exam 2 — Oct 15
3 — Hypothesis testing & t-tests	Probability & the CLT · hypothesis-testing logic (+power) · one-sample, independent, & paired t-tests	Exam 3 — Nov 12
4 — ANOVA	One-way ANOVA · two-way ANOVA (main effects & interactions)	Exam 4 — Dec 10
Finals week	Team statistics game (extra credit)	<i>no final exam</i>

This syllabus is a guide; dates may shift slightly. Any changes will be announced in class and on Canvas.

Sigma says: Read this once now, then keep up with the weekly T/F quizzes and just keep showing up — that's most of the battle in this course. When something doesn't click, ask early. You've got this.